

BOND STREET IMPROVEMENTS

REPORT ON WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL'S
INITIAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

CONFIDENTIAL

AUGUST 2016

BOND STREET IMPROVEMENTS REPORT ON ENGAGEMENT

Westminster City Council

Type of document (version)
Confidential

Project no: 70009316-205

Date: August 2016

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QUALITY MANAGEMENT

ISSUE/REVISION	FIRST ISSUE	REVISION 1	REVISION 2	REVISION 3
Remarks				
Date	26/08/16			
Prepared by	S Speirs			
Signature				
Checked by				
Signature				
Authorised by				
Signature				
Project number				
Report number				
File reference	\\ser01lon2uk.uk.wspgroup.com\Projects\70009316 - Bond Street Public Realm\C Documents\Reports\Consultation			

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In late 2015, Westminster City Council (WCC), in conjunction with the New West End Company (NWECC) and Transport for London (TfL), identified a concept design for Bond Street with the aim of delivering substantial improvement to the public realm to maintain Bond Street's status as a world class destination of choice for the purchase of high quality goods and to meet the future pedestrian demands of the Elizabeth Line due to open in late 2018.

The Bond Street concept design was developed by the Council and its partners into a Stage 1 Feasibility Design in early 2016, and then taken forward into Stage 2 Initial Design. During Stage 2, WCC has made a concerted effort to engage with residents and businesses to inform them about, and seek their views on, the Bond Street scheme. To this end, a leaflet was mailed to over 4500 properties in the local area in early July, and distributed by email to over 200 key contacts. A Facebook advertisement targeted those living or working close to Bond Street to further raise awareness of the engagement. WCC held three exhibitions and a drop in session in July, which were attended by over 40 business representatives, stakeholder organisations and residents.

Attendees at the meetings were encouraged to complete a questionnaire which gathered feedback on the proposed initial design of the scheme, but just 14 responses, in addition to several emails and letters providing comments on the proposals, were received. The overall low level of response to the questionnaire indicates that the majority of those who were given the opportunity to comment on the proposals chose not to. Many of those who attended mentioned that they were well-informed about the proposals and had already fed into the process, which confirms the importance of NWECC's previous engagement activities. Consultation exercises present the opportunity to raise concerns, and therefore typically attract responses from those who are worried about or opposed to a proposal, while those who are satisfied or have a neutral opinion are less likely to respond.

The combined efforts of the NWECC and WCC engagement activities have demonstrated that there is a good level of support for the Bond Street proposals, with recognition that it will deliver a more pleasant and attractive local environment. Local stakeholders have been involved at a formative stage and therefore have been able to directly influence the designs as the proposals have progressed.

There are, inevitably, some outstanding concerns, which predominantly relate to matters of detail, such as parking and loading, which is understandable given the conscious decision to provide only limited information on this area within this engagement. The Cabinet Member Report of June 6th gave the approval to proceed with engaging stakeholders to gain feedback on the physical design of the proposed scheme, with the expectation that there would be a second round of consultation (statutory) on the parking and loading arrangements later in the year. This second round of consultation (subject to approval) presents the opportunity to address concerns about the proposals by providing additional information.

Aside from parking and loading, the remaining key issues of concern are safety, particularly related to pedestrians in the Town Square area, along with traffic flow and anticipated disruption during construction.

The next steps in the process are to gain Cabinet Member approval to proceed with the TMOs and the associated consultation this autumn. The consultation (if approved) will clearly demonstrate how feedback from the July consultation has been used to further shape the design, and where it has not been possible to make any amendments. The exercise will also provide further technical information where it has been requested (e.g. traffic modelling, parking and loading arrangements).

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 In late 2015, Westminster City Council (WCC), in conjunction with the New West End Company (NVEC) and Transport for London (TfL), identified a concept design for Bond Street with the aim of delivering substantial improvement to the public realm to maintain Bond Street's status as a world class destination of choice for the purchase of high quality goods. The project is also crucial to meet the pedestrian demands resulting from the opening of the Elizabeth Line in late 2018.
- 1.1.2 The Bond Street concept design was developed by the Council and its partners into a Stage 1 Feasibility Design in early 2016, and then taken forward into Stage 2 Initial Design.
- 1.1.3 During Stage 2, WCC has engaged with local residents, representatives of local businesses and stakeholder organisations in July 2016 to present the proposed scheme and enable local stakeholders to provide feedback on the design and raise any concerns. The Council's engagement activity has followed NVEC's own substantive engagement on the concept design for the Bond Street project, which took place from late 2015 and early 2016.
- 1.1.4 This report sets out the findings of the engagement activity. Chapter 2 presents a brief summary of the methods used to engage with local residents and businesses. Chapters 3 and 4 present a summary of the data gathered in the feedback form and detailed written responses submitted in response to the proposals. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the findings and the next steps.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 This chapter sets out the various channels that NWEC and WCC used to engage with residents, businesses and wider stakeholders and the levels of response received.

2.2 CHANNELS & REACH

2.2.1 NWEC has been consulting with businesses and residents in Bond Street since 2015, continuing in 2016 during the Council's development of the feasibility design for the Bond Street project.

