



City of Westminster

Oxford Street District

Place Strategy and Delivery Plan

25.02.19

Foreword

As proud custodians of the Oxford Street District we are hugely ambitious to ensure its future success.

There is an incredible richness and heritage to the District that gives it its unique character. It is a place that is defined by historic neighbourhoods that each have their own clearly-defined attributes. This is what sets the area apart from all national and international rivals. Its connectivity to the commercial, cultural and unrivalled leisure offer of the wider West End provides endless opportunities that simply cannot be matched elsewhere.

That is what we have sought to build upon with this comprehensive Place Strategy for the whole of the Oxford Street District. In developing this work we have listened carefully to those who know best – those who live, work, visit and do business in the area; that has helped shape our deep understanding of what makes the place so special and what we should seek to augment.

Unlike many other world cities, we are not regenerating an area that has been in decline for decades and there’s no defunct infrastructure that we can give a fresh twist to. But we believe that no other major city has sought to refresh a whole district in such a comprehensive and ambitious fashion. Unlike other parts of the West End, there is fragmented land ownership which is why we are showing the necessary civic leadership in order to set out a unifying vision that can act as a catalyst and drive improvements on the ground. The significant funding that we are also making available is a massive kick start to make this a reality and we look to private and public partners to commit their support.

The District is busy and is intense. It is an extraordinary place but also somewhere we want people to be proud of and where they relish going about their day-to-day lives, be that shopping, going to work, simply meeting friends, or families and children being able to play. Enhancing all of these things is as vital as just focusing on improving the public realm. That is why this strategy is all encompassing and addresses all the elements that we feel make a successful place.

It is crucial that it is well understood that the area is also an economic powerhouse for London and the UK and is one of the largest employment centres in the capital. We want to be able to share the prosperity and success of the district across the city. But this needs to be achieved in a sustainable and sensitive fashion.

We are all well aware of the challenges the district faces and we want to bring all the available public and private resources to bear to tackle them head on and future proof the district’s ongoing success which is vital for Westminster and London. This strategy is the enabler to make this happen.



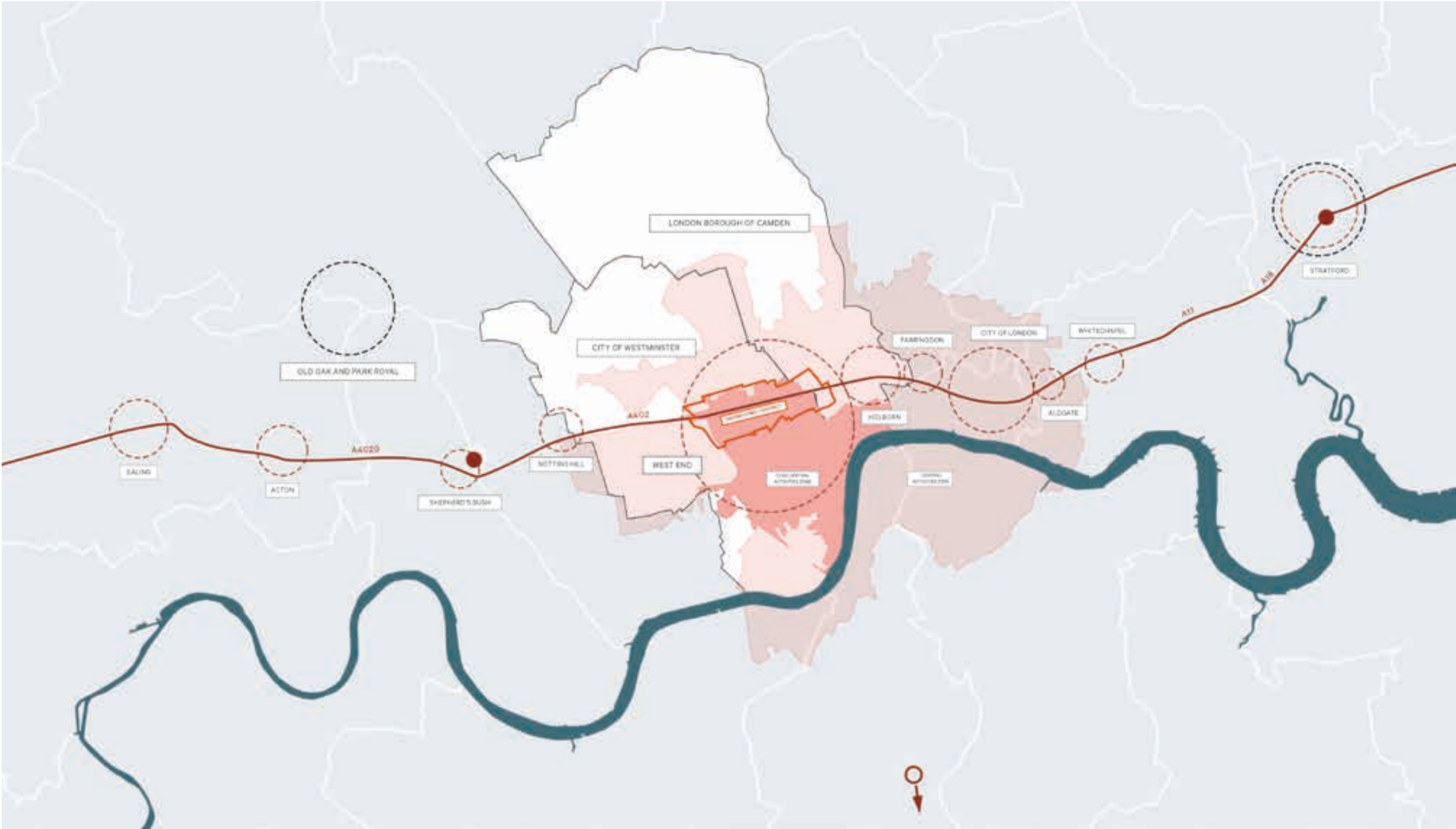
A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Richard Beddoe', with a horizontal line underneath.

Cllr Richard Beddoe,
Cabinet Member for Place Shaping and Planning

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Introduction



Oxford Street's location at the heart of London's longest shopping street

- High street shopping area

Mayoral Development Corporation

Westfield shopping centre

Planned Westfield shopping centre
- Core Central Activities Zone

Central Activities Zone

(Draft New London Plan, GLA 2018)

Introduction

The Place Strategy and Delivery Plan

This document is the Place Strategy for the future of the Oxford Street District and its streetscape and landscape revitalisation. It is a strategy about the place in its entirety, of which movement and transport are a critical part. Our commitment is to a project for the whole district that is exciting, holistic, ambitious and deliverable.

The strategy aims to restore one of London’s greatest streets, revitalising its connections by expanding the area of intervention to encompass an entire Oxford Street District. The district-wide approach defines the area spatially as a series of nine zones, carefully considered to reflect the variations in character from Marble Arch to Tottenham Court Road. The Place Strategy and Delivery Plan has been developed around 15 overarching principles that outline the approach to Oxford Street and the wider district and a holistic set of elements that form a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to achieve the ambitions for the whole area.

The strategic principles, when applied to specific places and locations will help to generate a set of solutions that meet the needs of the local residents and stakeholders. Each principle is designed to add to the character and function of the existing places within the district and help to determine the scope for new projects.

This strategy has a multi-layered approach, responding to the complex nature of the area and recognising that multiple aspects need to be addressed to create meaningful change. The Place Strategy contains proposals for these elements:

Mix of land uses; streets and spaces; proposed operational approach; transport including: walking; buses; cycling; air quality; vehicle access; road safety; coaches; London taxis (not including private hire vehicles); general traffic; goods vehicles; servicing and deliveries; accessibility for all; management; wayfinding and legibility; amenity; play; architectural quality; materials; lighting; landscape; culture and public art.

The Delivery Plan identifies 88 streets and spaces with 9 district-wide projects, with the aim of improving and enhancing the area as a place to live and work, while securing its continued position as a leading international retail destination. Delivery has been included in this strategy as it is clear that the improvements required to safeguard the future of Oxford Street and the wider district need to be implemented immediately, building upon existing project momentum and in preparation for the arrival of the Elizabeth Line.

The 10 example sites show how the overarching principles could be applied in specific places. These are not concept designs but a clear illustration of the approach to the streets and spaces and outline the type of improvements that could be applied to the other sites listed in the Delivery Plan for the whole district. These spaces will be designed, like the others in the district, in consultation with stakeholders.

A district-wide approach

For improvements that will benefit residents, visitors and workers this body of work has considered the district as a whole, rather than Oxford Street alone.

What happens on Oxford Street affects surrounding neighbourhoods, and it is critical to be mindful of this in any changes to the street. Moreover the great strength of the West End is that it is made up of historic and dynamic neighbourhoods – and strong connections to the wider West End will continue to give vitality to this part of London.

The Oxford Street District is a complex place of mixed ownership, which makes large-scale improvements challenging, the strategy is therefore a mechanism to bring together diverse interests and priorities into a single and effective improvement project.

A district has been defined that includes all of Oxford Street, including the gateways at Marble Arch and Tottenham Court Road, and a substantial wider area. The initial criteria was to include streets and spaces at a minimum of two blocks either side, all of the garden squares, and the new Elizabeth Line stations. The district’s edges are broadly defined as reaching Portman Square and Mortimer Street to the north, and extending to Grosvenor Street and Broadwick Street in the south, therefore including parts of the historic neighbourhoods of Marylebone, Mayfair, Fitzrovia and Soho. The definition of the district has remained flexible throughout the process, to allow for response to studies and ideas. The definition of the district was also part of the consultation, open for comments on its potential boundary.

Project process

In July 2018, Cabinet approved the decision to develop a Place Strategy and associated Delivery Plan for the Oxford Street District. Westminster City Council commissioned Publica and Norman Rourke Pryme (NRP), with additional supporting work from Volterra and WSP to create the strategy. This work was informed by the views of local residents and key stakeholders, and built upon the existing comprehensive technical evidence base. The project was driven by the need to be:

- Inclusive – opening up the conversation to as many people as we can, including many who did not take part in the previous consultations.
- Swift – to ensure momentum is retained and the delivery of this project is prioritised.
- Efficient – to build upon the studies and technical work of previous projects and to ensure that work is not repeated.
- Effective – setting out proposals to deliver change quickly and where it is needed most.

The first part of re-setting the necessary work to improve Oxford Street was to review all aspects of the previous project and the detailed comments made in the public consultation processes to understand what the emerging priorities should be, and how these could be incorporated in a district-wide project.

The second was to develop an evidence-based approach, surveying the area and building upon the studies undertaken for the previous project to understand the range of issues and opportunities.

NRP and Publica have built upon the significant work undertaken as part of the Oxford Street Transformation Scheme project. This project collected a lot of information regarding conditions within the district and this has been used to allow rapid progress in the development of the Oxford Street District Place Strategy. The consultation process for the previous proposals has provided a wealth of detailed information about specific issues and the viewpoints of stakeholders and residents. The Place Strategy project team used this information to inform the development of new strategic ideas and to build on the successful elements of previous work. The detailed technical consideration of transport issues and impacts has helped to develop the new approach, as outlined in this document.

Every street in the district has been studied in regard to how it works currently, and how it might be included as part of the improvements. This was approached through the application of criteria set out in the principles section of this document and in the detailed area analysis by Publica and NRP. The process also included a review of other previous strategies and ideas for Oxford Street and the wider district. There have been many excellent and detailed ideas developed for the area, over many years, therefore it is a key principle of this project to build on these studies and concepts.

Meetings were held with a broad cross-section of residents’ groups, retailers, businesses, interest groups and landowners in August and September 2018, to discuss priorities and ideas for the Oxford Street District. Workshops were also held with the Westminster Youth Council and workers from across the district. This process continued throughout the consultation period.

In October 2018, Cabinet granted approval for the Place Strategy and Delivery Plan to go to public consultation, for the principles, proposals and ideas to be put forward for discussion and testing as part of an open conversation about the future of the Oxford Street District. The public consultation took place from 6th November to 16th December 2018 and involved: a dedicated website; several consultation events across the district; a pop up exhibition space; presentations to resident associations and key stakeholders and a survey for everyone to provide their feedback.

There were a total of 2,154 completed consultation responses*. 66% of overall respondents stating they supported the Place Strategy principles, with 73% of resident respondents stating they supported the Place Strategy principles. The majority of stakeholders (resident and business groups) responded positively to the strategy, putting forward detailed responses. Air quality, management and the quality of the streets and spaces are the critical areas for improvement, and to make meaningful change the volume of vehicular traffic in the area must be addressed. There were also detailed comments that are directly relevant to the next design stages – these comments have been collated and will be revisited throughout the design process.

* This was comprised of 1,800 questionnaires either completed online or paper copies posted to the council and completed at consultation events, as well as 354 completed through face to face fieldwork.

Introduction: approach to the district



Focus area of study for the Oxford Street District

Introduction: approach to the district

Revitalising one of London's great districts

Oxford Street is one of the world's most celebrated retail streets. One of its most important strengths is its vitality, which comes from its eclectic nature and continual newness; from the ebb and flow of commercialism, movement, complexity, contrast and constant change. It is both international and local. It is for residents, workers, and visitors of all ages. It is a microcosm of London.

It is a street, not a shopping mall, with shops that have sides, backs and spaces in between them. It is a thoroughfare and a distributor of movement, but most importantly it is an intrinsic part of a street network that connects historic residential neighbourhoods and the wider West End. Oxford Street has character, authenticity and identity. Celebrating and amplifying these elements will reinforce its continuing status as London's primary shopping street and support its development into a vibrant centre for civic life and commerce.

The district is unique as a meeting point of Great Estates, international retailers, long-established neighbourhood forums and some of the UK's most important businesses and investors, all of whom have over time developed ideas and proposals for its streets and spaces. This strategy builds on the momentum of change being brought by both the delivery of the Elizabeth Line and renewed thinking about Oxford Street, and provides a mechanism to knit together the area's diverse projects.

The case for change

The case for change is both urgent and compelling – Oxford Street's current condition does not match its importance and status. Pedestrian safety and air quality must be urgently addressed, requiring the balance of vehicular and pedestrian movement to be transformed. Management and maintenance across the district is a key concern, affecting conditions today but also any proposed changes. The retail landscape is rapidly evolving and is currently challenging, with the importance of an enhanced environment more critical than ever.

The creation of the Elizabeth Line has already brought significant change and its opening will intensify conditions across the district. The two West End stations are projected to bring an additional 60 million people annually; increasing the 200 million annual visits to the district by almost a third*. The economic opportunities that this will bring are accompanied by the challenge of adapting congested streets and spaces to accommodate greatly increased pedestrian movement. The Elizabeth Line stations do not open out onto Oxford Street directly, but to Dean Street, Hanover Square and Davies Street, significantly altering the way people will move across the district.

The scale of ambition

The purpose of the strategy is to unify, not to homogenise – to respect the diverse and often contrasting characters of different parts of the street and the wider district. It aims to reflect and maintain Oxford Street's character of inclusivity and eclecticism, and to provide the setting and amenities that will allow its activity and diverse economies to flourish. This calls for a holistic

strategy encompassing all aspects of the built environment as well the critical elements of transport and movement. The starting point is to build from its assets; its urban form, its complexity of use and harness the many great ideas that have been advanced for its future. The strategy is pragmatic in addressing the diverse needs of the area but highly ambitious in setting out a vision for a programme of extensive improvements to a fully functioning and complex district, elevating its civic amenity, greenery, play, cultural programme, art, lighting and the quality of the public realm.

The aim is to create a greener, cleaner environment where people enjoy spending time supported by interesting routes, ample amenities and outstanding public space. The restoration of spectacle and delight is a primary objective – it should still be intense and dynamic especially at certain times of the day, but the range and scale of retail and experiences on Oxford Street and the diversity of its surrounding neighbourhoods offers endless possibilities to explore places of varying characters and intensities.

Celebrating diversity of use

The Oxford Street District does many things – as well as an international shopping area, it is a successful commercial office district with 51% of the area's employment within professional services, and 20% in retail*. It is a residential area, with Mayfair, Marylebone, Fitzrovia and Soho separated by Oxford Street. The street itself is both a thoroughfare and a distributor, providing access to these neighbourhoods, particularly east of Oxford Circus. A successful strategy will be one that ensures that all of these elements thrive; that accommodates the shared aims of residents, workers and visitors and businesses; that makes the area a more enjoyable place to be.

Oxford Street and the wider district changes significantly through the different seasons of the year and also from daytime to night reflecting this diversity of use, with an intense peak in the late afternoon and early evening as many different types of use converge and shoppers and workers are using public transport at the same time. This strategy is built upon a key principle of working with the patterns of use of the street and wider district – to make sure that pedestrian space is prioritised and also maximised when it is most needed and that essential servicing movements take place at appropriate times.

A blueprint for change

This strategy sets out an incremental and cumulative approach, with 88 projects that together form an ambitious proposal for the whole 2km-long district to bring radical and long-lasting change. Some of the projects are modest, some are long held ambitions, many are complex, all are put forward as proposals that will bring meaningful improvement. The Delivery Plan lists all projects and work is underway to schedule how to bring them forward in the most efficient and logical way to keep the area moving and working throughout.

* Source: *Volterra (2018) Oxford Street District: An Economic Assessment*

Introduction: stakeholder response

Consultation response

The public consultation on the Draft Oxford Street District Strategy and Delivery Plan opened on the 6th November 2018 for 6 weeks until the 16th December 2018. It employed a number of ways to engage with people and receive feedback including: a dedicated website; exhibition events across the district, a pop up shop and presentations to key stakeholders.

The online survey was opened to the public and responses came from a wide range of people including; residents, local workers and those visiting the district who were asked to respond to a set of open and closed questions inviting feedback on the Place Strategy. The strategy was generally supported with 63% of respondents strongly supporting or tending to support the principles, while 28% either strongly opposed or tended to oppose the principles.

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There were a total of 2,154 completed consultation responses*. 66% of overall respondents stating they supported the Place Strategy principles, with 73% of resident respondents stating they supported the Place Strategy principles. The majority of stakeholders (resident and business groups) responded positively to the strategy, putting forward detailed responses. Air quality, management and the quality of the streets and spaces are the critical areas for improvement, and to make meaningful change the volume of vehicular traffic in the area must be addressed. There were also detailed comments that are directly relevant to the next design stages – these comments have been collated and will be revisited throughout the design process.