2.2.2 A full report on the consultation undertaken by NWEC to date is provided in Appendix X. In brief, it has included 12 presentations to different groups, a three-day exhibition in January 2016 and the issue of two newsletters. In addition, NWEC representatives have visited the managers of 74 stores and retailers along the street to discuss the proposed scheme.

2.2.3 Table 2-1 below shows the reach of the various activities. The presentations are thought to have had a reach of approximately 100 individuals comprising residents and business representatives, property owners and ward councillors. The exhibitions were well-attended with 84 attendees (and 60 attendees at a drinks reception). The newsletters have each been circulated to over 3,300 properties.

Table 2-1 NWEC engagement channels

DATE	ACTIVITY	REACH
2 September 2015	Presentation to a West End Ward Councillor	Cllr Paul Church
29 September 2015	Presentation to the Chairman of Residents Society of Mayfair & St James	Lois Peltz
30 September 2015	Presentation to a West End Ward Councillor	Cllr Jonathan Glanz
11 November 2015	Presentation to Richemont Group (They hold 10 companies on Bond Street)	
17 November 2015	One day presentation to occupiers and property owners on Bond Street	33 attendees
16 December 2015	Presentation of final proposals to West End Ward Councillor	Cllr Jonathan Glanz
Mid-January 2016	Newsletter sent to residential and business properties in the vicinity of Bond Street inviting attendance at the public exhibition	3,382 properties invited to attend public exhibition
22 January 2016	Presentation of the final proposals to the Chairman of the Residents Society of Mayfair & St James	Lois Peltz
26 to 28 January 2016	Three day exhibition and drinks reception	84 attendees @ exhibition, 60 attendees @ drinks reception
18 February 2016	Presentation to Steering Group of Mayfair Neighbourhood Forum	
Late February 2016	Further newsletter to the area	3,382 properties

DATE	ACTIVITY	REACH
14 March 2016	Presentation to the Mayfair Neighbourhood Forum	45 attendees
April 2016	Presentation to the Surveyors Department of the Corporation of London	15 attendees
2 June 2016	Saville Row Bespoke Group	8 attendees
27 July 2016	Presentation to the Richemont Group	18 attendees
July/August 2016	Store visits	47 stores to date

2.2.55 Westminster City Council made a concerted effort to further engage with residents and businesses in July 2016 to inform them about the proposed scheme.

2.2.56 To this end, a leaflet was mailed to over 4,500 properties in the Bond Street area in early July 2016, and distributed by email to over 200 key contacts. The 4-page leaflet provided an introduction to the Bond Street improvement scheme, an overview of the proposals (including an annotated map and an artist's impressions of the proposed arrangement), timescales, and a series of frequently asked questions. It also invited recipients to attend one of three exhibitions and a drop in session. A Facebook advertisement targeted at those living or working close to Bond Street aimed to further raise awareness of the events and NVEC also pushed the communication out to its members and contacts. The display material and leaflet were also uploaded online (to both the Bond Street webpage and the consultation pages of WCC's website). Table 2-2 provides a summary of the communication channels employed and the audiences at which they were aimed.

Table 2-2 WCC engagement/communication channels

DATE	CHANNEL	AUDIENCE
July 2016	Leaflet	Distributed by post to over 4500 properties
July 2016	Online leaflet and feedback form - on both the Bond Street webpage and the consultation pages of WCC's website	Key contacts and stakeholders, wider public
July 2016	Three exhibitions + drop in session	Interested groups, local residents & businesses – 44 attendees
July 2016	Email address	Interested groups, local residents & businesses
July 2016	Facebook advert	Wider public

2.2.71 The exhibitions were held at The Grosvenor Chapel, South Audley Street, London, on:

- Thursday 14th July, 9.00am - 10.30am
- Tuesday 19th July, 12.30pm - 2.00pm
- Monday 25th July, 6.30pm - 8.00pm
- In addition, a drop in session was held on the afternoon of Monday 25th July.

2.2.72 Each of exhibitions took the form of a presentation with question and answer session, followed by the chance to examine various material on display and the opportunity to ask the project team about the proposals. Attendees at the exhibitions were encouraged to complete a questionnaire which gathered feedback on the proposed initial design of the scheme.

- 2.2.73 The exhibition material and feedback questionnaire were also available online. An email address was set up to which people could provide additional feedback.

Figure 2-1 WCC exhibition



2.3 LEVEL OF RESPONSE

- 2.3.1 As noted above, the NWECC exhibitions were well attended with 84 attendees (and 60 attendees at a drinks reception, in addition to presentations to around 100 individuals comprising residents and business representatives, property owners and ward councillors. Overall, 25 attendees completed feedback forms at the exhibitions or online. The detailed listing of the NWECC consultees is set out at the end of the NWECC Consultation Report.
- 2.3.2 The WCC consultation events were attended by 44 business representatives, residents and stakeholder organisations. It is suggested that NWECC's engagement activities have resulted in consultation fatigue to some extent, as reflected in the lower attendance of the WCC events. Furthermore, just 14 attendees at WCC's events provided feedback on the proposed design by completing the questionnaire. In addition to several emails and letters, were received.
- 2.3.3 The list of those attending the Council's consultation events is as follows:

ARUP	2
Atkins/ St. James's Conservation Trust	1
Benjamin Proust Fine Art Limited	1
Bond Street Association	1
Charbonnel	1
Chaumet	1
Deborah Gage	1
Grosvenor	7

Grosvenor Chapel	1
Harry Winston	1
Hermes	1
Holiday Inn, Mayfair	1
Hudson Walker Int Ltd	1
John Lewis	1
Kenningham Retail	1
Louis Vuitton	2
Luxem events	1
Sotherbys	3
Trophaeum Asset Management	1
Union Land & Property Limited	1
Vacheron Constantin	1
Westminster Cycling Campaign	1
Westminster Living Streets	1
William & Son	1
Residents	8
Westminster City Council (other teams)	2
Total	44

2.3.4 The overall low level of response to the WCC engagement activities indicates that the majority of those who were given the opportunity to comment on the proposals for Bond Street chose not to. Many of those who attended mentioned that they were well-informed about the proposals and had already fed into the process, which confirms the importance and extent of NWEC's previous engagement activities. Consultation exercises present the opportunity to raise concerns, and therefore typically attract responses from those who are worried about or opposed to a proposal, while those who are satisfied or have a neutral opinion are less likely to respond.

2.4 EFFECTIVENESS

2.4.1 Questionnaire respondents were asked how they had found out the proposed scheme. All channels were effective to some extent, with the most popular sources of information about the proposals being the emails sent from the Bond Street Communications Manager (4 respondents) and the leaflet that was mailed out to all properties (3 respondents)..

3 RESULTS: NVEC ENGAGEMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 This section provides a summary of the issues raised during NVEC's engagement activities.

3.2 OVERALL SUPPORT

3.2.1 In summary the NVEC engagement found that there is strong support for the proposed renewal of Bond Street's public realm, particularly the introduction of high quality materials, improving the setting of the retail and commercial premises, widening the pavements, providing more seating and spaces to spend time, decluttering the street, creating a more pedestrian friendly environment and improving the management of traffic. Many business owners believe the improved design of the public realm, combined with the opening of Crossrail, will add visual interest, improve the setting of the street, increase footfall in the area and therefore improve business.

3.2.2 There are, however, some concerns about the impact of the scheme which are summarised by theme below:

PEDESTRIAN SPACE

→ There are some concerns over the potential introduction of shared space along sections of the street, with some attendees concerned that this could be dangerous to pedestrians and motorists. All agreed that there needs to be clear communication to drivers entering the area, particularly for the first time; and could be improved through further measures to consolidate servicing vehicles on the street and/or limit their access to specific times.

CULTURAL OFFER & PUBLIC SPACE

- There were a couple of minor concerns regarding the potential loss of identity of Bond Street. Several residents also were not in favour of the choice of materials, particularly the introduction of Yorkstone paving. However, the majority of consultees agreed that the consistent material palette used throughout the street would enhance connectivity and give both Old and New Bond Street more of an identity.
- The majority of attendees support the principle of reintegrating Bond Street into the surrounding Mayfair area. Crucial to this success is felt to be the introduction of more wayfinding signage on Bond Street.
- There is also support for the principle of creating more places for people to rest and relax along Bond Street and in the surrounding area. However, it was noted that there needs to be sufficient supporting infrastructure and management to avoid increases in littering, smoking or loitering.
- Some attendees feel the proposed introduction of trees at the entrance to Oxford Street could clutter the street, and would prefer it to be a wide, clear highway to accommodate increased footfall. Some of the consultees also noted the potential rationalisation of trees at 'the plug', which led to further questions as to whether or not the project seeks to enhance the greenery of Bond Street.

TRAFFIC

→ Businesses and property owners along the street are particularly supportive of the proposed reduction of traffic on Bond Street as they feel it will make it more attractive to visitors and shoppers; and in turn enhance their businesses. However some residents who attended the exhibition believe that by making Brook Street and Davies Street two-way, traffic congestion in these areas and surrounding streets could significantly worsen. These residents, therefore,

are not supportive of this element of the project although understand the measures are being proposed in response to the emerging Mayfair Traffic Plan.

RESIDENTS

- Whilst most consultees recognise the need to invest in the future of Bond Street, there have been some questions as to how surrounding residents could also benefit from the proposals. Some residents highlighted that the scheme has been designed with businesses in mind, as opposed to making Bond Street a better place for those who already reside in the area.
- One resident expressed a desire to see a designated cycle lane, although this was generally resisted by other attendees as they do not feel that bicycles or other forms of public transport would be appropriate on Bond Street.

DELIVERY TIMES

- Although businesses welcome the ongoing work of NVEC to encourage retailers and commercial premises to participate in the Commercial Vehicle Reduction scheme as a long term solution, some have expressed caution over the planned introduction of restricted delivery times. Some galleries have illustrated that they often rely on deliveries throughout the day and as a result of restricted delivery times, their businesses would suffer. They have therefore queried whether an exemption from the restricted delivery times is possible due to the unpredictable nature of their business.
- Local businesses were happy to learn that there would be further consultation and encouragement to participate in the Commercial Vehicle Reduction Scheme, and agreed this was an important supporting aspect of the project.