Stakeholder consultation

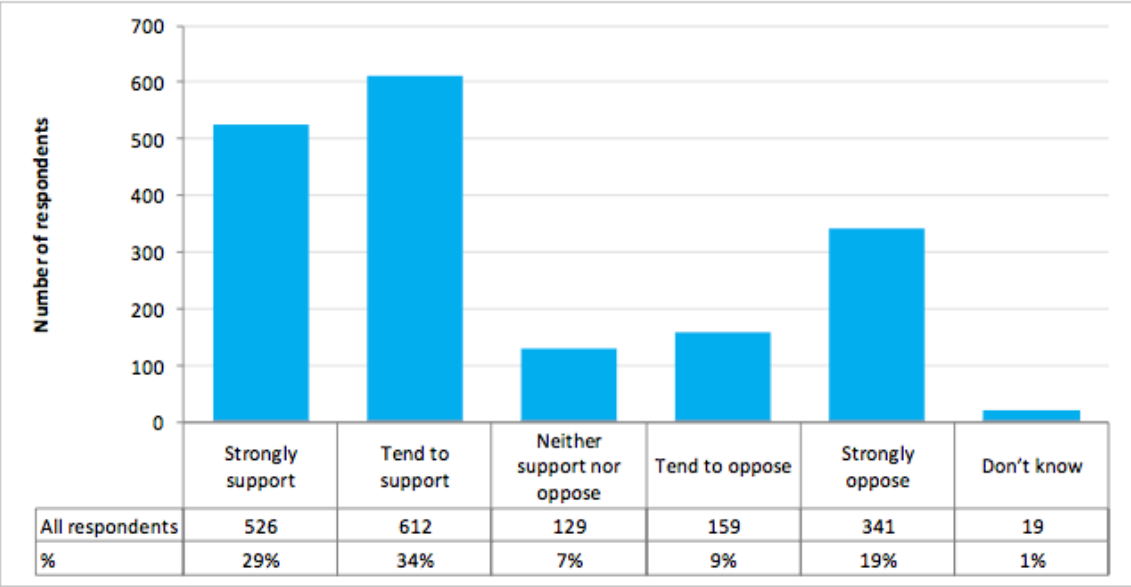
During the consultation Westminster City Council met with stakeholder organisations. The most frequent comments from stakeholders regarding the strategy included the following:

- Support for the strategic approach to the district
- Potential programme and phasing
- Request for ongoing stakeholder consultation
- Further detail of proposals requested
- Support for diversification of land use on Oxford Street
- Operational and servicing requirements
- Management
- Residential amenity

For detailed consultation analysis see ‘Oxford Street District Strategy consultation analysis January 2019’.

* This was comprised of 1,800 questionnaires either completed online or paper copies posted to the council and completed at consultation events, as well as 354 completed through face to face fieldwork.

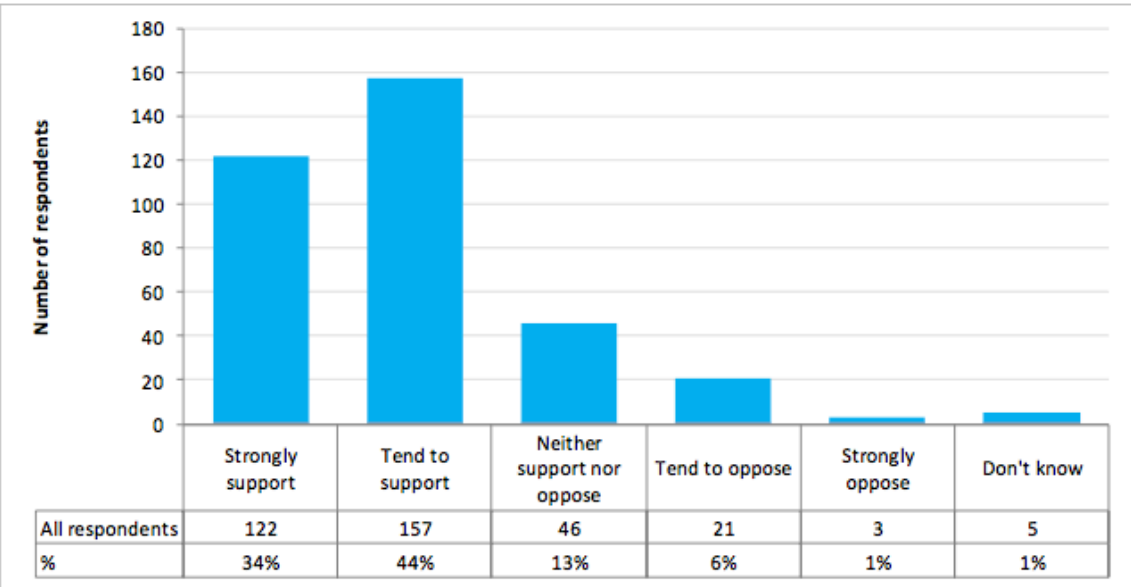
Figure 5.1: Q14. To what extent do you support or oppose the principles outlined in the draft Place Strategy and Delivery Plan?



Respondents who answered this question = 1,786

Source: Online survey, Oxford Street District Strategy consultation analysis, online survey, January 2019, Steer

Figure 6.2: Q7a. To what extent do you support or oppose these principles for the District as a whole?



Respondents who answered this question = 354

Source: On Street Survey, Oxford Street District Strategy consultation analysis, January 2019, Steer

Introduction: stakeholder response

Consultation during the preparation of the strategy

During the months of July and August 2018, Publica carried out an audit of existing material, including previous consultation responses and proposed plans, to identify and understand opinions, concerns and ideas. The review of previous consultation materials defined the next stages of the Place Strategy and Delivery Plan, ensuring that public opinions expressed previously were acknowledged and incorporated in the development of the thematic approaches for improving the district.

Key issues

- Accessibility and the ease at which mobility-impaired individuals can reach, enter, move through and use Oxford Street if bus routes and taxi access were removed
- Traffic and congestion, and the need to improve congestion in the area without displacement from Oxford Street into surrounding areas
- The safety of the area, relating to pedestrians and cyclists
- The safety of the area relating to anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime
- The need for appropriate public realm improvements to de-clutter the area and make it safer and more enjoyable
- The need to improve air quality in the wider district, and concerns about displacement from Oxford Street into neighbouring areas
- The need for a strict management plan for the area

Engagement process

Following the audit, Westminster City Council, Publica and NRP undertook a process of engagement with a broad cross section of residents, retailers, businesses, interest groups and landowners, and workshops with the Westminster Youth Council and workers from across the district, to bring into consideration the opinions and ideas of wider demographic groups in relation to future improvements.

Key themes emerging from the stakeholder engagement

- Commitment to change
- Street condition
- Accessibility
- Management
- Buses (routes, frequency, stopping places and dead-running)
- Make a place where people want to spend time
- Use space more effectively
- Flexibility to allow for change
- The evolution of retail and current challenges

Key issues and opportunities emerging from the stakeholder engagement

Public spaces

Improving the quality of the public realm and the pedestrian experience by de-cluttering streets, adding greenery, providing seating, and improving footways and crossings. While garden squares like Cavendish Square and Soho Square are well used, stakeholders feel they can be overcrowded and cluttered, and would benefit from improvements to revitalise, better manage and make them more attractive. Smaller side streets can offer quieter environments, resting places and cafes.

‘Need to create a desire to turn left or right [off Oxford Street]’

– *local worker*

Accessibility

Ensuring the district is safe and easy to move through for all users, regardless of age or ability. This includes improving footways and crossings, creating safer routes through the district for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-vehicular mobility, ensuring the district is well served by the bus network, and by increasing the legibility of the area through better wayfinding and signage.

Management

Tackling congestion to improve air quality, travel time and the quality of the environment; managing servicing, delivery and construction vehicles in a way that reduces congestion, pollution and disruption for all users. Many people commented on the need to better manage waste and street cleaning, to reduce ASB and the number of pedi-cabs, and to do more to help rough sleepers in the area.

A place where people want to spend time

Highlighting the strong historic character and the unique identities of Oxford Street and of the different neighbourhoods, providing a new cultural programme, public art and attractions, and improving the variety and quality of shops and amenities. Those engaged with commented on the importance of preserving the charm of London and the architecture, streetscape, passageways and institutions that define the district, while also adding cultural value to the area.

‘Oxford Street needs to be improved to bring families back’

– *retailer, Oxford Street*

‘You can order online, but you can’t experience theatre online’

– *local worker*

Flexibility

Using indoor and outdoor spaces flexibly to provide alternative uses to retail, including using meanwhile spaces during development, including8 spaces for exercise, reading, and creative uses. Those engaged with felt that alternative uses would attract people to the area, and could bring vitality to upper floors along Oxford Street, and offer activities after retail hours.

Youth Workshop

Westminster City Council and Publica facilitated a workshop with members of Westminster Youth Council to gain insight into the priorities of young people who live in Westminster and who frequently come to the Oxford Street District. The participants were positive about certain aspects of Oxford Street, for example, the distinct and varying characters of neighbourhoods like Soho, and cultural destinations like The Photographers’ Gallery. However, they felt that more could be done to attract and welcome different user groups to the district, including the provision of affordable entertainment and activities, cultural events, and welcoming public spaces for meeting and spending time with friends. They also mentioned the importance of improving wayfinding across the district, and the number of green spaces across the district was a revelation to many.

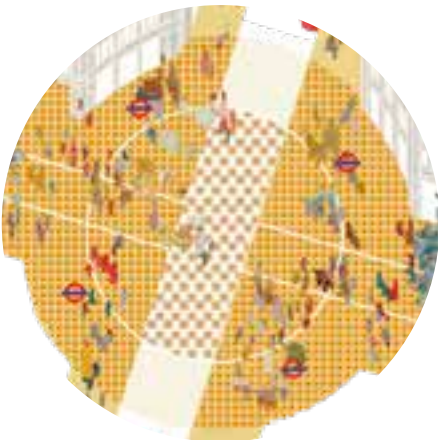
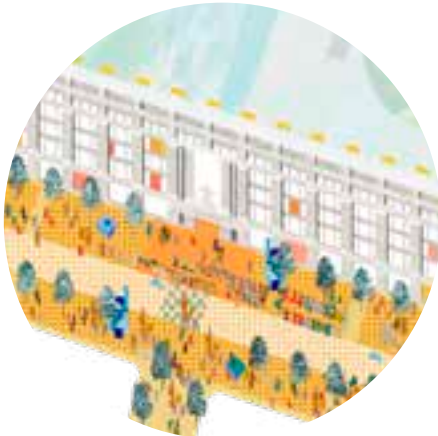
Introduction: approach to the district

Elements of the Place Strategy

The Place Strategy outlines the overarching principles for district-wide improvement. This has been developed into a holistic set of elements, listed below, that form a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to achieve the ambitions for the Oxford Street District.

- Mix of land uses
 - Streets and spaces
 - Proposed operational approach
 - Transport including;
 - Walking
 - Buses
 - Cycling
 - Air quality
 - Vehicle access
 - Road safety
 - Coaches
 - London taxis
 - General traffic
 - Goods vehicles, servicing and deliveries
 - Accessibility for all
- Management
 - Monitoring and evaluation
 - Wayfinding and legibility
 - Amenity
 - Play
 - Architectural quality
 - Materials
 - Lighting
 - Landscape
 - Culture and public art

The elements are described in detail within the Place Strategy chapter of this document on page 35



Introduction: approach to the district



Illustration of the proposed Oxford Street District

Current context

This chapter outlines the current context of the Oxford Street District, the issues that holistic improvements need to address and the great opportunities that will provide the foundation for change.

It includes highlights from an evidence base of studies that set out current conditions, from the historic evolution of the streets and spaces to the area’s diverse mix of uses, its economic vitality, transport and movement patterns and its character and identity.

Contents

Key challenges

Issues and opportunities

Existing public realm projects

Evidence base

- Policy context
- The evolution of Oxford Street
- Historic development
- Neighbourhoods
- Thresholds
- Mix of land uses
- Ground floor land use
- Ground floor retail
- Civic amenity and culture
- Economic context
- Movement
- Routes and connections
- Public realm and environment

Key challenges

Inadequate public realm

Poor quality public realm and limited amenities mean that the current pedestrian environment is no longer adequate or pleasant for residents and visitors to the district and connections between the street and its surroundings are often unclear. A good pedestrian environment is crucial to the ease with which visitors, residents and workers move through and enjoy the Oxford Street District.

Pedestrian congestion

Pedestrians using Oxford Street and parts of the surrounding district experience high levels of congestion and discomfort during some periods of the day. The street environment is cluttered and in some places constrained. It is anticipated that the number of pedestrians in the Oxford Street District will increase overall as a result of the new Elizabeth Line stations, with some areas experiencing very significant growth in pedestrian movement. If not addressed, the issues of pedestrian over crowding within the Oxford Street district will become more acute and this may lead to impacts on pedestrian safety.

Poor air quality

Oxford Street and the surrounding district is one of the most polluted areas in the UK. The majority of harmful emissions are released from road traffic. The current levels of traffic congestion, quantity of freight movements during busy periods of the day and high volumes of polluting diesel vehicles need to be addressed by a holistic programme of measures. Conditions in the future can be greatly improved by reducing the amount of traffic and ensuring that the remaining vehicles adopt low emission technology as rapidly as possible across the entire district.

Poor street environment blighted by an excessive number of vehicles

The excessive number of vehicles moving around and through the district contributes to poor air quality, road safety issues, traffic congestion and limits the space that can be provided to pedestrians and the public realm, however the presence of stationary vehicles is also a challenge. The streets around Oxford Street are very heavily utilised by waiting and parked vehicles, detracting from the quality of the public realm. Many of the vehicles have an important purpose but the most convenient location for them to stop is often where it causes the greatest impact, blocking sight-lines, causing obstructions, making crossing movements more difficult and dangerous, and dominating the street environment.

Poor road safety

The issue of road safety is of critical concern for the Oxford Street District project. With the expected increase in pedestrians as a consequence of the Elizabeth Line, it is critical that the road safety issues on Oxford Street and throughout the district are addressed as part of the Oxford Street District project.

Evolving retail trends and global competition

In an age of online shopping, high street retail is increasingly moving away from traditional commerce, towards an approach that includes leisure, entertainment and experience. In addition, Oxford Street’s competitors – both within London and further afield – are providing attractive shopping destinations. Oxford Street should thrive as part of a diverse district, integrated into the wider West End, to build upon a unique mix of retail, workspace, homes, culture and leisure, delivering economic growth and responding to the rapid evolution of retail and working life.

Issues



Overcrowded station entrances and exits



Narrow, cluttered footways on Oxford Street with high pedestrian flows



Inadequate places to rest



Impact of bus layover and dead-running on the district's streets



Evening life and uses on Oxford Street are limited



Undervalued and underwhelming spaces

Opportunities



Beautiful garden squares



Character and identity of one of London's great streets



Internationally renowned high street with world leading and innovative retailers



Extraordinary architectural settings and heritage



Popularity of existing public and playable spaces



Fine network of neighbourhood streets

Existing public realm projects

Considerable development within the Oxford Street District is currently underway, including major public realm improvements associated with the Elizabeth Line.

Major improvements to Bond Street are due to be completed imminently. The Elizabeth Line at Bond Street in Hanover Square is the location of a major new station a street block back from Oxford Street. Public realm improvements in Hanover Square by Westminster City Council are currently at detailed design stage. The project encompasses all aspects of operation and layout of the square, with a new design that responds to the historic significance of the square and its gardens.

The map on p.19 shows the extent of major public realm projects recently completed, under construction and planned across the district.



Concept design sketch of Hanover Square



Sutton Row public realm, Soho Place



Baker Street two-way is currently under construction



Bond Street public realm improvements

Existing major public realm projects



PROJECTS AT DESIGN STAGE

- 11 Conduit Street
- 12 Sutton Row
- 13 St. George Street
- 14 Riding House Street
- 15 Berners Street
- 16 Princes Street

PROJECTS IN CONSTRUCTION

- 20 Baker Street two-way
- 21 Wigmore Street (east)
- 22 Davies Street Elizabeth Line station
- 23 Dean Street Elizabeth Line station
- 24 West End Project (L.B. Camden)
- 25 Centrepont Plaza (L.B. Camden)

- 26 1 Oxford Street public realm
- 27 Hanover Square and gardens
- 28 Tenterden Street
- 29 Harewood Place
- 30 West side of Grosvenor Square
- 31 Marble Arch Place

RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS
(WITHIN THREE YEARS)

- 30 Grosvenor Hill
- 31 Rathbone Place
- 32 Cambridge Circus
- 33 Tottenham Court Road Elizabeth Line station
- 34 Bond Street

- 35 Brook Street
- 36 Savile Row
- 37 Duke Street (north)
- 38 Marylebone Lane (north)
- 39 Marylebone Lane (south)

- 310 Glasshouse Street
- 311 Berwick Street
- 312 Old Quebec Street

Evidence base: policy context

Westminster City Plan – City Plan update 2018

The City Plan is undergoing a refresh. We consulted on a new draft Plan in November to December 2018.

The new draft plan aims to enable our high streets to adapt to changing circumstances and to thrive in the future. The new policy includes a change in approach to how we manage our high streets and would aim to create a lot more flexibility for change of use in response to the changing nature of retailing. It will seek to make our high streets a destination for leisure and entertainment as well as shopping, whilst still maintaining the retail focus of the area. This will help our shopping centres to face the unprecedented challenges posed by online retailing, falling sales figures and customer expectations for exciting destinations and experiences. Oxford Street is an international shopping centre and expectations for the quality and range of retail and entertainment offers are that they should be world class. The new draft City Plan will help to deliver this.

Soho is a unique area within the wider West End and therefore we are determined to enhance it. We have worked closely with the Soho Society and Soho Neighbourhood Forum to identify the issues and root causes of the unwelcome changes we are seeing in Soho. The new City Plan includes a draft policy to address some of these – for example workspace for small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) particularly in the creative sector, housing that meets the needs of those working in the area, restricting the size of new hotels and a diversity of leisure and evening / night time venues. The draft policy also aims to conserve and improve the existing green spaces in Soho.

The consultation on the City Plan attracted a large number of responses giving a wide range of views on the suite of new draft policies. These consultation responses are being analysed and the policies amended accordingly before a second round of formal consultation takes place. Relevant policies are noted as follows:

City Plan 2019 – 2040 Draft policies: <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/cityplan2040>

Westminster City Plan (adopted 2016): <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/westminsters-city-plan-strategic-policies> and <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/unitary-development-plan-udp>

London Plan (2016): <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan>

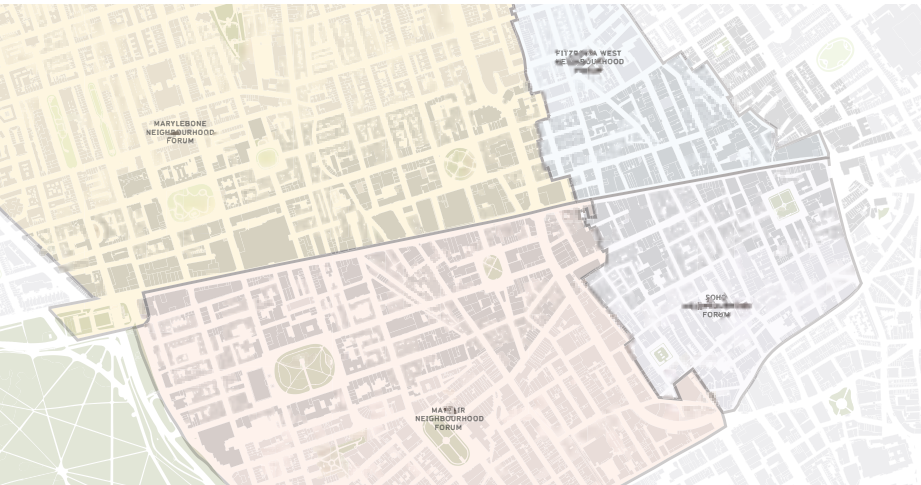
See appendix for details of existing and adopted Westminster and Greater London Authority policy and guidance.



Evidence base: policy context

Neighbourhood forums

Neighbourhood plans are sets of planning policies developed by local communities, through neighbourhood forums. They set out a positive vision for the development of a particular neighbourhood, based on the knowledge and priorities of people who live and work there. When completed and agreed upon by the residents, businesses, and the local authority, they are used to determine planning applications within the neighbourhood plan area. A number of neighbourhood plans are being developed across the Oxford Street District, and once complete, these may have a bearing on planning decisions in the area.



Neighbourhood forums in the study area

Soho Neighbourhood Forum

Soho Neighbourhood Forum is a business and residential neighbourhood forum, designated in 2014. In 2016 and 2017, the forum conducted stakeholder surveys and questionnaires to help identify key environmental issues to inform the development of aspirations and recommendations in their emerging neighbourhood plan. Emerging aspirations include to:

- Protect Soho’s unique historic and cultural offer
- Safeguard the fine-grained built character
- Promote recycling and reduce waste
- Improve air quality
- Protect entertainment venues
- Balance the evening and night time economy with the needs of residents
- Reduce traffic congestion and vehicle volumes
- Support greening opportunities
- Ease movement for pedestrians
- Improve general amenity for workers, visitors and residents

The Soho Neighbourhood Forum has also commissioned a number of studies to support its neighbourhood plan, which is in development.

Source: Soho Neighbourhood Forum (2017) Aspirations for Soho: Report on 2017 public engagement. Available at <https://planforsoho.org/>

Marylebone Neighbourhood Forum

The Marylebone Neighbourhood Forum has been working since 2015 towards the development of a neighbourhood plan and includes businesses, residents, and representatives from medical and educational sectors, and churches. In July 2017 the forum announced that the development of its neighbourhood plan would be paused pending the publication of the new Westminster City Plan in 2018. Its key areas of focus are:

- Design and conservation
- Special policy areas
- Lifetime neighbourhood
- Parking
- The public realm and transport

Source: Marylebone Neighbourhood Forum <http://www.maryleboneforum.org/news/marylebone-forum-on-hold-pending-new-city-plan>

Draft Mayfair Neighbourhood Plan

Mayfair’s draft Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by the Mayfair Neighbourhood Forum, a business and residential forum, and is currently under examination by Westminster City Council. Mayfair’s draft Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2038 includes the following principles relevant to the improvement of public realm local to the Oxford Street district:

- MPR1 advocates improvements to Mayfair’s streets, including, where appropriate, creating: ‘additional space for pedestrians; attractive streetscapes; multifunctional streetscapes; accessible and safe streetscapes; improved walking infrastructure.’
- MPR1 also suggests: ‘Enhance and improve pedestrian routes around public transport interchanges, in particular pedestrian access to the Elizabeth Line Bond Street station entrance’ and ‘Improve pedestrian comfort levels on the most congested pavements: Oxford Street from Marble Arch to Oxford Circus ... Regent Street East footway (between Great Marlborough Street and Glasshouse Street) ... Princes Street and Hanover Square ...’
- MGS2 supports ‘Enhancements to the public realm around Mayfair’s green spaces, where those enhancements result in improved accessibility and usability of the green spaces.’
- MR3 encourages the creation of ‘Oasis Areas’ which ‘support the retail frontages through the provision of areas to relax, sit and, where appropriate, and subject to amenity considerations, to eat and drink’, including at Princes Street.

Source: Mayfair Neighbourhood Forum (2018) Mayfair Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2038. Available at <https://www.mayfairforum.org>

Draft Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Plan

The Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Forum (Fitzrovia West) was designated in 2015 and has representation from both local residents and businesses. The draft plan sets out the following priorities: liveable neighbourhood; nurturing young and independent businesses; urban realm; environment.

Following consultation, it was agreed that the policies to concentrate on were:

- Reducing pollution

- Improving green space
- Better rubbish collection and storage
- Improved walking and cycling

The following draft policies and ambitions relate to the public realm:

- ‘promote walking, cycling and use of public transport throughout the neighbourhood area, and in particular, to reduce generation of road traffic and help reduce both air and noise pollution.’
- ‘... promote the use of zero carbon movement through the area by walking, cycling and electric vehicles.’
- ‘... any new development ... should ensure that pedestrian priority and safety is paramount.’

The diagram below illustrates the plan’s three areas of change:

- Oxford Street Hinterland: to be made more attractive for smaller shops, cafés and services to support Oxford Street, with a re-landscaped al fresco eating quarter, centred on Market Place
- Great Titchfield Street / Mortimer Street: improving local shopping and local facilities, independent businesses showrooms and cafés, and enhancing walking routes.
- Great Portland Street: re-attaching the historic Great Portland Street Underground Station to its surroundings, increasing greening, and improving Holcroft Court.

Source: Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Forum (2017) FitzWest Plan. Available at <http://fitzwest.org/wordpress/draft-plan/>



Fitzwest Strategy Diagram
Source: Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Forum Vision

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ■ Great Portland Street | ■ Oxford Street |
| ■ Improvement zone | ■ Hinterland pedestrianisation |
| ■ Great Titchfield | ■ TfL proposed cycle routes |
| ■ Mortimer Street zone | ■ Fitzwest boundary |
| ■ Preferred pedestrian street | |

Evidence base: the evolution of Oxford Street

The forthcoming study of Oxford Street by the Survey of London clearly defines the evolution of Oxford Street, examining ‘how it was that Oxford Street became the most continuously prosperous shopping street not just in London but, arguably, anywhere.’ The survey begins by laying out the basis for understanding its development over time:

‘Three stages in the road’s evolution can be identified. It started out from Roman times as just one section of a major road in and out of London. Then in the eighteenth century it became the boundary between wealthy parishes and communities that had grown up on the western fringes of London. Finally from the 1830s onwards it began to take advantage of the various means of long-distance access to its shops, by bus, cab, and underground train.’

Excerpts from this study which have been kindly shared by its author, and the previously published Survey of London: South-East Marylebone: Volumes 51 & 52 (2017), supported by other sources, form the basis of this interpretative description of the development of Oxford Street and its surrounding district. Publica’s role has been to study the research and present, very much in outline, its most pertinent findings as regards this strategy.

Early Settlement

Oxford Street originally formed part of the east-west route out of the Roman port city of Londinium, crossing the River Tyburn, and passing above the lower, marshier, terrain which would become Mayfair. During the following centuries the road remained in use as a trade route, linking disparate settlements including the Saxon settlement of Lundenwic, west of the Roman city, the settlement of Thorney Island where the Tyburn River met the Thames and St Giles, further east, which established the eastern termination of Oxford Street at Tottenham Court Road.

Urbanisation and the Estates

The Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536 initiated a radical shift in land ownership, and Oxford Street and its surroundings became bordered by newly Crown-owned grounds. By 1637 land originally belonging to Westminster Abbey had become the royal hunting ground known as Hyde Park and Regents Park and Soho Fields had become royal parks. Oxford Street itself formed ‘a peppering of ribbon development – brick fields, taverns, animal pounds and the like – relieved by occasional elm trees’.

During the following centuries much of the royal land was sold to members of the aristocracy: ownership of Soho was ceded to Henry Jermyn, first Earl of St Albans during the 1660s and the freehold of most of Soho Fields was granted to the first Earl of Portland in 1698. Oxford Street became a boundary between areas of estate development. The first stage of development began in Soho, extending towards the present south section of Regent Street. In 1704 Great Marlborough Street was formed on part of Millfield close. A little later development extended north of Oxford Street. In 1716 Rathbone Place, an extension of Soho Street, would become the first speculative street development north of Oxford Street.

Those areas which were dominated by one or two landowners tended to be developed with strong grid patterns and fashionable residential squares: Hanover Square developed from 1713 by the 1st Earl of Scarborough, followed by Cavendish Square which was first laid out in 1717 as the first development on the 2nd Earl of Oxford’s London Estate and, to the west end of the district, Sir Richard Grosvenor’s Grosvenor Square, believed to have been laid out in 1721. By contrast, areas such as Fitzrovia, which developed in a more piecemeal fashion, have a city grain of small and irregular streets.

The Crown’s grand gesture

In 1810 John Nash, architect to the Crown, put forward proposals for a grand ceremonial route from St James’s in the south to Regent’s Park in the north inspired by the boulevards which had started to appear in other European cities. The original designs for a wide, straight street were altered to preserve the gardens of the grand residential houses on the east side of Cavendish Square with Langham Place as a linking device and All Souls’ Church as its centrepiece. In 1816, worried about escalating costs, the treasury tried to omit Oxford Circus from the plans but: ‘Nash with his sense of tactics saw the circus as a key to the great enterprise’s success and defended it doughtily.’ The circus was, however, considerably reduced in size prompting Nash to declare in 1821 that, ‘the whole has a neglected appearance highly detrimental to the undertaking.’ The project was eventually completed in 1825.

Reconstruction of Regent Street was planned from 1898 with ‘no desire on the Crown’s part to retain the Nash ensemble’. A limited competition for the circus redesign was won by George Tanner Jr. with a French-style submission. The south west and east of the Circus were rebuilt in 1911, and the north west and east after the first world war in 1920 – 23. The headquarters of the BBC, Broadcasting House, was built in 1932. The last major changes to the built fabric in Oxford Circus and the surrounding area followed the war time bomb damage which, in many cases, allowed for comprehensive redevelopment of an entire urban block.

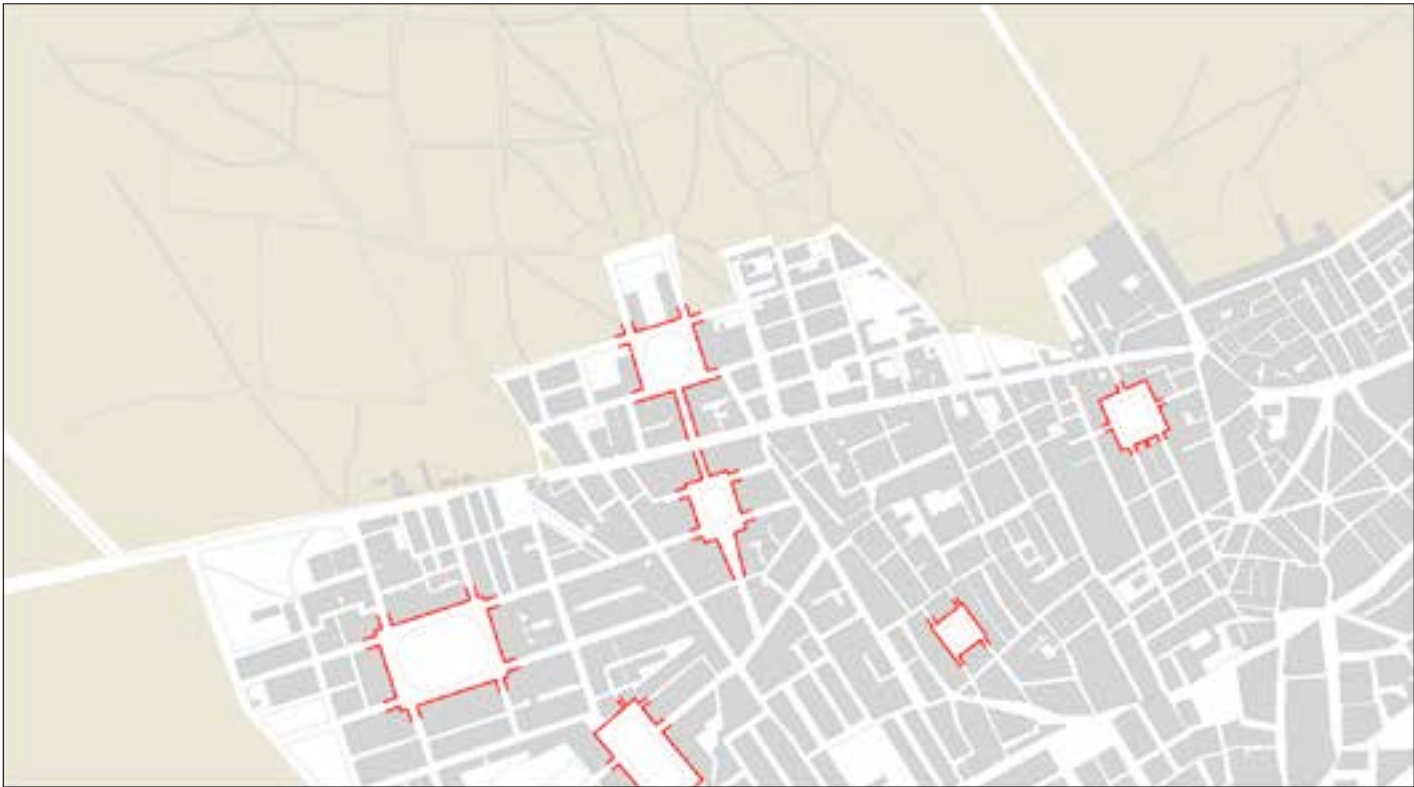
The commercial life of the street

From the 1770s Oxford Street started to become home to London’s most fashionable shops with small enterprises growing out of the workshops and homes to the east of Oxford Circus. The 1800s saw the opening of a number of covered bazaars, arcades, shopping and entertainment centres influenced by those in Paris including the Soho Bazaar, which opened in 1816 and the Crystal Palace Bazaar which opened behind Oxford Circus in 1858. From the 1830s, the advent of cabs and omnibuses made these attractions easily accessible and a ‘monster’ cab stand was reported to stretch from Rathbone Place to Oxford Circus. With the arrival of the London Underground ‘Oxford Street was allotted no less than four stations, closer to one another than elsewhere on the railway in view of its commercial value – Marble Arch, Bond Street, Oxford Circus, and Tottenham Court Road.’ Department stores emerged from the 1870s starting with Marshall and Snelgrove on Vere Street. A flourishing music scene – including the 100 Club, established as a jazz venue in 1942, cemented Oxford Street’s reputation as a prime destination for a good day – or evening – out.

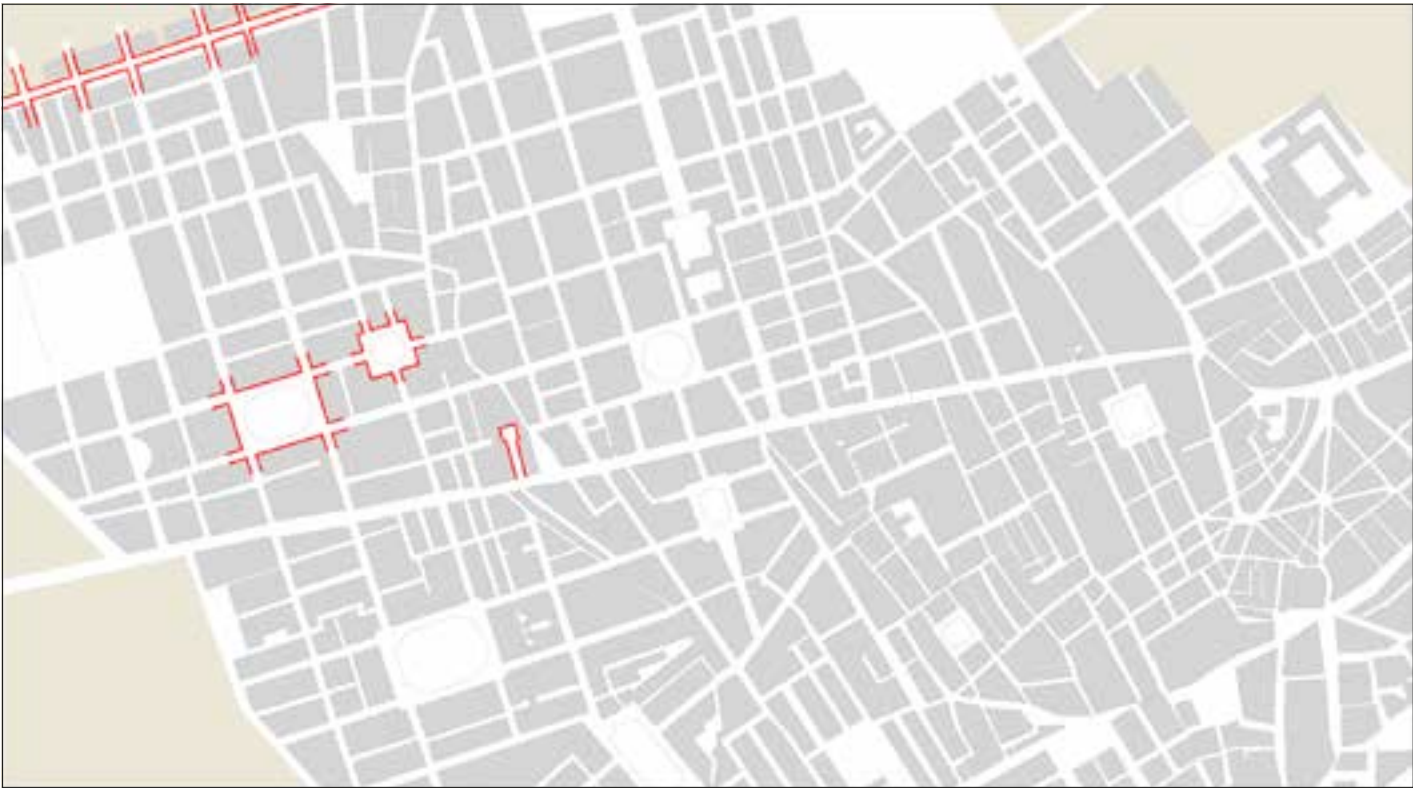
Evidence base: historical development



Oxford Street formed part of the westward road from the Roman city. A western Saxon settlement allowed it to retain significance



1746: The urbanisation of the West End began south of Oxford Street



1790: By the late 18th Century most of the district had been developed



1894: The creation of Regent Street introduced a new centrepiece – Oxford Circus

Evidence base: neighbourhoods

Oxford Street is located at the heart of a number of distinctive character areas, unique to London and to the West End. Many of these areas are historic neighbourhoods, and have been shaped by the local policy context as well as their physical and social development.

The areas are distinguished by their land use (and their mix), architectural heritage, urban grain, and the nature of the public realm.



St. Giles-in-the-Fields church, St. Giles



Berwick Street, Soho



Charlotte Street and Rathbone Place, Fitzrovia



Carnaby Street



Regent Street



Marylebone Lane, Marylebone



South Audley Street, Mayfair



Portman Village, Portman Estate



Great Cumberland Place, Marble Arch

Evidence base: thresholds

There are significant transitional spaces or thresholds that signify a change of character between Oxford Street and the neighbouring areas. These transitions are particularly clear between Oxford Street and Soho to the south side of the street. This threshold and change of character is often defined by a change in the use, scale and grain of the buildings; as in the case of Berwick Street in Soho, where there is distinct change to a finer architectural grain and change in use from high street retail to specialist shops, cafés and restaurants and local shops such as hairdressers. Towards the west, the department stores have larger ground floor footprints extending the threshold between Oxford Street and the character areas of Mayfair and Marylebone.



Fitzrovia is separated from Oxford Street by stretches of inactive frontage, yet is visible from the street itself



There is a dramatic level change between Oxford Street and Ramillies Street (towards Carnaby Street and Soho)



At the junction with Park Street the Edwardian red brick mansion blocks of Mayfair are visible south of Oxford street



To the north of Oxford Street, the large floorplates have extended the threshold between Oxford Street and adjacent neighbourhoods

Evidence base: mix of land uses

The Oxford Street District is an intensely used mixed-use neighbourhood. Oxford Street itself is the retail spine of London’s West End, with department stores, flagship and high street retailers predominantly occupying the ground floor. Other key retail areas within the district include the smaller, often specialist shops of Soho and Fitzrovia, as well as the luxury shopping streets of Bond Street and Mount Street.

Larger retailers, particularly the flagship stores, have recently started to include a variety of additional uses nested within their stores. For example, Topshop’s flagship includes a café and hair and beauty salons, Nike Town organises a running club, and Lush is home to a spa and ‘hair lab’. At the eastern end, planned developments and associated short leases allowed many retailers that would not otherwise be able to afford rents in the area to establish themselves on the street.