PARKING AND LOADING

- With regard to NVEC's store visits, 100% of responses were positive, although a number expressed concerns about parking and loading arrangements as well as disruption caused by the building works. One of the most commonly expressed views was a concern about the lack of control of white van and construction vehicle parking all along the street.

CONSTRUCTION PLAN

- Most consultees would like to see a robust construction plan, and were reassured that the timeline of the project included many months of planning and logistical research and would be introduced in phases to minimise disruption.
- All stakeholders were particularly keen to be consulted on the detailed design of the scheme and given significant advance notice of any construction periods, and welcomed the idea of a forum or point of contact to raise specific issues.
- The majority of businesses and property owners are particularly satisfied that the entire scheme is forecasted to be completed in conjunction with Crossrail.

4 RESULTS: WCC ENGAGEMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 This section provides a summary of the issues and concerns raised during WCC's engagement activities in July 2016; including questions asked/ discussions held at the exhibitions, the results of the feedback questionnaire completed at the exhibitions and online, and comments submitted in written correspondence (emails and letters).

4.2 ATTENDANCE & RESPONSE

4.2.1 The purpose of the exhibitions was for businesses, residents and other stakeholders to find out more about the proposals and therefore ask questions of the project team to gather the information they required in order to make a judgement on the proposals.

4.2.2 The three exhibitions and drop in session had varying levels of attendance, as shown in Table 4-1 below. In total, the events had a total attendance of 44 (8 residents and 36 businesses/ stakeholder organisations).

Table 4-1 Attendance at briefing meetings

DATE	No. ATTENDEES
Thursday 14 th July (morning)	10 businesses/stakeholders
Tuesday 19 th July (afternoon)	19 businesses/stakeholders & 3 residents
Monday 24 th July (evening)	6 businesses/stakeholders & 4 residents
Monday 24 th July (afternoon) drop in session	1 business stakeholder & 1 resident
Total	36 businesses/stakeholders & 8 residents = 44

4.2.3 Attendees at the exhibitions were encouraged to complete a questionnaire which gathered feedback on the proposed initial design of the scheme. Hard copies of the questionnaire were made available at the exhibitions and the form was also made available online. By 5th August 2016, 14 responses had been received.

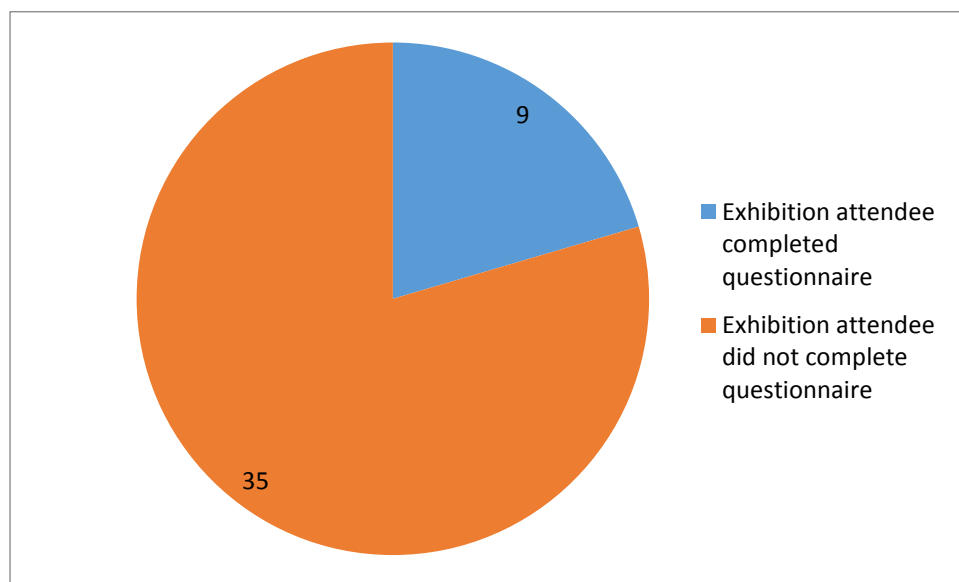
4.2.4 The 14 respondents comprised:

- 3 residents
- 4 business owners, 1 business manager
- 3 stakeholder organisations
- 2 local employees, 1 visitor.

4.2.5 Nine of the fourteen respondents had visited an exhibition. Figure 4-1 shows the proportion of exhibition attendees who completed a feedback questionnaire (20%).

4.2.6 Given the number of leaflets and targeted emails distributed in advance of the exhibitions, the low response rate suggests that NVEC's work to date has been well-received and informative, with few stakeholders taking the opportunity to further comment on the proposals. This suggests broad support for the proposed scheme.