Commercial ground-floor offices tend to be clustered, for example along Brook Street and Wigmore Street, on Rathbone Place and through Soho. With 1,130 jobs per hectare, the Oxford Street area has relatively high levels of employment density, second only to Soho (1,395 jobs per ha)*. Areas with a large number of offices tend to become quieter around 6pm as workers leave the area, with pubs and restaurants in the area becoming busier around that time. Publicly accessible green spaces usually close at dusk, thus are open longer into the evening in the summer months.

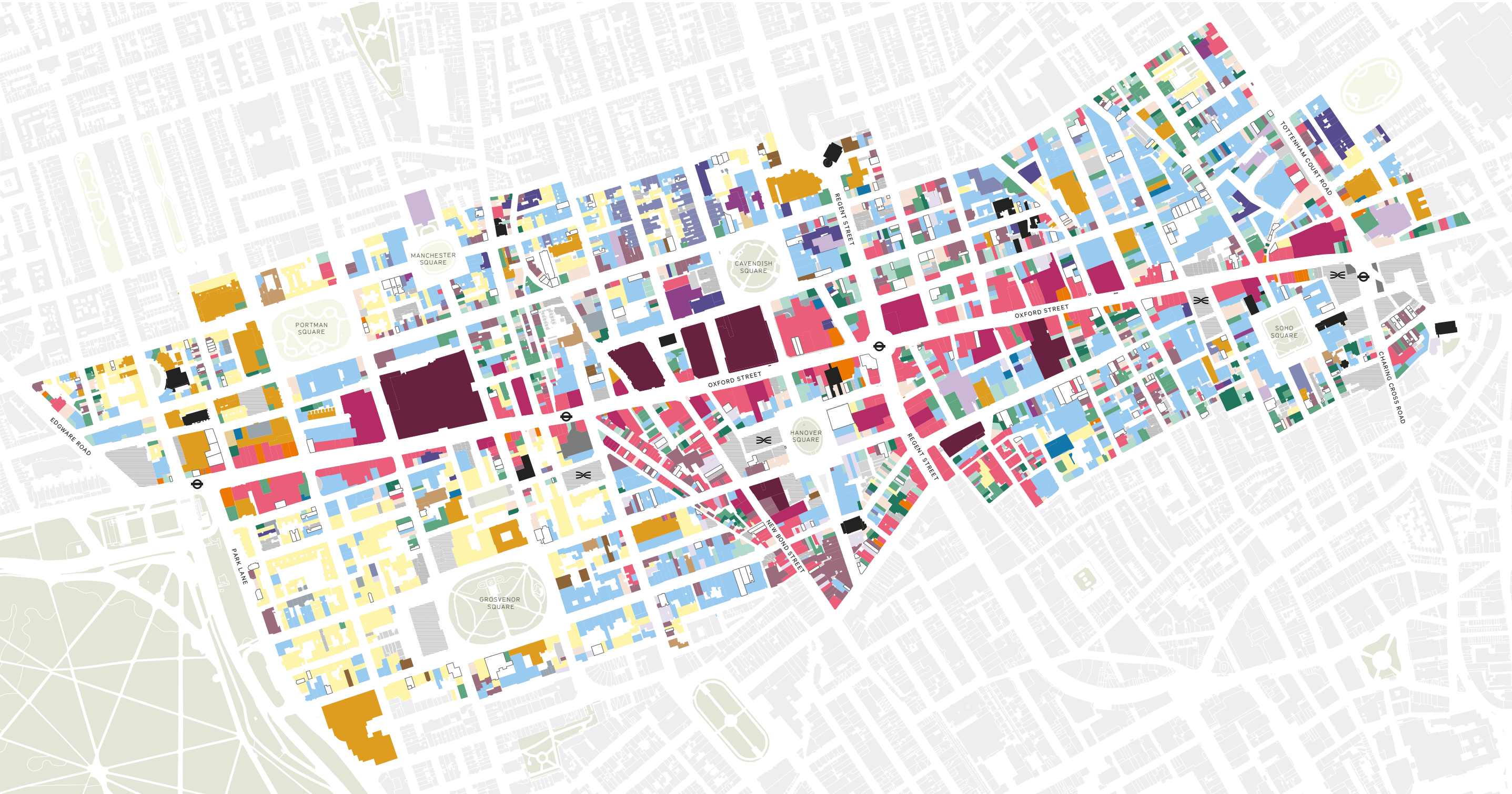
For all four stations within the Oxford Street District, the PM peak is the busiest period of the day, with the PM peak being between 35% and 65% busier than the AM peak period, in contrast to the pattern across the entire London network, which on average experiences only a 5% increase in use in the PM peak period compared to the AM peak. The reason for this is likely because of Oxford Street District’s importance both as a major employment location – to and from which workers travel during the peak periods – and as a leading leisure and tourism destination, to which shoppers and tourists tend to arrive and leave at different times throughout the day, including during the PM peak period. This means that the transport capacity is being thoroughly utilised in serving the area throughout the whole day.

Fitzrovia and Soho have a variety of places to eat, drink and socialise, and provide much of the activity within the area during the evening. However, the life of these areas is highly influenced by licensing policy. Pubs in Fitzrovia tend to close at midnight, whereas many of Soho’s bars and venues remain open much later. Oxford Street itself has a scarcity of restaurants, bars and cafés, with the majority located in clusters within areas to the north and south of the street. These include St. Christopher’s Place, Market Place, Rathbone Place, Great Marlborough Street, Carnaby Street and Soho. Hotels are located throughout the area, with a clear cluster towards the western end of Oxford Street, around Marble Arch.

Oxford Street has a history of spectacle, and entertainment, theatres, concert halls and pubs once lined the streets. Forms of entertainment can still be found along the street and within the wider area, and a number of temporary uses and events take place in the area, many of which are seasonal or linked to city-wide events. Oxford Street, Oxford Circus or Regent Street are occasionally closed to traffic for a specific show or event, such as the 2016 and 2018 Lumière light festivals and the annual Christmas light switch-on.

**Source: Volterra (2018) Oxford Street District: An Economic Assessment*

Evidence base: ground floor land use



Map of ground floor use from survey August 2018

- RETAIL**

 - Department store
 - High street retail
 - Flagship
 - Specialist
 - Tourist
 - Local
- CAFÉS, BARS AND RESTAURANTS**

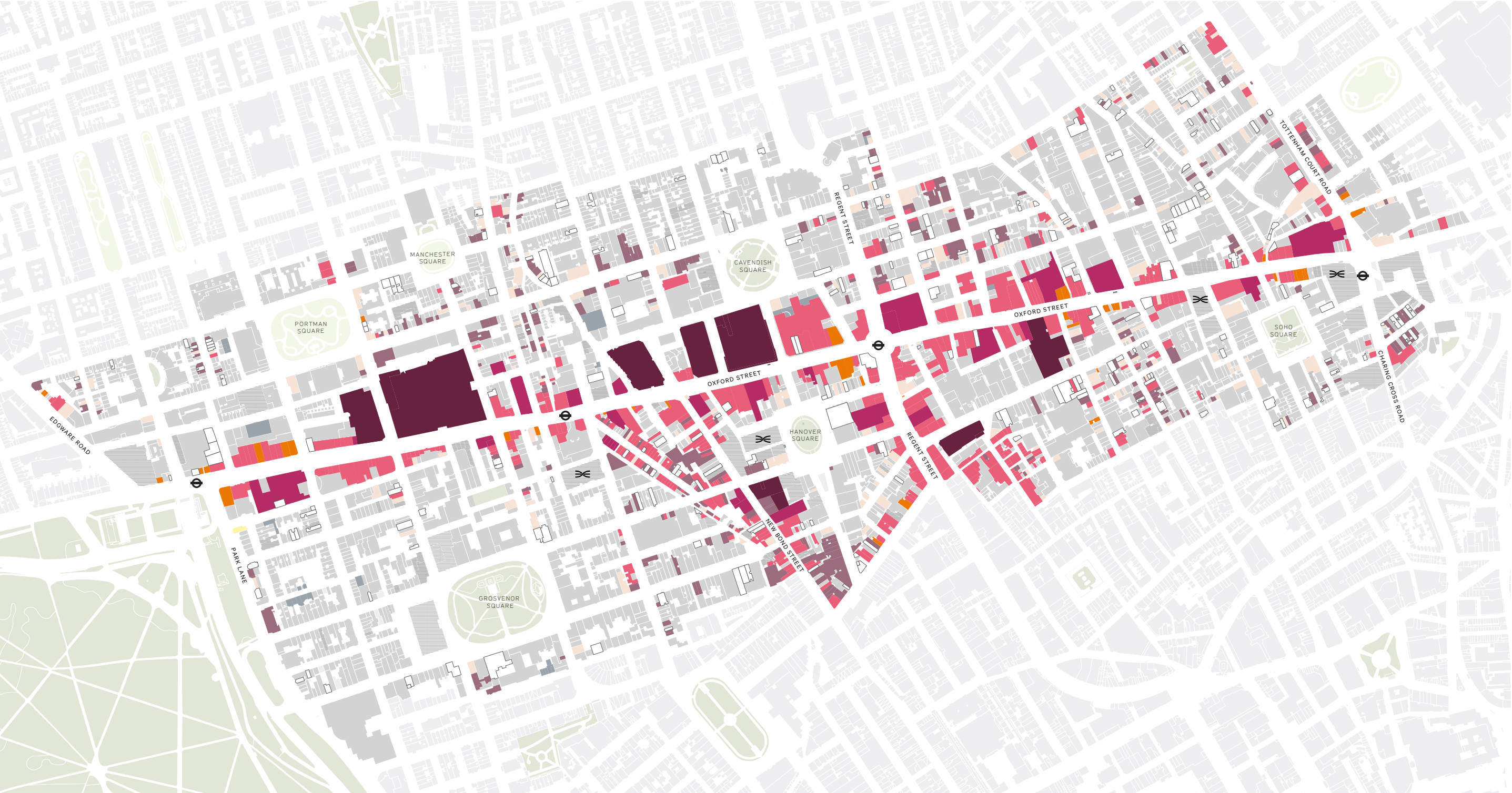
 - Pub / bar
 - Restaurant
 - Café / takeaway
 - Commercial
- RESIDENTIAL**

 - Hotel
 - Residential
- CIVIC AMENITY AND CULTURE**

 - Embassy / high commission
 - Private members' club
 - Events / venue / casino
 - Theatre / museum
 - Art gallery
 - Institution
- OTHER**

 - Education
 - Health
 - Fitness / leisure
 - Religious
 - Car park
 - Vacant
 - Under construction
 - Transport

Evidence base: ground floor retail



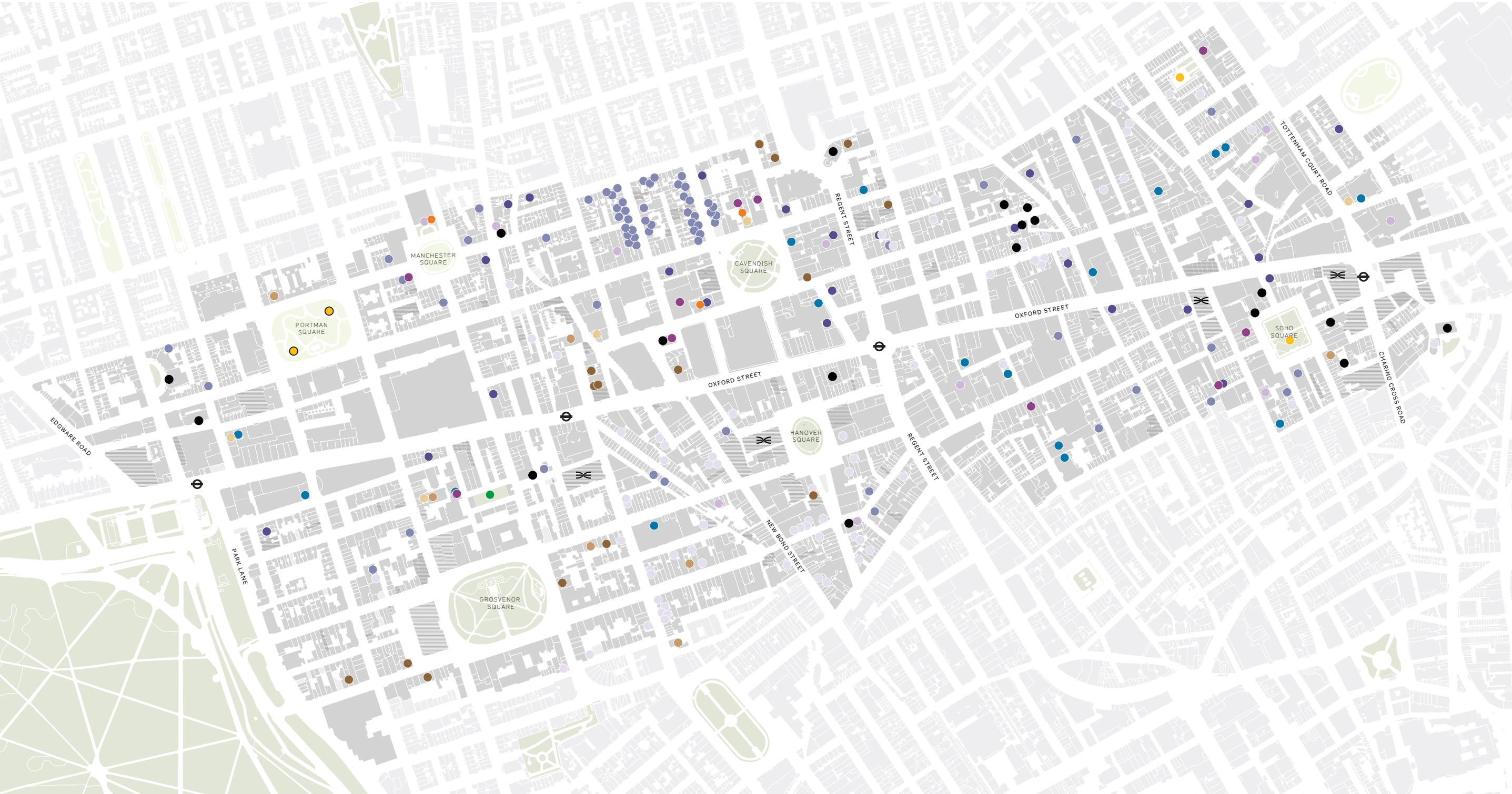
Map of ground floor retail from survey August 2018

- RETAIL**

 - Department store
 - High street retail
 - Flagship
 - Specialist
 - Tourist
 - Local
- OTHER**

 - Car park
 - Vacant
 - Under construction
 - Focus area

Evidence base: civic amenity and culture



Map of civic amenity and culture from survey August 2018

- Embassy / high commission
- Private members' club
- Events / venue / casino
- Theatre / museum
- Art gallery
- Institution
- Education
- Health
- Fitness / Leisure
- Religious
- Market
- Play
- Library
- Focus area

Evidence base: economic context

Although the Oxford Street District only accounts for 8% of the land area in Westminster, it accommodates 21% of Westminster’s total employment. This is estimated to total 155,000 jobs.

The Oxford Street District has an employment density of 1,130 jobs per ha; this is significantly higher than averages across both the West End and Westminster.

If the Oxford Street District is able to accommodate even more growth than it has in the past, it could generate between 1,600 and 7,200 new jobs each year across the district. Estimates are wide-ranging due to a multitude of variables that could be used to hypothesise this scenario; for example the impact of the Elizabeth Line, or continued changes to the nature of retail.

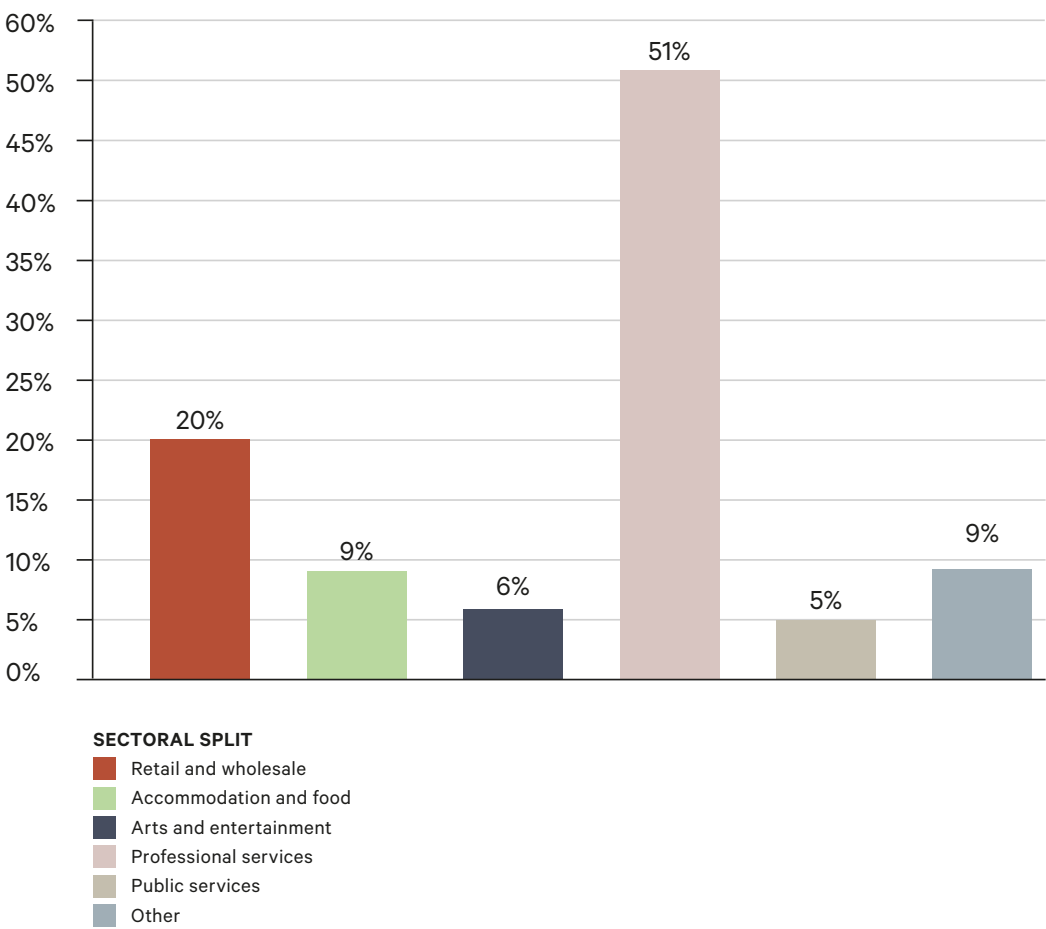
The West End is a world class shopping destination; the West End area was ranked second (behind New York) in the 2016 Global Retail City Destination Index Ranking. Around 600,000 people visit Oxford Street every day. Of this, approximately 30% of visitors to Oxford Street and Regent Street are international. It is estimated that the International Shopping Centre of Oxford Street, Regent Street and Bond Street together generate approximately £9.1bn in annual sales.

The Oxford Street District is currently home to a diverse range of employment with Professional Services the largest sector in the district, with 51% of total employment. Retail & Wholesale makes up 20% of employment, although this proportion is 33% in the inner Oxford Street District, comprising Oxford Street and its immediate side streets. The remaining jobs are in Accommodation & Food (8%), Public Admin, Education & Health (6%), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (5%) and ‘Other’ (8%).

The Retail & Wholesale sector has experienced a decline of between 8-12% over the past five years. This means that the proportion of employment accounted for by Retail & Wholesale in the Oxford Street District area has fallen by 4%. The Professional Services sector, by contrast, has experienced strong growth of 7-8% in the Oxford Street District and dominates the district outside of the Primary Shopping Frontage of Oxford Street itself.

Source: Volterra (2018) Oxford Street District: An Economic Assessment

Breakdown of employment by sector in the Oxford Street District area



Source: ONS, 2016, The Census; Volterra Report, 2018

Evidence base: movement

The Oxford Street District is served by four underground stations – Marble Arch, Bond Street, Oxford Circus and Tottenham Court Road – giving access to five different tube lines. The arrival of the Elizabeth Line serving Bond Street and Tottenham Court Road will increase the number of stations to six, further increasing the connectivity of the area.

Oxford Circus is one of the busiest stations in London (fourth in 2016), with the highest number of entry and exits per year among all stations with no mainline interchange. Bond Street and Tottenham Court Road also experience large volumes of passengers passing through them each year, with both ranked among the 15 busiest in London in 2016. For all four stations within the district, the PM peak is the busiest period of the day at 35% and 65% busier than the AM peak period, in contrast to the pattern across the entire London network, which experiences only a 5% increase in use in the PM period compared to the AM period.

After the shops close at night, Oxford Street changes from being a retail hub to primarily facilitating transport to night time activity concentrated within Soho and Fitzrovia. Night buses bring life to Oxford Street, which can improve the sense of safety for visitors late at night when the street can feel very empty.

The buildings surrounding Oxford Circus were designed as a symmetrical set piece that defines the edge of the circus to create a grand, recognisable landmark when emerging from the underground. However, limited signage means people find it difficult to orientate themselves between north, south, east and west.

The footways vary along the length of Oxford Street, and are intensively used during retail opening hours, with a peak in the afternoon, and improved footway capacity would benefit visitors, residents and workers in the district. The accident record for Oxford Street is concerning, with one pedestrian involved in a fatal collision with a vehicle each year on average.

A good pedestrian environment is crucial to the ease with which residents, visitors, and workers move through the Oxford Street District. The health and environmental benefits of walking and cycling are promoted in Westminster City Council’s Walking Strategy (2017) and the Mayor’s Transport Strategy (2018), which includes the Healthy Streets agenda. Both documents emphasise the importance of improving streets and the public realm to encourage the use of active travel for all.

Public realm improvements are underway as part of a large number of development schemes in the area, particularly around the redeveloped Tottenham Court Road station. The exits of the Elizabeth Line stations are located on side streets one or two blocks back from Oxford Street. This will increase pedestrian flow in these areas.

Commuter coaches currently travel along Oxford Street at its western end, approaching northbound from Park Lane and southbound from Baker Street. Meanwhile, sightseeing buses tend to circle Marble Arch and travel north along Park Lane.

Source: Volterra (2018) Oxford Street District: An Economic Assessment

Evidence base: movement

Passenger demand forecast for stations on Oxford Street (March 2018)

Bond Street

London Underground Elizabeth, Central and Jubilee lines

	AM Station entrances/exits	IP Station entrances/exits	PM Station entrances/exits	ALL DAY Station entrances/exits	ANNUAL Station entrances/exits (millions)
Stage 2: 2018	23,300	42,400	39,700	124,600	39.7
Stage 3: 2018	30,700	44,600	48,500	146,100	46.6
Stage 4: 2019	36,900	50,300	56,600	169,800	54.1
Stage 5: 2021	40,000	64,300	61,700	196,000	62.5
Stage 5: 2026	41,500	66,800	63,700	203,200	64.8
Stage 5: 2031	42,700	69,300	65,600	209,700	66.8

Note: Forecasts assume a full years operation for each phase and have not been adjusted to reflect the planned length of each phase.

Bond Street is expected to show a significant increase in demand following the introduction of the Elizabeth line. This is despite the abstraction of demand from other LU lines (Central and Jubilee lines). Total station demand is forecast to increase by 57 percent between 2018 (prior to Elizabeth line opening) and 2021.

Tottenham Court Road

London Underground Elizabeth, Central and Northern lines

	AM Station entrances/exits	IP Station entrances/exits	PM Station entrances/exits	ALL DAY Station entrances/exits	ANNUAL Station entrances/exits (millions)
Stage 2: 2018	21,200	37,800	35,400	117,400	37.6
Stage 3: 2018	32,300	42,700	54,400	161,000	51.5
Stage 4: 2019	39,400	48,400	66,400	191,800	61.3
Stage 5: 2021	41,500	59,300	70,100	212,600	68
Stage 5: 2026	42,800	62,200	72,100	220,300	70.5
Stage 5: 2031	44,000	65,100	74,100	227,800	72.9

Note: Forecasts assume a full years operation for each phase and have not been adjusted to reflect the planned length of each phase.

Tottenham Court Road is served by the Northern line which also sees some demand generation from interchange with the Elizabeth line. Total station demand is forecast to increase by 81 percent between 2018 (prior to Elizabeth line opening) and 2021.

Marble Arch

London Underground Central line

	AM Station entrances/exits	IP Station entrances/exits	PM Station entrances/exits	ALL DAY Station entrances/exits	ANNUAL Station entrances/exits (millions)
Stage 2: 2018	9,200	16,800	15,400	50,500	17.4
Stage 3: 2018	8,500	16,600	14,800	48,400	16.7
Stage 4: 2019	8,100	16,300	13,900	46,700	16.1
Stage 5: 2021	8,100	15,800	13,600	45,700	15.8
Stage 5: 2026	8,000	16,200	13,500	46,000	15.8
Stage 5: 2031	8,100	16,600	13,600	46,700	16.1

Demand at Marble Arch station is forecast to decrease by 7 percent between 2018 and 2031.

Oxford Circus

London Underground Bakerloo, Central and Victoria lines

	AM Station entrances/exits	IP Station entrances/exits	PM Station entrances/exits	ALL DAY Station entrances/exits	ANNUAL Station entrances/exits (millions)
Stage 2: 2018	55,000	91,500	82,300	274,500	87.6
Stage 3: 2018	57,200	89,900	78,100	264,100	84.3
Stage 4: 2019	51,400	89,700	76,900	261,400	83.4
Stage 5: 2021	54,900	91,300	81,000	272,500	87
Stage 5: 2026	56,700	95,400	83,300	283,300	90.1
Stage 5: 2031	58,200	99,200	85,400	291,200	93

A short-term 5 percent demand decrease in daily demand by 2019 is forecast for Oxford Circus. By 2026 Oxford Circus demand growth resumes, reaching a 6% demand increase from 2018 in 2031.

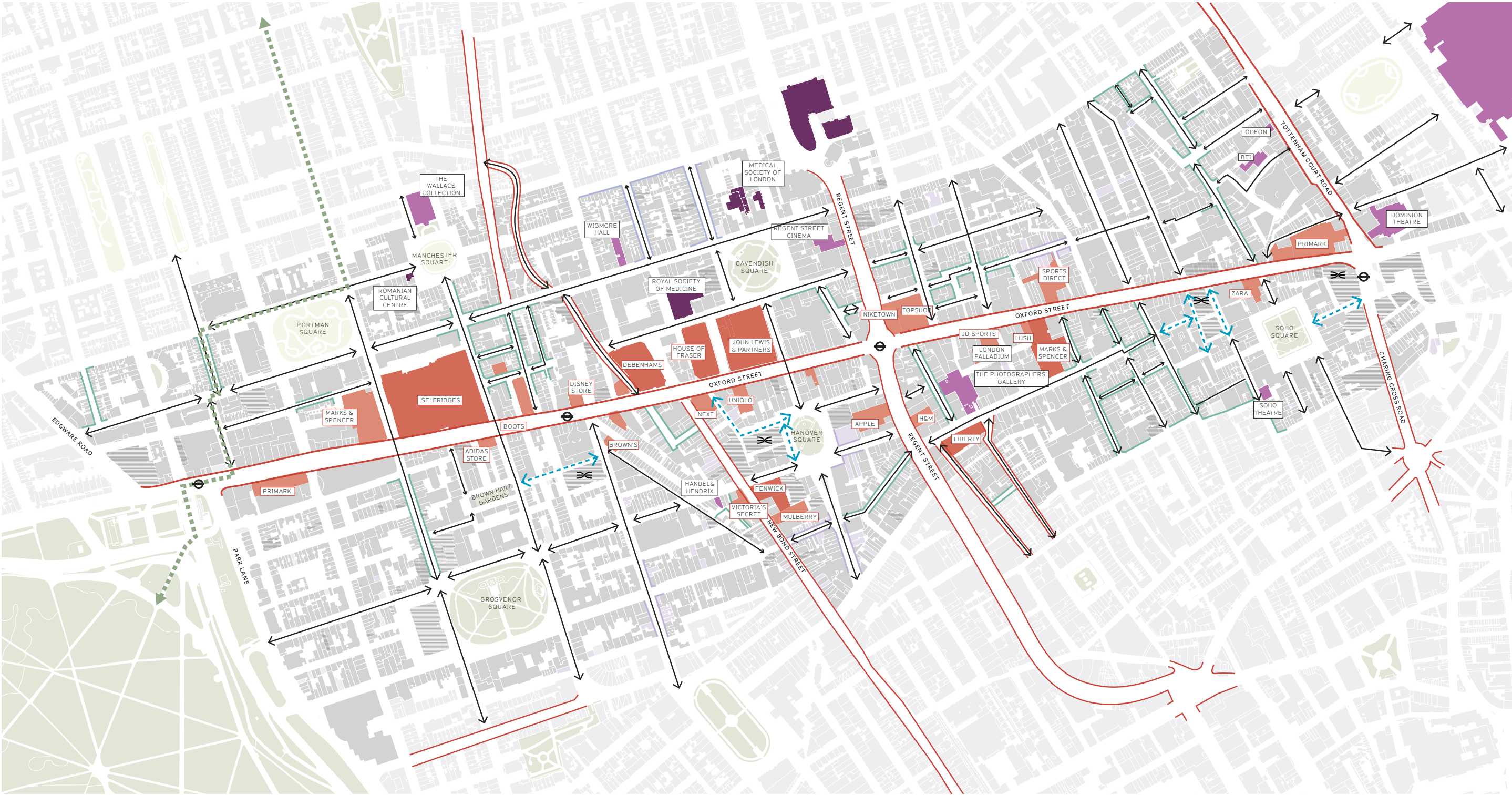
Data source: Passenger demand forecast for stations on Oxford Street, TfL, March 2018 (See full document for full details and methodology)

Total entry and exit demand during the AM peak, inter-peak (IP), PM peak, all-day and annual to reflect the staged opening of the Elizabeth line and includes:

- Stage 2 2018: before Elizabeth line opens
- Stage 3 2018: launch of Elizabeth line in central section in December 2018
- Stage 4 2019: Shenfield services extend through central section in May 2019
- Stage 5 2021, 2026, and 2031: full Elizabeth line services between Reading, Heathrow, Shenfield and Abbey Wood

N.B This information refers to a document released by TfL in March 2018. Updated information on station completion and service opening dates is awaited therefore for the purposes of this study the 2021 full service assessment is the principal focus.

Evidence base: routes and connections



Map of routes and connections from survey August 2018

- Department stores
- Flagship retail
- Theatre / museum / cinema
- Art galleries
- Institutions
- Food and drink streets
- Retail streets
- Vistas and connections
- Public parks and squares
- Park to park walking route
- Elizabeth Line station connections
- Focus area

Evidence base: public realm and environment

The Oxford Street District has one of the greatest concentrations of green squares in London, with Hyde Park in the far western edge providing an important amenity and visual relief in a relatively densely built up area. However, connections between Oxford Street and Hyde Park do not facilitate easy movement between the two, as pedestrians and cyclists must navigate Marble Arch and Park Lane, which are heavy with traffic.

Oxford Street and the surrounding street network is one of the most polluted areas in the UK, with the majority of harmful emissions released from road traffic. The current levels of congestion, quantity of freight movements and high volumes of polluting diesel vehicles needs to be addressed by a holistic programme of measures.

Public spaces across the district are varied, with several well-used courtyard spaces like Rathbone Place, oasis spaces like Ramillies Street and Brown Hart Gardens; formal spaces with programmed uses like Berwick Street Market; and informal street spaces like Hills Space, used by shoppers and visitors who sit on the pavement and eat lunch. Aside from the high quality green spaces of the local garden squares, the public realm is generally inconsistent in quality. The pavements are often narrow making the accommodation of street trees difficult, and a lack of street cleanliness has a negative effect on the public realm, being both unsightly and obstructing movement.

Oxford Street currently lacks sufficient seating provision, and people therefore perch to rest on window ledges, utility boxes and cycle racks. Much of the existing seating is positioned in such a way that it impedes pedestrian movement on and around Oxford Street, or it is located behind kiosks where it is not immediately visible from Oxford Street itself.

Off Oxford Street, outdoor seating and tables associated with outside dining are prevalent along some streets like Duke Street, James Street and St. Christopher’s Place. These objects serve a clear purpose, however they can impede movement through the area. Many of the kiosks on Oxford Street are typically located at the entrance to side streets, selling food and drinks or souvenirs. Kiosks can appear to dominate some spaces, therefore blocking sightlines and movement through the area.

Art and sculpture can be found across the district, with statues, monuments and fountains in its streets, parks and squares. The area is also home to contemporary works by major artists, including Barbara Hepworth’s Winged Figure at John Lewis, and Anthony Gormley’s ROOM in Brown Hart Gardens. As part of the public works to upgrade and revitalise Bond Street, Elizabeth Frink’s Horse and Rider sculpture was restored and relocated from Dover Street to a more prominent position on New Bond Street.

Formal play provision is currently very limited in the Oxford Street District, and Westminster City Council has identified much of the district as deficient in both formal and informal play space. By designing streets that are suitable for use by children, we improve the quality of the urban environment for all users. The Draft New London Plan (Policy S4) states that incidental, playable space should be incorporated into large-scale public realm developments.



Street tree planting makes for better streetspaces however narrow pavements make this difficult in some places



Public spaces are often uninviting in the evening



One of the highest concentrations of garden squares in London



There is a wealth of public art in the Oxford Street area



Lighting of shopfronts is variable and often overly bright conflicting with street lighting



Public spaces off of Oxford Street are well used but underwhelming



Street clutter and rubbish blocks narrow pavements



Inadequate amount of seating for visitors and shoppers on Oxford Street

Place Strategy

This chapter sets out a series of detailed and deliverable recommendations, actions and strategic proposals to significantly improve the quality and experience of the Oxford Street District. It will act as the guideline and framework for the next stages of concept design and implementation of a series of improved streets and spaces.

Contents

- Principles for the Oxford Street District
- Principles for Oxford Street
- District approach
- Elements of the Place Strategy

Make the district inclusive, accessible and liveable

Such an intensively-used district at the heart of a World City needs to cater for the many varied users: for all who live in, work, visit and pass through the area at all times of the day and night. It is therefore an essential overarching principle that everyone will have easy access to beautiful, safe, clean, well-managed and enhanced civic amenities.

- Consider the neighbourhood qualities of the district – the provision of new amenities, leisure and cultural uses will make a better place for everyone.
- All streetscape design and interventions will be made to make the district accessible for everyone.
- Provide clear, well connected walking routes with resting and quiet spaces for people with different needs and requirements as well as enhanced open spaces, welcoming family play provision, cultural programming, lighting and green spaces.
- Provide amenities that would support a twenty-first century district.
- Retain access to Oxford Street for buses, improved connections to new accessible Elizabeth Line stations and prioritise disabled parking and accessible vehicles.

Improve air quality

Poor air quality is recognised as a significant issue across the district with vehicular traffic being the major contributor to emissions.

- Improve the street environment to encourage walking and cycling and reduce the general need for vehicle trips in and through the district.
- Work with landowners, BIDS, local businesses and stakeholders to minimise, consolidate and manage the movement of freight and servicing more efficiently in order to reduce vehicle movements.
- Accelerate the adoption of zero-emission buses, taxis,

private hire vehicles, and ultra-low commercial goods vehicles throughout the district; setting an ambitious schedule for banning highly polluting vehicles from Oxford Street.

- Investigate and support the adoption of innovative ideas and technologies including porterage and cargo bike schemes, kerbside monitoring, flexible use of kerbside space (e.g. loading permitted at some times of day, pedestrian space at others), geo-fencing areas for ultra-low emission vehicles, restricted parking zones and pedestrian zones.
- Monitor air quality throughout the implementation of the proposed strategy and Delivery Plan and post-scheme, and ensure this information is publicly accessible.

Improve safety

Improvements in safety will be fundamental to the perception – and experience – of the Oxford Street District as a place which is inclusive, liveable and welcoming and a pleasure to visit by day or by night.

- Reduce the risk of collisions through targeted measures to address known issues.
- Improve street design to prioritise vulnerable road users.
- Reduce the volume and speed of traffic including buses in critical locations at the busiest times.
- Introduce a 20mph zone throughout the district with potential for a lower limit on Oxford Street.
- Address safety and security in the design of all streets and spaces, including appropriate security measures for crowded places from the earliest stages of design.

Take immediate steps to address management

Feedback from stakeholders has highlighted a number of issues regarding the existing management of the district and has reinforced the need to have a collaborative approach to managing and keeping the district safe.

- A comprehensive partnership management plan will be produced and implemented which will set out the arrangements for all aspects of safety and management within the district, including:
- Cleansing, waste and recycling services.
- Street management and enforcement matters including noise nuisance, begging, anti-social behaviour, street entertainment and littering.
- Public safety and policing the district.
- Highways maintenance to ensure materials withstand cleansing regimes and are promptly replaced following work by utilities companies, for example.

This innovative plan will outline our aspiration for a truly integrated multi-disciplinary approach and provide an opportunity to enhance the quality of management for residents, businesses and visitors.

Principles for the Oxford Street District

Prioritise pedestrians and value every space

The strategy recognises and prioritises walking as the primary form of movement within and across the district.

- Increase footway width at every opportunity and create and revitalise public space across the district, assessing every street and space for opportunities to make new public spaces and provide additional amenity, including space between and behind buildings.
- Ensure adequate resting places for those with less mobility.
- De-clutter every street and public space.
- Ensure that buildings ‘turn the corner’ and address side streets with animated façades to draw activity and pedestrian movement through the district, enlivening the backs of buildings and secondary entrances.

Make the district better for cycling

Westminster City Council supports the growth of cycling as an active, zero-emission mode of transport and is committed to make cycling across the borough practical, enjoyable and safe.

- Maximise the potential of the district-wide project as a mechanism to transform the area for cycling and to develop safer and more comfortable routes through a major part of the West End that connects with existing and planned cycling routes.
- Improve the opportunities for commuting, leisure cycling, tourism and deliveries by bike in order to reduce the need for other, more polluting forms of transport in the district.
- Ensure appropriate provision of cycle parking in the public realm.

Support economic growth across the district and promote innovation and experimentation

Investment in the Oxford Street District is important to protect and develop the area as a major employment district and to catalyse the inward investment and improvements that will support its continued status as an international shopping street.

- Recognise the vital contribution the Oxford Street District makes to the Westminster, London and UK economies.
- Protect and support the district as a centre of major employment, across a number of sectors.
- Consider opportunities for diversification of land use and support the evolution of retail to create an environment where retail and complementary and ancillary uses can thrive.
- Support new businesses and start ups and promote access to entry level employment, new jobs and skills opportunities.
- Support complementary civic amenity programmes that can be tested through temporary uses, conditions and events.
- Develop a digital strategy to maximise engagement, celebrate the district’s history and identity, and provide information on its amenity, cultural and commercial offer, connectivity and wayfinding throughout the whole district.
- The West End will be at the forefront of creative and technological innovation, with the infrastructure upgrades needed to underpin them, in particular superfast 5G broadband and reliable mobile connectivity, security / CCTV technology and public information systems.
- Adhere to the West End Partnership definition of “good growth” in the district to support inward investment through policies, plans and actions which benefit residents, communities, business and visitors alike.