Figure 4-1 Response from exhibition attendees

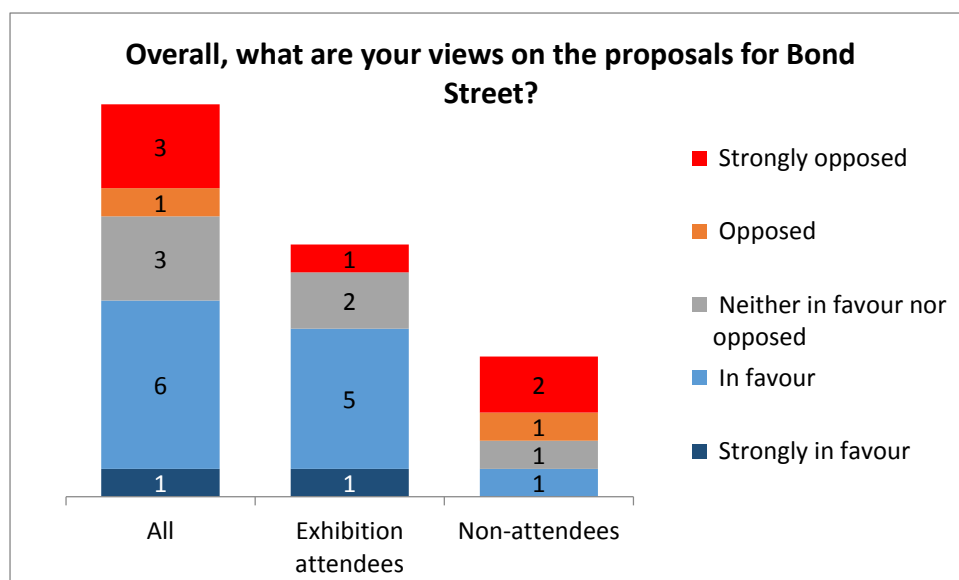


4.3 OVERALL SUPPORT

4.3.1 Looking at the 14 respondents who completed the feedback questionnaire, when asked their views on the proposal overall, half (7/14 respondents) are supportive (1 is 'strongly in favour', 6 are 'in favour') while over a quarter (4/14) are opposed (1 is 'opposed' while 3 are 'strongly opposed'). The remaining three expressed a neutral opinion (Figure 4-2). Of those who are opposed, one is a business owner, one is a stakeholder organisation, one a visitor and one a local employee.

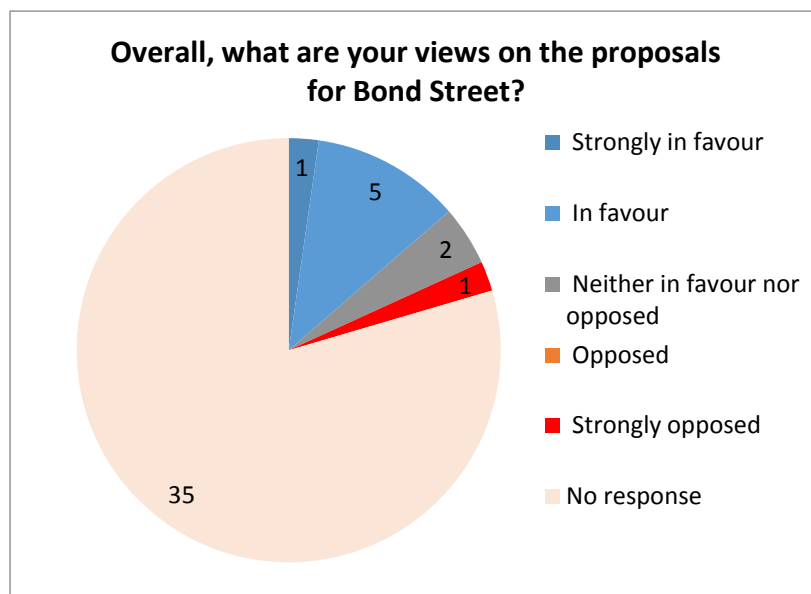
4.3.2 Further analysis (Figure 4-2) indicates that of the 9 respondents who attended an exhibition, two-thirds (6/9) are in favour of the proposed scheme, one is opposed and two have a neutral opinion. This demonstrates that opposition is greatest (3/5) amongst those who did not attend an exhibition. This is a common finding in consultation as those who do not attend events may not have sufficient information about the proposals in order to make an informed judgement.

Figure 4-2 Overall views on proposals



4.3.3 Importantly, as noted above (Figure 4-1), the majority of exhibition attendees did not complete a feedback questionnaire which suggests they have no concerns about the proposals (Figure 4-3).