Design for flexibility

There is a finite amount of space to be shared between competing uses – a flexible approach should be used to create a design and management system that responds to the life of the district.

- Patterns of use change significantly throughout the day and from daytime to night with an intense peak in pedestrian use when both shoppers and workers head home at the end of the day. Additionally use patterns vary from weekday to weekend, and at different times of the year. The design and future management systems of the streets and spaces should therefore be time-based and flexible to both accommodate all street users and maximise pedestrian space when it is needed most.
- Different sections of Oxford Street operate very differently to one another and the approach to their design should reflect this.
- Design each space for elegance and comfort in both extremely busy periods and quiet times.
- Newly-designed space will allow for flexible use and will accommodate events where appropriate.

Build from existing and connect the whole district

The district is a remarkable place, with many existing assets and a history of creative thinking by landowners, neighbourhood forums, retailers and developers. The strategy sets out to enhance and build on the area’s existing qualities and harness its population’s enthusiasm, vision and expertise.

- Build from and reveal the existing pattern and character of streets and garden squares.
- Respect the thresholds with the surrounding distinct historic neighbourhoods to ensure that the Oxford Street District is a good neighbour as well as an outstanding place in its own right.

Principles for the Oxford Street District

- Embrace the momentum of change being brought by renewed focus on Oxford Street and the imminent arrival of the Elizabeth Line and knit together diverse projects including proposals from neighbourhood forums, landowners, retailers and developers.
- As the Elizabeth Line stations are all positioned off Oxford Street – on Dean Street, Hanover Square and Davies Street – use these major new entry points to reveal the wider district-wide connectivity by designing beautiful, accessible and connected routes and gateways.
- Reveal wider connections by opening up long views and prioritising wayfinding.
- Encourage footfall to retail areas behind and around Oxford Street.

Create beautifully-designed streets, gateways and a diversity of public spaces across the district

The district's streets and spaces are some of London's most historic, handsome and internationally recognized, yet their current condition does not always reflect their quality and status. This strategy seeks to unlock the full potential of the existing urban realm and its built fabric; to reveal, connect, and upgrade the environmental conditions, whilst respecting the distinctive character and identity of the local historic neighbourhoods, making well-connected and enhanced civic amenity for all users.

- Make improvements to the material condition of the streets to reflect the fact that the area includes some of London's most handsome and celebrated streets and spaces.
- Use materials suitable for extremely high levels of use and capable of withstanding not only the volume of use, but the cleaning regimes required to maintain them.
- Distinguish the thresholds between Oxford Street, Soho, Fitzrovia, Mayfair and Marylebone to respect the heritage and identity of adjacent neighbourhoods.

- Consider the gateways of Oxford Circus, Marble Arch, Tottenham Court Road and the Elizabeth Line stations as important public spaces with amenities, orientation, wayfinding and special features.
- Ensure diversity of public space including active spaces, quieter places to spend time and places for art and events.
- Consider opportunities across the district for family-friendly and cross-generational active leisure, active travel modes, play and playable spaces.
- Create world-class event and cultural spaces with appropriate infrastructure for temporary activation and cultural programmes.

Take every opportunity to add additional trees and planting, creating new green spaces and revitalising the garden squares

Creating linked green spaces through the district will enhance biodiversity, increase local amenity, create valuable habitats for wildlife and improve the environment for all.

- Introduce new street trees across the whole district, exploring all options for placement.
- Introduce greening to side street spaces with more intensive planting away from the main footfall areas.
- Increase biodiversity by introducing a range of planting and species types.
- Encourage greening, planting and access and use of rooftops for additional green spaces and biodiversity.
- Include the revitalisation of the garden squares in district-wide improvements to provide more amenity for residents, workers and visitors as well as beautiful gardens.

Enrich the cultural life & identity of the district

This strategy aims to celebrate and build on the district's cultural and artistic assets whilst developing a programme of events which gives a reason to celebrate – and to visit – all through the year.

- Make the district a destination for culture, creating spaces for a wide range of different uses from everyday activities to large-scale events.
- Reveal the exceptional heritage, art, architecture and institutions that are currently hidden in plain sight.
- Encourage world-class design of buildings and public spaces that protect, celebrate and contribute to the architectural character of the district and the eclectic architectural character of Oxford Street.
- Lighting will be one of the major transformational elements. Ensure streets, spaces and buildings are beautifully lit and work well with shopfront and event lighting to create dynamic and exciting streets, with special commissions for public spaces which could form part of a cultural strategy and commissioning process.
- Develop a suite of Oxford Street public realm features, which could include lighting, seating and drinking water fountains.
- Ensure that the experience of visiting Oxford Street is distinct in every season – consider its seasonal character not only at Christmas but in relation to school term times, international visitor seasons, fashion seasons and celebrations throughout the year. Reflect these seasonal variations to inform strategies for planting, culture, retail display, lighting and events.

Principles for Oxford Street

Diversify land use and extend the life of Oxford Street

Retail is changing and evolving. The economic vitality of Oxford Street will be strengthened by its ability to adapt and experiment and offer a range of attractions and ancillary, complementary uses that support the retail and commercial activities of the district.

- Respond to changes in retail and safeguard the economic vitality of the district by creating the conditions for experimentation, adaptation and change.
- Reduce the pressure on the transport network at peak travelling times by introducing reasons to travel to and from Oxford Street at different times of day.
- Support later opening hours and a programme of events extending into the evening.
- Support cultural activities that cater for different audiences and user groups.

Make Oxford Street spectacular

Oxford Street has a long tradition of celebration and spectacle. The aim is to celebrate the daily urban theatre of its existing retail and leisure uses whilst creating settings for events at every scale.

- Design the gateways and key iconic spaces of the street (Marble Arch, Oxford Circus and the Tottenham Court Road junction) for flexibility, seasonal programming and as major public spaces.
- Celebrate Oxford Street's status as one of the world's leading retail districts with flagship stores, events, window displays, non-retail uses within stores and special events.
- Promote diverse uses including evening activities and one-off celebrations and events.
- Create a world-class built environment – promote and commission the highest quality of architectural and streetscape design.
- Set a new frontages guide for Oxford Street.
- Create spaces that overlook the street, on the upper floors of the buildings and enliven the frontages and upper levels of buildings on Oxford Street.

Embrace Oxford Street's role as an important sustainable transport corridor for the West End

Oxford Street transports people and traffic within, to and from the West End, either to visit Oxford Street or the surrounding district. A balance must be struck between the clear need for an improved pedestrian environment and this important city function.

- Prioritise sustainable transport modes including walking, cycling (parallel to Oxford Street), bus use and underground use across the district.
- Retain buses on Oxford Street for 24 hours a day but ensure that they are reduced in number, operate more safely by travelling at slower speeds through busy areas and are converted to zero-emission capable vehicles as soon as possible.
- Reduce vehicle traffic on Oxford Street at critical times and locations to prioritise pedestrian movement, safety and quality of the street environment.
- Ensure that taxis and goods vehicles are able to access the street (at some locations only at controlled times of the day) and are not displaced into surrounding neighbourhoods.

District approach

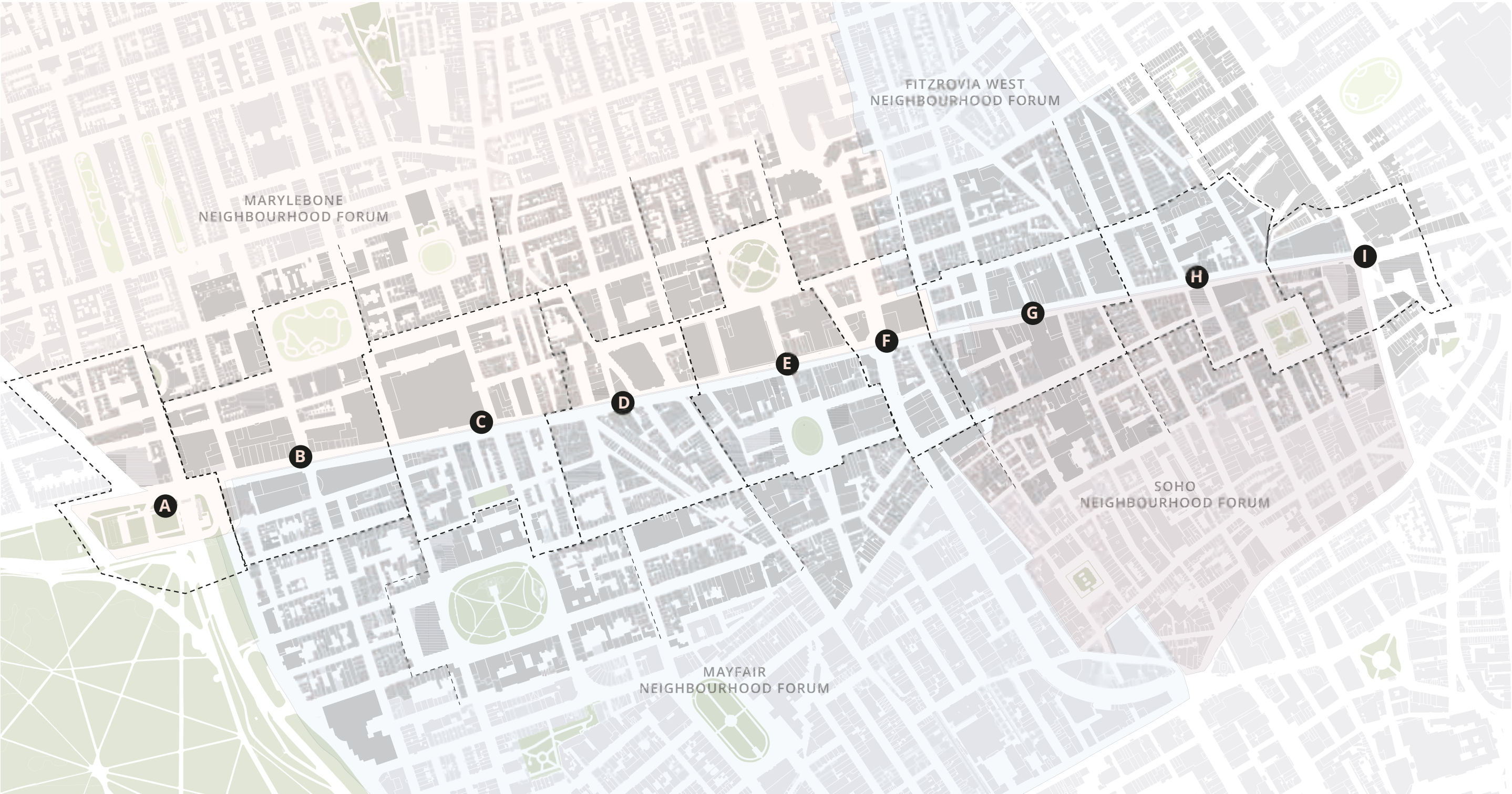
The Oxford Street District is a complex place of mixed ownership, which makes large-scale improvements challenging, the strategy is therefore a mechanism to bring together diverse interests and priorities into a single and effective improvement project.

For improvements that will benefit residents, visitors and workers this body of work has considered the district as a whole, rather than Oxford Street alone. What happens on Oxford Street affects surrounding neighbourhoods, and it is critical to be mindful of this in any changes to the street. Moreover the great strength of the West End is that it is made up of historic and dynamic neighbourhoods – and strong connections to the wider West End will continue to give vitality to this part of London.

A district-wide approach to the Place Strategy realises the area spatially as a series of nine character areas or zones from Marble Arch to Tottenham Court Road which have been sensitively considered to reflect the diverse demographic of users, the historic heritage, garden squares and parks, the varied range of uses, traffic networks and major gateways into the district and wider West End.

- (A) Marble Arch, a historic asset for the district, is the gateway to Oxford Street, Hyde Park, and the west, playing a critical role in movement through the centre of London.
- (B) A number of flagship stores are located here, as well as hotels, connecting with neighbouring residential areas.
- (C) Home to the Selfridges department store, Oxford Street connects Baker Street and the north Mayfair streets of Duke Street and North Audley Street.
- (D) Connects south Marylebone with the heart of Mayfair, Bond Street and the new Elizabeth Line, it is characterised by a fine-grain network of historic streets.
- (E) The Cavendish Square to Hanover Square connection – providing links to green spaces and the new West End gateway of the Elizabeth Line.
- (F) Oxford Circus, the set-piece joining Oxford Street and Regent Street, is an iconic destination and arrival point for many visitors to the district.
- (G) Characterised by the concentration of flagship stores it also provides connections through its side streets to East Marylebone into the north and Soho in the south.
- (H) This zone plays a key role in connecting Soho and Fitzrovia, and facilitating movement across the district and beyond with its new connections to the Elizabeth Line, with finer grain and a diverse range of smaller shops and cafés.
- (I) Is a primary gateway to Oxford Street and arrival point from the Elizabeth Line, linking the district with Tottenham Court Road and Bloomsbury, New Oxford Street, Holborn, St Giles, Seven Dials, Covent Garden and Charing Cross Road.

District approach



--- Zones of the Oxford Street District

District approach

Zone A



Zone B



Zone C



Zone D



Zone E



Eastern island Marble Arch, a large public space provides the setting for the Grade I listed Arch, forming the gateway to Oxford Street and Hyde Park



A number of flagship stores and hotels on this part of Oxford Street forms the boundary between the residential neighbourhoods in Marylebone to the north and Mayfair in the south



The iconic department store Selfridges. Duke Street connects Oxford Street to Portman Square and fine network of active side streets



Key junction with Bond Street with the entrance to Bond Street London Underground and Elizabeth Line stations, connecting to the historic finer grain small scale independent retail within Mayfair and Marylebone



Holles Street and Harewood Place, the connecting streets between Cavendish and Hanover Square

District approach

Zone F



Zone G



Zone H



Zone I



Architectural set piece of Oxford Circus at the junction of Oxford Street and Regent Street. Adjoining John Prince's Street and Argyll Street provide links to the adjacent neighbourhoods



Characterised by a concentration of smaller flagship stores. Great Marlborough Street provides connections through its sides streets to Oxford Street in the north and Soho in the south



New connections to Elizabeth Line station at Dean Street and facilitating movement between Soho and Fitzrovia



Arrival point from the Tottenham Court Road station and the new Elizabeth Line. Centrepont marks the primary gateway to Oxford Street

Elements of the Place Strategy

To achieve the principles of the Oxford Street district outlined on p.38, a set of elements has been developed which provide a comprehensive multi-faceted approach to improvements.

- Mix of land uses
- Streets and spaces
- Proposed operational approach
- Transport
 - Walking
 - Buses
 - Cycling
 - Air quality
 - Vehicle access
 - Road safety
 - Coaches
 - London taxis
 - General traffic
 - Goods vehicles, servicing and deliveries
 - Accessibility for all
- Management
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Wayfinding and legibility
- Amenity
- Play
- Architectural quality
- Materials
- Lighting
- Landscape
- Culture and public art

Mix of land uses

Oxford Street has always been a centre of commercialism, adaptation and change. It is essential that it is allowed to continually develop in order to reflect the way we live now and changes in the way we shop. Competition comes in many forms but the expansion of online retail and the arrival of shopping malls to London has changed the expectations of a major shopping street. The remarkable aspect of Oxford Street is that it is able to provide very different types of retail offer simultaneously, and therefore cater to a wide audience. What retailers of all types have expressed is a desire for greater flexibility of land use, for there to be other types of businesses alongside to support retail, and for a wider understanding of what may become a future definition of retail. This could include a retail model that was once considered a showroom – but in an age of online retail is emerging as a new type of brand experience. This could in turn free up space for other uses at upper levels: there is a notable lack of cafés and restaurants on Oxford Street, and also spaces that look over the excitement of the activity of the street.

The transport network is under significant pressure during the afternoon peak as both workers and visitors leave Oxford Street at the same time. Conversely, the area quickly feels very quiet and closed during the evenings. There is not enough to attract families and visitors to the area outside shopping hours and for prolonged periods of time. The retail offer needs to be augmented by diverse activities and uses, amenities and programming and events which bring people into the area into the evening and throughout the year, and will support a move into experience being a more prominent part of shopping.

The Place Strategy will be developing a set of objectives, including but not limited to the below:

- Build from existing – use the expertise of the businesses and retailers to innovate. Work with residents and businesses to create the right conditions to enable commerce and neighbourhoods to flourish.
- Diversify land use.
- Encourage flexibility, innovation and experimentation – test the potential for new retail units with temporary use and events.
- Encourage people to stay in the area beyond the PM peak travel time by creating a more vibrant and diverse environment that stays open into the evening.
- Enrich the cultural life of the district during both the daytime and evening hours.
- The prominent use (particularly at ground floor) will be a world-class retail experience complemented by beautiful, well-managed and expertly curated public places and spaces that will delight visitors.
- Make space on upper floors to be available to different and diverse uses, such as offices, hotels, restaurants, studios and cultural uses.
- Encourage new clusters of café and restaurant uses to animate street activity one block back from Oxford Street.
- Extend day time activities into the evening, while introducing new and evening uses.

The City Plan is undergoing a refresh, and Westminster City Council consulted on a new draft Plan in November to December 2018.

For more information, please refer to City Plan 2019 – 2040 Draft policies at <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/cityplan2040>

Precedents



Zurich Station, Switzerland
Destination retail provided at Zurich Station



Torvehallerne Market, Copenhagen
Range of independent food and drink units



Gentle Monster, Argyll Street, London
Each shop location for this eyewear brand is different, curated for an “immersive and experiential offline shopping experience”



The Store of the Future, Farfetch, London
Integrating benefits of online shopping to enhance physical stores



Makerversity, Somerset House, London
Workspace for professional makers



McNally Jackson Books, New York City
Independent book store with calendar of events throughout the day and into the evening



Lumiere, London
Family friendly events in the evening that change perception of spaces



White Collar Factory, London
Running track on the rooftop provides leisure space for employees

Streets and spaces

Oxford Street is London’s primary shopping street. It is a thoroughfare and a distributor of movement, but most importantly it is an intrinsic part of the district and wider street network that connects historic residential neighbourhoods and the wider West End.

Most retail units focus on the façades facing the main thoroughfare – the sides and backs of buildings are often bland, blank and uninviting which deters visitors from exploring the area’s networks of smaller streets. The public realm is cluttered and, in places, in a state of bad repair.

The balance of vehicular and pedestrian movement needs to be transformed with an emphasis on pedestrian safety and improved air quality. At key times of day – particularly the peak afternoon travelling time – the streets and spaces struggle to accommodate the huge volume of commuters and shoppers who are leaving for the day. Elizabeth Line stations will not open out onto Oxford Street directly, but to Dean Street, Hanover Square and Davies Street, radically altering the way people will move across the district.

The strategy proposes to work with the patterns of the street and wider district to respect and enhance the different characters of places and sections of Oxford Street, prioritise pedestrian space when it is most needed and to create a greener, cleaner environment where people enjoy spending time with interesting routes, ample amenities and outstanding public space.

The Place Strategy will be developing a set of objectives, including but not limited to the below:

- Provide a holistic approach to public space to ensure that individual spaces function together as a coherent network across the district, stitching together existing public realm improvements and providing variety in type and scale and character of spaces.
- Create a diversity of public space such as active spaces, quieter places to spend time and places for art and events.
- Significantly improve the quality of public realm on Oxford Street to restore and enhance its character and identity as one of London’s primary destinations.
- Prioritise pedestrian space throughout the district to make a pleasant walking environment. Improve accessibility of the whole area to ensure the district can be visited and enjoyed by all.
- Provide a clear hierarchy of vehicular, cycle and pedestrian routes to reduce conflict and ensure the safe movement of people through the district.

- Incorporate a proportionate approach for security measures based on a risk assessment of each location, this will be sensitively integrated into the streetscape design while enhancing the public realm. Design advice will be sought from security consultants, the Metropolitan Police and the Centre for Protection of National Infrastructure.
- Transform the full length of Oxford Street from Marble Arch to Tottenham Court Road, marking significant moments along the street such as the iconic set piece of Oxford Circus as the gateway to the district, gateways from London Underground and Elizabeth Line stations.
- Celebrate the garden squares as primary public spaces by revitalising the gardens and the surrounding streets, for example through the redesign of Cavendish Square and decluttered and redesigned connections to Hanover Square.
- Improve existing public spaces such as Ramillies Street and the provide of additional places to relax, dwell, meet people and find respite off of Oxford Street such as Gilbert Street and Stratford Place.
- Create functional, beautiful and safe public spaces around transport hubs for people to pause, and where shade, seating, wayfinding information and drinking water fountains can be located.
- Enhance streetscapes across the district, with new materials, clearing clutter to maintain sightlines and create space within the public realm.
- Future proof the district by supporting the introduction of high speed broadband / 5G data, and other appropriate innovations.

The map on the following page illustrates the variety of public spaces across the district which have been identified as part of the strategy.

Precedents



Chiado, Lisbon
Special design at transport gateways



Laneways, Melbourne
Active back streets to retail areas



Biblioteksgatan, Stockholm
Well designed retail streets across the district



Rue de Tresor, Paris
Quiet side streets



Mount Street, London
Balancing transport function with pedestrian priority spaces



Town Square on Bond Street, London
Major public realm improvements recently completed

Streets and spaces



- Gateways / major public spaces
- Oxford Street improvements
- Public spaces
- Street improvements
- Revitalised garden squares
- Other spaces currently in construction, planning or recently completed

Proposed operational approach

The figure opposite sets out the recommended approach for each street within the Oxford Street District in terms of streetscape function and indicates the design elements that will be considered as detailed proposals are developed for these locations.

In many cases, Westminster City Council has already brought forward schemes that have been delivered, or are in the process of being delivered, to provide the recommended improvements including the Baker Street two-way scheme, Brook Street, Davies Street and Bond Street, Hanover Square, and the western part of Wigmore Street.

■ **Enhanced Street (Designed for all modes)**

- Provide comfortable footways, widened and decluttered where possible
- Improve and provide new controlled pedestrian crossings – more waiting space, reduced waiting times
- Provide a safer and more comfortable environment for cycling
- Provide capacity for traffic movement, minimise delay and traffic congestion
- Review parking and loading arrangements and seek to improve where possible
- Consider changes to traffic operation (one-way and two way) to achieve benefits for the district
- Improved materials and lighting

■ **Pedestrian focused street design (Prioritise pedestrians)**

- Maximise and declutter footways at every opportunity
- Introduce design features to prioritise pedestrian comfort and ease of movement along and across the street
- Improve and provide new controlled pedestrian crossings – more waiting space, reduced waiting times
- Provide a safer and more comfortable environment for cycling
- Provide access for traffic movement
- Review parking and loading arrangements and prioritise providing footway space where possible while maintaining kerbside capacity for essential activity
- Improved materials and lighting

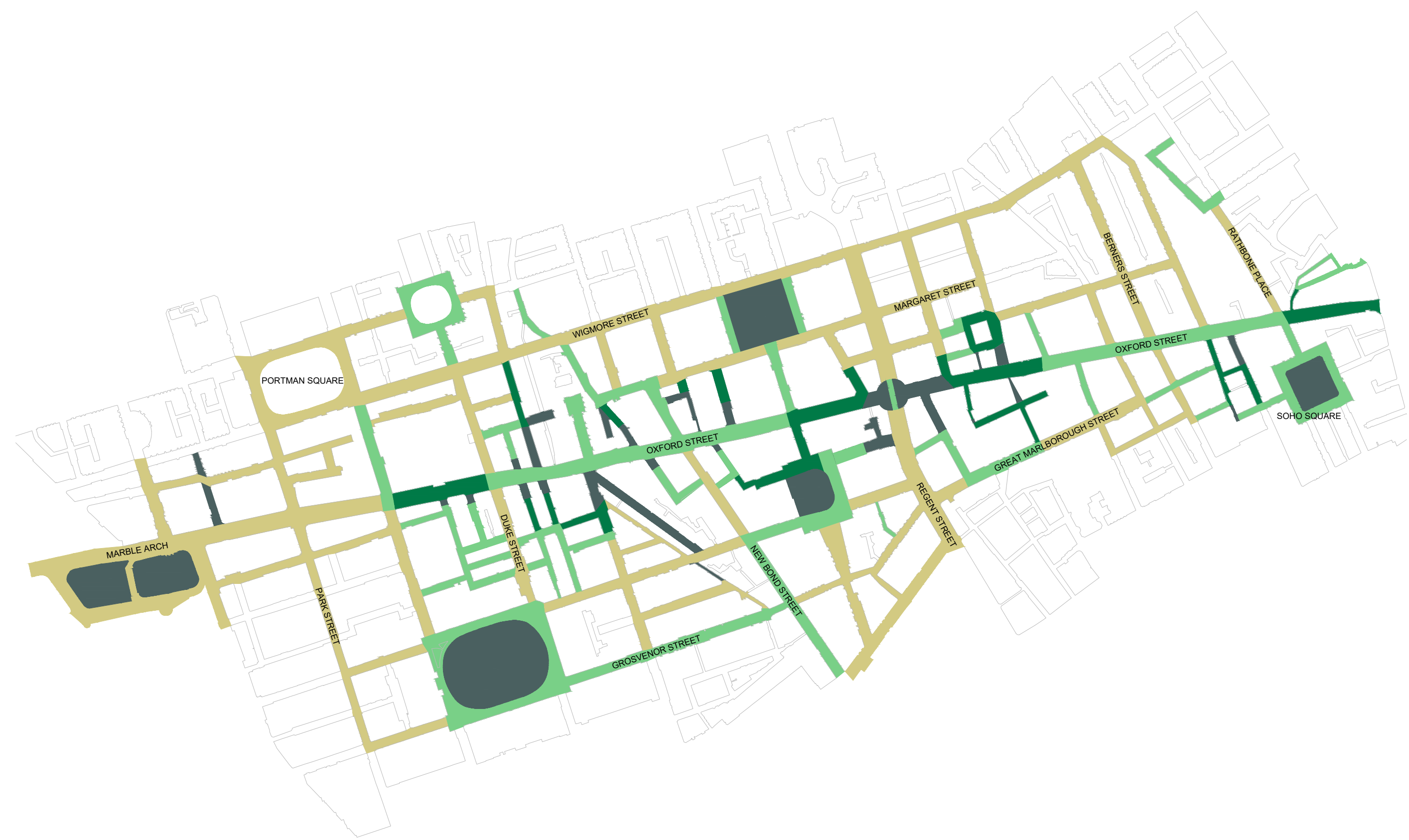
■ **Pedestrian focused street design with reduced traffic (Prioritise pedestrians)**

- As above with consideration to reducing vehicle movements at key times of the day
- Options to reduce vehicle movement include:
 - Overall reduction in motor traffic flow across the district achieved by encouraging use of public transport, walking and cycling and better management of freight
 - Restricting specific turns on to and off Oxford Street that result in traffic reduction at key locations
 - Traffic restriction of specific vehicle types during the hours of high pedestrian activity
 - Design of kerbside areas to manage the provision for loading and parking in sensitive areas during the hours of high pedestrian activity or when such activity is likely to cause a nuisance
 - Improve and address existing traffic congestion issues on the surrounding road network to provide less incentive for rat-running
- All options would retain access for essential vehicles

■ **Public realm focused street design (Prioritise public space)**

- Maximise public space for pedestrian movement and dwelling
- Consider significantly restricting or removing traffic for some or all of the day
- Retain access for essential vehicle movements in a managed way
- Measures may include pedestrian zone treatments or physical closures if appropriate

Proposed operational approach



Transport

Walking

Oxford Street and some areas within the Oxford Street District currently suffer from high levels of pedestrian congestion and crowding which results in an uncomfortable environment for walking, particularly from midday onwards to early evening (with a peak around 5pm on most parts of the street). During the summer months and towards the end of the year, these problems worsen due to increased visitors and shoppers to the district.

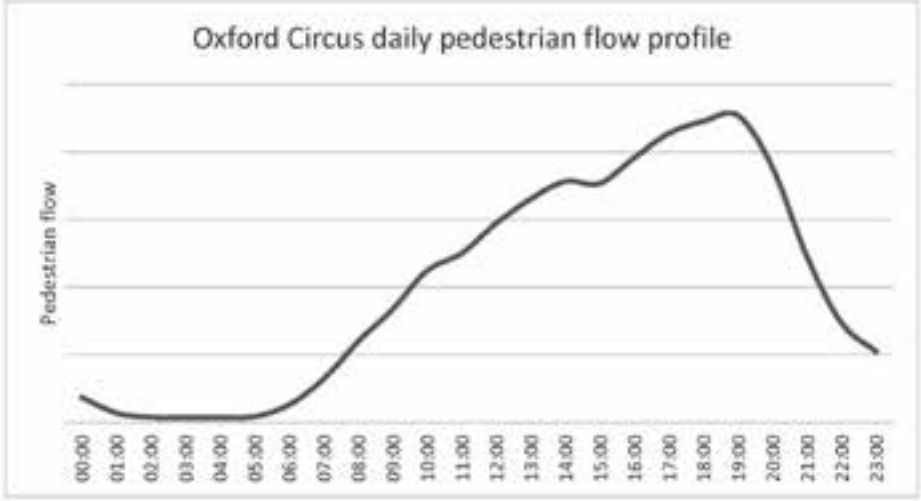
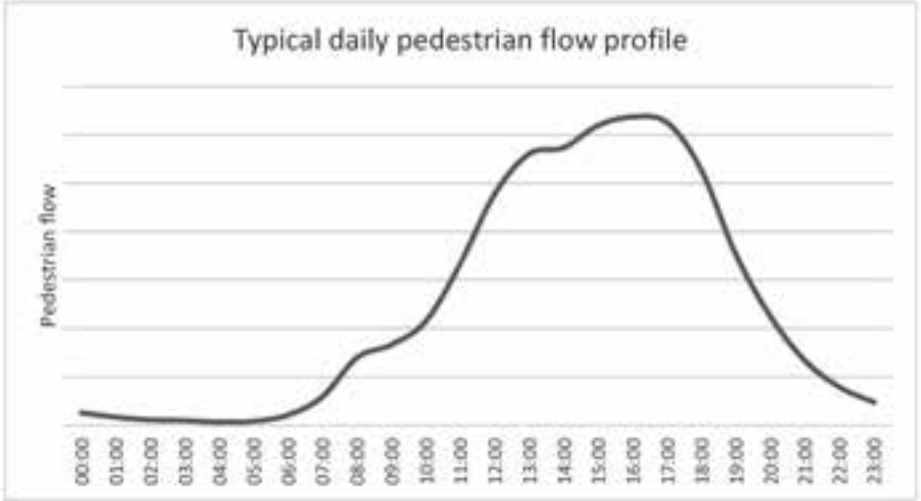
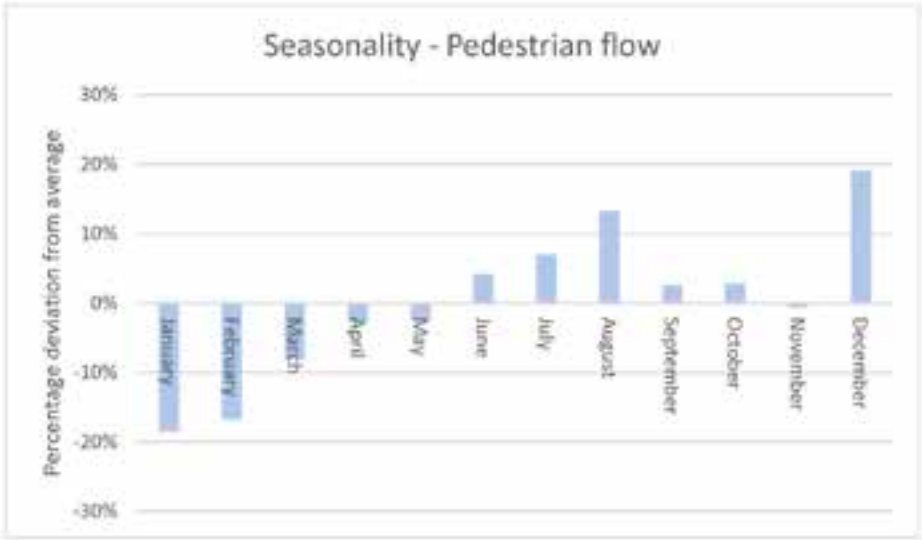
Detailed analysis has been undertaken to understand and predict future pedestrian volumes, taking into account the significantly improved access to the district to be provided by the Elizabeth Line. This analysis has been considered carefully when developing the proposed strategy for pedestrians. Without improvements to the space currently provided for pedestrians on Oxford Street the existing issues will significantly worsen following the opening of the Elizabeth Line. This is not considered to be an acceptable situation and therefore a number of measures are recommended.

- Develop design proposals for a pedestrian-focused streetscape on Oxford Street that recognises walking as the most important mode of transport.
- Widen and declutter footways throughout Oxford Street and at key locations within the district to maximise the available space for pedestrians. For a significant proportion of Oxford Street and the surrounding district this will be sufficient to address the issues of pedestrian crowding.
- Provide upgraded paving and a programme of maintenance that will ensure an attractive, accessible and comfortable walking environment for years to come.
- Provide resting spaces with seating and shade.
- Provide signage, wayfinding and clearer sightlines to better connect Oxford Street to the surrounding areas and neighbourhoods and create an environment that is more legible.

- Provide significant improvements to controlled pedestrian crossings by improving their design, reducing crossing distance, increasing the amount of green time for pedestrians, minimising the waiting time, and prioritising pedestrians over vehicles at key locations. Provide many new controlled pedestrian crossings at locations where there is a current under-provision.
- In high stress areas where the widening and decluttering of footways is insufficient to address safety problems, consider reduction, restriction or removal of traffic at appropriate times of the day. Note that restriction of traffic will only be proposed when and where there is appropriate justification, and it can be demonstrated that the potential impacts of traffic reassignment will not be significant on residential streets. See Vehicle Access for details.
- Develop a palette of design measures that encourages other road users to take greater care around pedestrian-focused areas and improve the comfort and ease of moving through the district on foot.

The cross-section diagrams show that much of the footway widening on Oxford Street would be achieved by removing inset bus stops, central medians and taking advantage of a simplified layout to minimise the need for carriageway space. This arrangement is expected to operate efficiently as a result of the lower number of vehicles that will be present on the street. Transport for London’s proposal to reduce bus flow will help to achieve this reduction. In general carriageway lane widths would be reduced to comply with “cycle friendly” lane widths (as set out in the London Cycling Design Standards).

Visit www.westminster.gov.uk/walking



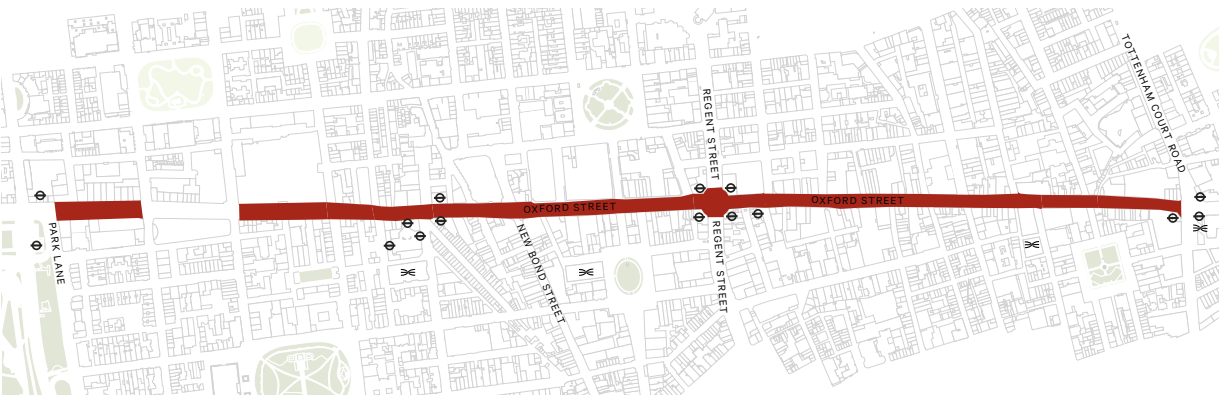
Source: TfL Automatic pedestrian counters (2012-2016)

Transport

Current areas of pedestrian congestion – 5pm



2026 areas of pedestrian congestion – 5pm



2026 areas of pedestrian congestion with widened footways – 5pm



Approximate existing cross-section (west)



Approximate proposed cross-section (west)



Approximate existing cross -section (east)



Approximate proposed cross-section (east)



Transport

Buses

Transport for London manage and control the bus network. The Council will continue to work with TfL to realise the aspirations set out by this strategy document but TfL are responsible for current and future proposed changes to bus routes in the district.

It is considered that buses play a very important role in providing transportation for visitors, employees and local residents to access the Oxford Street District and the West End. The operation of buses on Oxford Street provides access to public transport for the district as a whole and allows for passengers to make connections between buses, underground rail and other forms of transport. Buses also allow for movement of people along the street that may have difficulty using other forms of transport that may not be fully accessible for all users. The cost of bus travel tends to be lower for medium and longer journeys than other forms of public transport.

However, buses take up significant space on the street, produce harmful emissions in their current form, contribute to traffic congestion and noise pollution and, on Oxford Street due to the high levels of potential conflict with pedestrians in particular pose a safety risk. The majority of fatal collisions that have taken place on Oxford Street in recent years have involved buses colliding with pedestrians.

A large number of bus routes currently start and end within the district which results in buses waiting on the streets around Oxford Street. Buses need to turn around between their last and first stops and this results in a large number of empty or underutilised bus movements at undesirable locations such as Oxford Circus, Hanover Square, Cavendish Square and Cavendish Place.