Figure 4-3 Overall views on proposals: exhibition attendees only



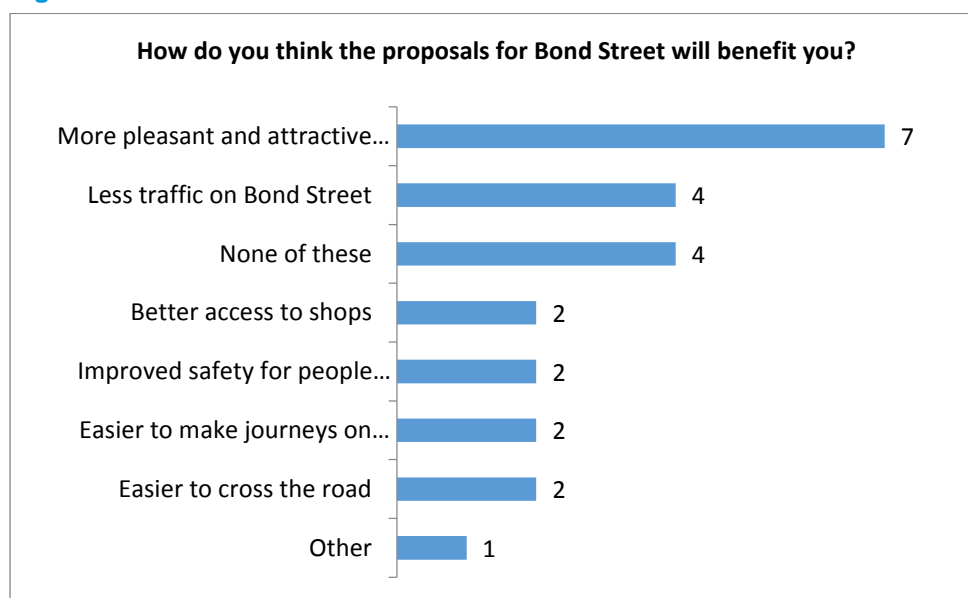
4.4 REASONS FOR SUPPORT

4.4.1 The respondents who expressed support confirmed the urgent need to improve the appearance of Bond Street if it is to remain competitive as a luxury destination. The need for a better balance in favour of the pedestrian/ cyclist was also highlighted, for example:

- “This will spruce up Bond Street to take on the appearance of a famous and celebrated destination in London - and to convey the sense of becoming a modern, forward looking city”
- “Long overdue enhancement and if we do not act we will have our position as one of the world's greatest luxury destinations usurped”.

4.4.2 When considering the benefits of the proposed scheme, as shown in Figure 4-4, half of all questionnaire respondents (7/14) recognise that the scheme will deliver a more pleasant and attractive local environment, while over a quarter (4/14) believe they will benefit from reductions in traffic on Bond Street.

Figure 4-4 Perceived benefits



4.5 DETAILED COMMENTS & OUTSTANDING CONCERNS

4.5.1 When asked to consider any outstanding concerns about the proposed scheme, seven respondents identified concerns about the safety of people walking, while six noted concerns about parking and loading arrangements. The latter is to be expected since very little details of the proposed parking and loading arrangements were given in the consultation material; these being the focus of the Traffic Order consultation due to commence in September.

4.5.2 Several noted concerns about journey times, traffic speeds and design of the public space. Concerns about the safety of cycling and disruption during the works were each identified by four respondents. However, as noted above, the majority of exhibition attendees did not take the opportunity to comment on the proposals, and are therefore assumed to have no outstanding concerns.

4.5.3 The following paragraphs provide a summary of the comments stated in the feedback questionnaire, and those made during the exhibitions and in written correspondence. The designer response to these concerns is shown in Appendix C (ii) along with a summary of where additional information will be shared with stakeholders in the autumn 2016 consultation (subject to approval) to address these concerns.

TRAFFIC FLOW

4.5.4 Two respondents (a local employee and a visitor, neither of whom had attended an exhibition) expressed the view that the proposed scheme does not go far enough to reduce traffic. One argued that the scheme will not prevent rat-running and ignores the real need to provide access for people walking and cycling. The respondent suggested that the proposed scheme is a “waste of expense on extravagant non-essential paved area and parking” and instead should be focused on restricting through-traffic, with delivery access from side streets only:

4.5.5 *“The street is an oppressive and dangerous rat-run. Why is this not being fixed? ... To fritter with a bit of granite and parking at huge expense is beyond reason”.*

- 4.5.1 Likewise, a stakeholder organisation suggested that Bond Street should be pedestrianised, with access for delivery vehicles at set times of day. However, business representatives at the exhibition explained that this would not suit their business needs.
- 4.5.2 In contrast, a business owner (who had attended an exhibition) expressed concern that reducing the traffic flow to one lane would have a significant impact on traffic, in particular referring to the number of visitors who arrive by chauffeur and taxi needing to be set down close to their destination, along with the need for deliveries to gain access throughout the day: *“The current proposal will bring traffic to a halt and so drive clients away that will mean the street will lose its appeal to high end retailers who will then be unable to pay the rents due to a reduction in income.”*
- 4.5.3 Some residents are concerned that the proposed scheme will result in more traffic (including commercial vehicles) on adjacent streets, e.g. Avery Row.
- 4.5.4 Another concern raised was that if Oxford Street is pedestrianized in the future, traffic levels on adjacent streets will increase and a narrower Bond Street may not be able to cope.

ACCESS

- 4.5.5 Of the comments specifically about access, an exhibition attendee queried whether any weight and length restrictions will be imposed on vehicles. It was also suggested that the speed limit should be 10 mph. The need for good taxi access during business trading hours was highlighted by one business respondent.
- 4.5.6 There is concern that the proposed two-way flow on Brook St two-way will not be effective.

STREET FURNITURE & TREES

There are mixed views on the ‘greening’ of Bond Street. At one exhibition, an attendee queried why the proposals include only one tree. In contrast, another consultee stated that planting more trees would restrict the footway space and impede pedestrian flows at busy points. In the questionnaire responses, two business respondents requested more trees to be included in the proposals *“Enough trees to provide for a human factor, responsiveness and scale... let's consider the impact and elegance of tree lined streets in other capital cities around the world”*.

There is some concern that public seating may encourage ‘loitering’ rather than ‘dwelling’. The need for sufficient but ‘attractive’ litter bins to be provided was also identified.

DESIGN OF TOWN SQUARE

- 4.5.7 There are some concerns about what respondents refer to as ‘shared space’, particularly in the Town Square area, as the potential conflict between pedestrians and motorised vehicles gives rise to concerns about safety. There are also concerns about the safety of ‘shared’ surfaces for the visually and mobility impaired. As one business respondent stated: *“I believe Bond Street is in need of a refurb... however there are some aspects of the plans with which I do not agree, like the lack of greenery and the cars driving alongside the pedestrians in the 'Town Square'.”*

DESIGN OF FOOTWAYS

There is concern that shallow kerbs present a trip hazard and it was suggested that the footway should be clearly differentiated from the carriageway to avoid the risk of accidents and discourage vehicles from parking on the footway.

- 4.5.8 One participant expressed concern that the wider footways may be used by cyclists.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

- 4.5.9 There is a concern that the proposed Grosvenor Street zebra crossings will not be effective or safe as pedestrians will attempt to cross at natural desire lines (where the existing traffic signals are located), rather than further up the street (where the proposed zebras crossings are located). There is also a concern noted (by a business respondent) that the proposed zebra crossing will cause delays to traffic, particularly if there is expected to be much higher pedestrian footfall once Crossrail opens.
- 4.5.10 There is some concern that pedestrians will cross the road 'where they want' if they are not 'channelled', which will cause traffic congestion and frustration amongst drivers, and coupled with inconsiderate parking/ loading, the street could become more dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 4.5.11 It was suggested that all pedestrian crossings should be signalised (with a pedestrian only phase) to ensure safety.
- 4.5.12 There was a request for an improved crossing point over Brook Street (at junction with South Molton Street), e.g. through raised surface / increased priority for pedestrians.

CYCLE FACILITIES

Of the comments directly related to cycling, the following concerns and queries were raised:

- Whether it would be possible to provide cycle contraflow northbound between Clifford Street and Conduit Street.
- Where the cycle racks in The Plug are to be relocated. There is a concern that if removed completely, bikes will end up being chained to railings.
- How cyclist behaviour will be managed on shared footways, e.g. will there be signs asking them to dismount?

LOADING & PARKING

- 4.5.13 It was suggested that there is too little taxi space provided in the proposals, given the predicted increase in footfall. Similarly, there is a concern that there will not be sufficient space for taxis to set down passengers without causing traffic congestion.
- 4.5.14 Several business representatives explained the need for constant loading/set down access as Bond Street relies on high spending shoppers who travel by car/chauffer. Some businesses need the flexibility of being able to accept deliveries all day – jewellers, galleries/art dealers.
- 4.5.15 One exhibition attendee queried the possibility of locating parking and loading bays on one side of the street only to remove any conflict between parking and cycling. However, others at the meeting highlighted the need for bays on both sides of the street to serve the businesses.
- 4.5.16 A resident highlighted the need to ensure adequate provision is in place to residents to send and receive goods.
- 4.5.17 Abuse of shared parking/loading bays was highlighted (e.g. parking during loading hours) elsewhere (e.g. Haymarket), which dampens the emphasis on public realm.
- 4.5.18 There were also questions about enforcement, parking arrangements on Sundays and a concern about the proposed location of a loading bay.

SERVICING AND DELIVERIES

- 4.5.19 A resident, while supportive of the need to better manage deliveries and collections to reduce traffic, suggested that businesses should not be permitted to change their delivery times to antisocial hours (after 6pm and before 8am weekdays, Saturday pm and all day Sunday) due to the disturbance this causes to local residents.

DISRUPTION TO TRADING

- 4.5.20 While recognising the longer term benefits, there are some concerns amongst businesses that the works will cause significant disruption to trading during peak seasons and at key hours in 2018, in addition to difficulties loading and unloading directly in front of business premises. It was emphasised that the Communications Manager and contractor will liaise closely with businesses to understand their working patterns and take all necessary steps to minimise disruption.

SCHEME DOES NOT GO FAR ENOUGH

- 4.5.21 A stakeholder organisation expressed the view that timing of the proposed scheme is unwise given that plans are being developed to pedestrianise Oxford Street which would result in major shifts in the routing of buses in the area, thereby presenting the opportunity to radically transform Bond Street into a traffic free zone (allowing access for delivery vehicles, residents' cars and taxis, but not any "through" traffic). Within that zone, "shared space" materials could control traffic speeds, and people would walk and cycle in comfortable conditions: *"The result would be transformational for the area and likely massively boost retail and resident amenity, as well as enabling a shift from cars to walking, cycling and public transport."*
- 4.5.22 Another expressed the view that there is conflict between the scheme objectives – designing a scheme which maintains traffic speeds at the same time as improves the public realm *"the scheme is completely flawed by the complete lack of pedestrianisation and the huge amount of parked cars which will lead to more congestion, not less"*.

OTHER AREAS OF COMMENT

- 4.5.23 These included:
- Query as to whether the scheme will include provision for more public lavatories.
 - Suggestion that a Bond Street warden should be on hand to assist pedestrians as required.
 - Requests for more information such as the impact of Brook Street and Davies Street two-way working on the Mayfair area and details of how the plans for consolidated servicing and deliveries would work in practice to allay concerns of additional impact on side streets

4.6 SUMMARY

- 4.6.1 In brief, WCC's engagement has found that there is a good level of support for the public realm on Bond Street to be improved; most stakeholders welcome the opportunity to create a more pleasant and attractive local environment befitting of Bond Street's status as a luxury destination. Traffic reduction and better provision for those who do not travel by car are also considered to be important benefits of the proposed scheme.
- 4.6.2 The overall low level of response to the exhibitions and feedback questionnaire, while disappointing, indicates that the majority of those who were given the opportunity to find out more about and/or comment on the proposals for Bond Street chose not to. Overall, there were 44 exhibition attendees and just 14 questionnaire responses received. Consultation exercises present the opportunity to raise concerns, and therefore typically attract responses from those who are worried about a proposal, while those who are satisfied or have a neutral opinion are less likely to respond.
- 4.6.3 Of the 14 respondents who completed the feedback questionnaire, half are supportive of the proposed scheme, 3 have a neutral opinion and 4 are opposed. Those who attended the exhibition prior to completing the questionnaire are more positive, with just one business owner expressing objection to the proposals (mainly on the grounds of anticipated traffic flow/congestion).
- 4.6.4 However, as anticipated, there remain some concerns which will be addressed at the next stage of consultation. Many of these concerns relate to matters of detail, such as parking and loading, which is understandable given the limited information provided to date. The Cabinet Member Report of June 6th gave the approval to proceed with engaging stakeholders to gain feedback on the physical design of the proposed scheme, with the expectation that there would be a second round of consultation (statutory) on the parking and loading arrangements later in the year. This second round of consultation (subject to approval) presents the opportunity to address concerns about the proposals by providing additional information. Aside from parking and loading, the remaining key issues of concern are safety, particularly related to pedestrians in the Town Square area, along with traffic flow.
- 4.6.5 The designer response to these concerns is shown in Appendix C(ii) along with a summary of where additional information will be shared with stakeholders in the autumn 2016 consultation (subject to approval) to address outstanding issues.

5 SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

5.1 SUMMARY

- 5.1.1 Westminster City Council made a concerted effort to engage with residents and businesses in July 2016 to inform them, and seek their views on, the Bond Street improvement scheme.
- 5.1.2 To this end, a leaflet was mailed to over 4500 properties in the local area in early July, and distributed by email to over 200 key contacts. NWECC also pushed the communication out to its members and contacts. A Facebook advertisement targeted at those living or working close to Bond Street aimed to further raise awareness of the engagement.
- 5.1.3 WCC held three exhibitions and a drop in session in July, which were attended by over 40 business representatives, stakeholder organisations and residents. The display material and leaflet were also uploaded online (to both the Bond Street webpage and the consultation pages of WCC's website). Despite the efforts to raise awareness, it is suggested that NWECC's engagement activities have resulted in consultation fatigue to some extent as the four WCC events had a relatively low attendance in comparison to NWECC's exhibitions earlier in the year.
- 5.1.4 Though attendees at the exhibitions were encouraged to complete a questionnaire which gathered feedback on the proposed initial design of the scheme, just 14 responses, in addition to several emails and letters providing feedback on the proposals, were received.
- 5.1.5 This report has summarised the views expressed and concerns raised during the engagement activity. It has found that there is broad support for the public realm on Bond Street to be improved, though there remain a number of unresolved issues, which will be addressed in due course.
- 5.1.6 The overall low level of response indicates that the majority of those who were given the opportunity to comment on the proposals for Bond Street chose not to, with 44 exhibition attendees just 14 responses received. Many of those who attended mentioned that they were well-informed about the proposals and had already fed into the process, which confirms the importance and extent of NWECC's previous engagement activities. Consultation exercises present the opportunity to raise concerns, and therefore typically attract responses from those who are worried about or opposed to a proposal, while those who are satisfied or have a neutral opinion are less likely to respond.
- 5.1.7 The combined efforts of the NWECC and WCC engagement activities have demonstrated that there is a good level of support for the Bond Street proposals. Local stakeholders have been involved at a formative stage and therefore have been able to directly influence the designs as the proposals have progressed.
- 5.1.8 Many of the concerns raised relate to matters of detail, such as parking and loading, which is understandable given the limited information provided to date, and will be addressed by providing additional information during the Traffic Management Order (TMO) consultation (subject to member approval). Minor amendments to the scheme have been made to address many of the remaining concerns. There are, however, several isolated cases where a stakeholder is not in agreement with the fundamental principles of the proposed scheme, e.g. desires pedestrianisation, and such comments will not result in amendments to the design.
- 5.1.9 Aside from parking and loading, the main issues of concern are the design of Town Square, the safety of pedestrians, traffic flow, and anticipated disruption during construction.

5.2 NEXT STEPS

- 5.2.1 The next steps in the process are to gain Cabinet Member approval to proceed with the TMOs and the associated consultation this autumn. The consultation will clearly demonstrate how feedback from the July consultation has been used to further shape the design, and where it has not been possible to address certain concerns. The exercise will also provide further technical information where it has been requested (e.g. traffic modelling, parking and loading arrangements).