These issues have been carefully considered and a proposed set of aspirations for bus operation within the Oxford Street District has been identified:

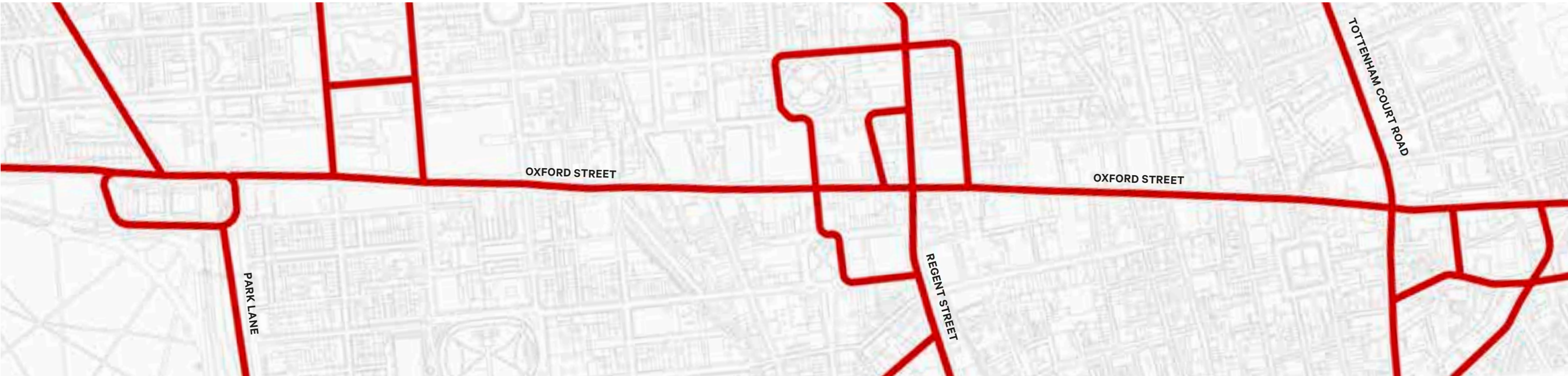
- Retain buses operating east-west along Oxford Street but at reduced volume.
- Seek to ban diesel buses from Oxford Street and work with Transport for London to set an ambitious target date for when this can be achieved. In the future only zero emission capable buses should be permitted to operate on Oxford Street to reduce air pollution.
- Rationalise bus stop infrastructure on the street to reflect the reduced number of services and maximise pedestrian space.
- Limit the speed of buses operating on Oxford Street to 20mph or less to reduce the risk and severity of accidents.
- Review the way that terminating buses turn around to minimise their movement and minimise the need for bus stands in the area.
- Rationalise the number of bus stands.
- Explore options, with TfL, to minimise empty or under-utilised bus movements through sensitive locations and reduce the impact of buses waiting within the Oxford Street District.
- Consider further options for changes to bus routes and infrastructure that would provide benefits across the district.
- Westminster City Council will continue to liaise with Transport for London to ensure that these aspirations are deliverable and are treated with a high level of priority.

It is considered that Oxford Street is the best place for night buses to operate, providing a key transport link for the night-time economy of the West End. The presence of buses operating on Oxford Street at night will assist with ensuring that there is activity on the street throughout the day.



Transport

Future bus network – including Baker Street two-way and Tottenham Court Road two-way projects



Street with buses

Aspiration for future bus network



Street with buses
Street with reduced buses
Street with significantly reduced buses

Transport

Cycling

Westminster City Council supports the growth of cycling as an active, zero-emission mode of transport in central London. Improving the opportunities for commuting, leisure cycling, tourism and deliveries by bike will all help to reduce the need for other, more polluting forms of transport in the district.

The current road network throughout the Oxford Street District does not provide a coherent, comfortable and safe environment for cycling and improvement is greatly needed. Existing and proposed cycle routes do not fully cross the district, meaning that there is a significant gap in cycle route provision. This gap will be partially addressed by the proposed cycle quietway scheme currently under development from Pimlico to Fitzrovia. This route provides a north-south cycle connection but does not address east-west cycling movement for which there is currently no high-quality route within the district.

Oxford Street itself is currently not an attractive route for cycling. Although Oxford Street provides a continuous east-west route across a large part of the West End, there are relatively few cyclists that choose to use it compared to other parallel routes, particularly west of Regent Street. This is because the environment is generally uncomfortable for cycling and the presence of large numbers of buses means that the street is intimidating and difficult to navigate.

The current high number of pedestrians, and expected increase in the future means that there is no realistic opportunity to provide dedicated space for cycling on Oxford Street.

Considering these issues, an Oxford Street District strategy for cycling is being developed:

- Retain access for cyclists to Oxford Street.
- Identify measures to reduce vehicle speeds in the district (see General Traffic).
- Provide significantly increased levels of cycle parking within the streetscape proposals.
- Develop proposals for new cycling routes across the district through consultation with stakeholders and residents.
- Develop a scheme proposal for a new east-west cycling route to the north of Oxford Street connecting Sussex Gardens west of Edgware Road to Torrington Place east of Tottenham Court Road.
- Develop a scheme proposal for a new east-west cycling route to the south of Oxford Street connecting Hyde Park to New Oxford Street.
- Provide a number of key north-south connections across the district.
- Provide general improvements across many streets within the Oxford Street District to improve conditions on the street for cycling, even on non-designated routes. This could include measures such as advanced cycle-stop-lines, safer lane widths, reduced traffic speeds, reduced traffic volumes, improved and maintained carriageway surfacing, and contraflow cycling on one-way streets.
- Support the use of human powered mobility vehicles such as wheelchair hand bikes and consider these types of vehicle when designing cycle parking infrastructure.

Visit www.westminster.gov.uk/cycling



Transport

Air Quality

It is well understood that air quality in the Oxford Street District is exceptionally poor. The primary source of air pollution is vehicular traffic. Westminster City Council proposes a threefold approach to improving air quality across the district.

- Improve the street environment to encourage walking and cycling and reduce the need for vehicle trips in the district.
- Accelerate the adoption of ultra-low and zero emission buses, taxis and private hire vehicles, and commercial vehicles throughout the district leading to an eventual ban on highly polluting vehicles on Oxford Street at an appropriate time.
- Work with local businesses and stakeholders to minimise, consolidate and manage the movement of freight.

In addition to these strategies, Westminster City Council will also ensure that any detailed proposals that are developed with the aim of restricting or reducing traffic within any part of the district must not result in any adverse, long-term air quality impacts on residential areas.

Westminster City Council will continue to monitor air quality at a number of locations throughout the district to ensure that the pollution impact of all proposals and projects in the area are fully understood. Westminster City Council will make this monitoring data freely available to the public and other stakeholders.

It is recognised that the existing vehicle fleet needs to be given a realistic timeframe for change-over to allow removal of higher polluting vehicles from the district without simply forcing them in to adjacent neighbourhoods. Therefore, the proposed study would aim to identify ambitious target dates for when restrictions on polluting vehicles could be brought forward but will only propose these on the basis that public transport, servicing of businesses and residents, and access for all can be provided by available vehicles and that there is no significant impact on surrounding neighbourhoods caused by the displacement of non-compliant vehicles. Careful consideration and consultation on economic issues facing local businesses will be undertaken before proposing restrictions on commercial vehicles.

It is likely that the study would initially focus on forms of transport which are already transitioning towards low emission technology and focus on accelerating delivery of change to the Oxford Street District. In particular Westminster City Council will strongly request that introduction of zero emission capable buses on Oxford Street are prioritised by Transport for London and the Mayor.

Westminster City Council is currently reviewing its Air Quality Strategy and will be consulting on a draft document in Spring 2019. The findings from the emerging Air Quality Strategy will be applied to the Place Strategy for Oxford Street District.

Transport

Vehicle access

Oxford Street currently permits access for all vehicles from 7pm-7am between Orchard Street and Regent Street and all day east of Regent Street. Between Orchard Street and Regent Street only buses, taxis and cyclists are permitted from 7am – 7pm.

The current arrangement results in less traffic on the street than otherwise would be the case west of Regent Street. However, both east and west of Regent Street, there are currently locations and times of the day when there is traffic congestion, poor air quality, a high rate of collisions and too much traffic to fully prioritise pedestrians. With an increase in pedestrians expected on the street over the coming years, it is considered that some level of traffic reduction is required in key locations on and off Oxford Street for the environment to be safer and fit for purpose in the future. Westminster City Council is therefore considering options for reducing traffic on Oxford Street and the surrounding district.

Any proposals to reduce traffic flow on Oxford Street will be carefully considered and will not be taken forward if it is demonstrated that they would result in significant displacement of traffic flow to residential streets in adjoining neighbourhoods. Proposed traffic restrictions will require a statutory traffic order consultation before implementation.

A strategy for vehicle access has been developed:

- Oxford Street will retain a carriageway for two-way vehicle movement and will not be pedestrianised. However, there may be some times of the day at critical locations where a reduction in traffic volume on the street is necessary to address issues of safety and pedestrian crowding.
- Westminster City Council will carefully consider these times and locations and develop the means that this may be achieved, which may include traffic restrictions, prohibiting specific turning movements and measures to achieve an overall reduction in vehicle traffic across the district.
- Proposed restrictions to reduce traffic flow in general might only need to be applied during the hours that pedestrian flow on Oxford Street is considered to be high (midday-early evening).
- An aim of any traffic restrictions on Oxford Street will be to make sure that the street works for the district. It should not be the case that deliveries and servicing vehicles are displaced from Oxford Street into the surrounding streets. To the west of Regent Street, Westminster City Council will consider relaxing the current restrictions and allowing goods vehicles to access Oxford Street during the morning at specific locations.
- The design of proposed traffic restrictions will be carefully developed to ensure that there are zones on the street where moving traffic violations are fully enforceable.
- Additionally, Westminster City Council will explore the opportunity to close the east and west side of Oxford Circus to vehicle traffic while ensuring that traffic will continue to be able to access Oxford Street either side of this location.

In addition to Oxford Street itself, there are other locations where a reduction in traffic would provide the opportunity to create public spaces. Proposals for these locations will be developed to ensure that essential servicing and other activities can be adequately accommodated and that no significant traffic flow is displaced to adjacent residential streets.



Transport

Road safety

The issue of road safety is of critical concern for the Oxford Street District project. On average one pedestrian per year is involved in a fatal collision with a vehicle on Oxford Street. Given that the number of pedestrians on Oxford Street and within the wider district is expected to rise in the future as a result of the improved access provided by the Elizabeth Line, it is essential that the proposals brought forward as part of the Oxford Street District project include measures to reduce the risk of collisions and reduce the severity of injuries. A strategy for road safety has been developed.

A detailed review of all recorded collisions within the last five years has been undertaken to understand the causes of collisions and to identify the measures required to address them.

A number of measures have been identified that can be delivered in the short term to address some of the existing problems, with the objective of ensuring that the risk of accidents on Oxford Street does not increase as a result of the expected opening of the Elizabeth Line. The delivery of these measures is currently underway with footway repaving, localised footway widening, and reduced delays at pedestrian crossings at key locations.

The future proposals for the Oxford Street District will be designed with safety as a critical objective and will include:

- Specific targeted improvements at key locations to address existing safety issues.
- Simplified streets and junctions with improved pedestrian crossings that aim to reduce conflict between road users and minimise waiting times for pedestrians.
- Widening and decluttering of footways to address issues of overcrowding;
- Measures to calm traffic speed through street design and the development of a 20mph zone for the Oxford Street District.
- Significant reductions in bus movements on the street and surrounding district.
- Development of measures to further limit the speeds of buses and aid awareness with visual and audible indicators in non-residential areas.
- Reduction of vehicle flows at critical locations for pedestrian safety.
- Pedestrian priority street design that encourages drivers to take greater care;
- Streets designed for improved cycling comfort and safety with new facilities developed and introduced on identified routes.
- Management of freight to avoid the busiest times of day for vulnerable road users.
- Streets designed to be safer for use by those with disabilities.
- Consideration of further innovative programmes such as enhanced driver training, promotion of safer vehicles and new technology.

- Continued commitment to the principle of the Mayor’s Vision Zero casualty reduction ambition, which is the elimination of all Killed and Serious injury and Fatal casualty related accidents by 2041 and the forthcoming Westminster 2019 Road Danger Reduction Strategy.

Security will be a key consideration throughout the design process.

Coaches

Visitor coaches are a key mode of transport to hotels and theatres within the district. Current provision for coach drop-off / pick-up and parking is limited and has not been designed to integrate with the needs of the street environment. This can result in congestion caused by coaches stopping inappropriately and problems caused by parking activity in inappropriate locations.

Coach services are also operated within the district, providing transport connections to and from airports, cities and towns outside of London. The primary coach hub within the district is Marble Arch. Coach stops are located around Marble Arch and on Baker Street and Gloucester Place, but are often difficult to find and result in unfavourable impacts to the street environment and residential and visitor amenity.

The district-wide scheme will seek to improve conditions by considering a number of measures:

- Consider coach drop-off and pick-up requirements within the overall street design and develop proposals than minimise the impacts caused by these activities while retaining access to key destinations.
- Consider flexible use and enforcement of kerbside restrictions to use available space efficiently when coaches are not present, but accommodate necessary coach stopping at the times this is required.
- Restrict and enforce coach waiting in sensitive locations to suitable periods of time for the embarking and disembarking of passengers.
- Identify adequate coach parking at less sensitive locations external to the immediate Oxford Street District where longer term waiting of coaches is more appropriate. Encourage use of this parking by reducing the opportunities for medium-long term waiting in sensitive locations.
- Review the location of coach stops around Marble Arch and seek to identify proposals that improve ease of access to coach services and relocate coach stops from unsuitable locations such as Portman Street.
- Work with the Mayor and Transport for London to develop a city-wide coach strategy, ensuring that routes, services, stops and hubs are located in the most appropriate locations and operated to the benefit of local residents and visitors

London taxis

London taxis perform an important function within the Oxford Street District. They provide a direct mode of transport that is accessible for the mobility impaired. They transport customers and employees of local businesses. They are also used by residents and visitors to the area and support the night time economy.

However, the volume of taxis within the Oxford Street District contributes to traffic congestion and air pollution. In particular, the act of circulating through the area to seek a fare results in a significant number of vehicle movements that are not transporting passengers, and this is not a desirable situation.

Oxford Street itself is often used as a through route by taxis into and out of the West End. This is preferable to alternative routes on residential side roads at some times of day, particularly late evening and overnight. However, during periods of peak pedestrian flow on Oxford Street the high number of taxi movements contributes to the congested, uncomfortable and hazardous street environment.

Taxi ranks on Oxford Street take up space which during the busiest times of day, which would be better utilised by pedestrians to address crowding issues. However, the importance of taxi access to Oxford Street is recognised and therefore a balanced strategy is proposed:

- Review current arrangements and provide taxi ranks of adequate capacity in convenient locations for shoppers and other visitors to the district.
- Ensure that proposed taxi rank locations are close to key locations and are easy to find with clear wayfinding from Oxford Street and the surrounding district.
- Ensure that taxi access to critical locations (such as department stores and other attractors) is maintained.
- Vehicle access, including taxis, may need to be restricted at specific locations and at certain times of the day to provide a safer and more comfortable environment for pedestrians. The detail of any traffic restrictions that affect taxis will be carefully considered and only taken forward if it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant impact on nearby residential streets (See Vehicle Access).
- Consider options for flexible taxi rank design which may allow rank locations to be used for loading activity or as footway at times of day when taxi use is low.
- Promote the adoption of zero emission capable technology.

Providing an improved taxi rank arrangement for Oxford Street is a key objective. This should reduce the need for taxi drivers to circulate the district in search of a fare, as customers will be able to find taxis waiting at ranks more easily. Better located ranks will assist with reducing traffic congestion and air pollution.

Transport

General traffic

Traffic in general terms includes buses, taxis, commercial vehicles, private cars and private hire vehicles. All of these types of movement need to be considered separately as each has a different role to play in providing for the transport needs of the Oxford Street District. However, there are some issues which can to be considered more generally.

The presence of traffic within the Oxford Street District is essential to provide the full range of transport that the district requires. However, current levels of traffic results in unacceptable air quality, noise pollution, poor road safety, queues and congestion and an uncomfortable environment for walking and cycling.

The Oxford Street District strategy will achieve localised traffic reduction in key areas through street design, traffic restrictions and management of access and servicing. However, to achieve significant reductions in traffic across the entire district, for safety, environmental (air and noise pollution), and public realm benefits, it is acknowledged that Westminster City Council will need to develop a wider strategy of implementable measures and proactively work in collaboration with other Central London Boroughs and Transport for London to deliver them. Westminster City Council intends to fully explore the opportunities available to tackle this key issue and to develop appropriate and feasible measures on a district-wide and city-wide context.

A number of objectives need to be considered for the development of the detailed proposals that will follow this strategy:

- Reduce motor vehicle movements and journeys across the district. This can be achieved by improving access and ease of use to other more efficient forms of transport, encouraging walking and cycling, consolidating freight, servicing and delivery movements.
- Development of simpler designs for streets that reduce the need to circulate around one-way systems and minimise opportunities for rat-running.
- Better manage vehicle movements so that conflicts are reduced. This will include better planning for the delivery of freight, goods and personal deliveries so that periods of peak pedestrian movement are avoided in sensitive areas, restriction of some or all vehicles at key locations for critical times of the day, better management of kerbside space through careful consideration of parking and loading restrictions and identification of measures that address issues of traffic congestion.
- Manage vehicle speeds through the design of streets and the development of an Oxford Street District 20mph zone. Work with Transport for London to explore the options to limit bus speeds to less than 20mph in areas of acute pedestrian pressure.
- Carefully develop detailed proposals to ensure that the schemes brought forward within the Oxford Street District do not result in significant displacement of traffic onto sensitive residential streets.

- Protect neighbourhoods from any displacement of traffic that could occur as a result of proposals on Oxford Street or changes to other parts of the highway network brought forward separately. Closely monitor potential increases in traffic volume on sensitive local streets and consider appropriate measures that address concerns relating to rat-running.
- Design traffic junctions and streets to ensure that there is sufficient capacity and resilience for the necessary movement of vehicles without excessive traffic congestion and queueing.
- Consider changes to the complex system of one-way roads surrounding Oxford Street to simplify the traffic network, reduce conflict and provide capacity for essential traffic movements.
- Develop a carefully considered plan for traffic and transport construction impacts to be managed and minimised throughout the implementation of the Oxford Street District Delivery Plan.

Goods vehicles, servicing and deliveries

The Oxford Street District is home to a high concentration of businesses, all of which have essential servicing requirements. It is the council's ambition that the economy of the Oxford Street District and the West End as a whole continues to benefit the national, regional and local economies and create jobs for local people. The movement of freight and the delivery of goods and services requires vehicles to enter and leave the district. This contributes to the high level of conflict on the streets, air and noise pollution and general traffic congestion. A range of objectives have been identified:

- Minimise the number of trips made by goods and commercial vehicles in and out of the district.
- Work with local businesses, land owners, Business Improvement Districts and logistics companies to maximise the consolidation of freight, servicing and deliveries within the district, including reverse logistics and waste reduction.
- Manage necessary trips made by goods and commercial vehicles.
- Plan the routes taken for deliveries to minimise impacts and ensure that streets and junctions are designed appropriately for the size of vehicles required.
- Plan the re-timing of deliveries to avoid conflict with the busiest times in the district, whilst avoiding disturbing residents and businesses at night.
- Consider banning goods and servicing vehicles from adjacent residential streets at times of the day when activity would cause disturbance. Provide new opportunities for loading on Oxford Street at times of the day when pedestrian activity is low.
- Investigate the potential for micro-consolidation hubs in the district for the last mile delivery.
- Manage the kerbside to provide adequate capacity for loading and servicing at appropriate times but to prioritise pedestrians and minimise conflicts at peak times.

- Investigate and support the adoption of innovative ideas and technologies including porterage and cargo bike schemes, low emission and zero emission vehicles, kerbside monitoring, flexible use of kerbside space (e.g. loading permitted at some times of day, pedestrian space at others), geo-fencing areas for ultra-low emission vehicles, Restricted Parking Zones and Pedestrian Zones.

Consideration will be made for Oxford Street to provide space for loading and servicing during the morning and at night (when pedestrian activity is low) to minimise this activity on adjacent streets where it can be disruptive. This measure will be carefully considered to minimise undesirable increases in conflict with pedestrians. Allowing goods vehicles to use Oxford Street in the morning would also provide or maintain access to adjoining neighbourhoods and reduce the current need for goods vehicles to operate in residential areas.

Westminster City Council will engage with local businesses, land owners, Business Improvement Districts and logistics companies to develop a comprehensive district-wide strategy for freight management, servicing and deliveries with practical and workable proposals building on the West End Partnership's Freight & Servicing Strategy (May 2018).

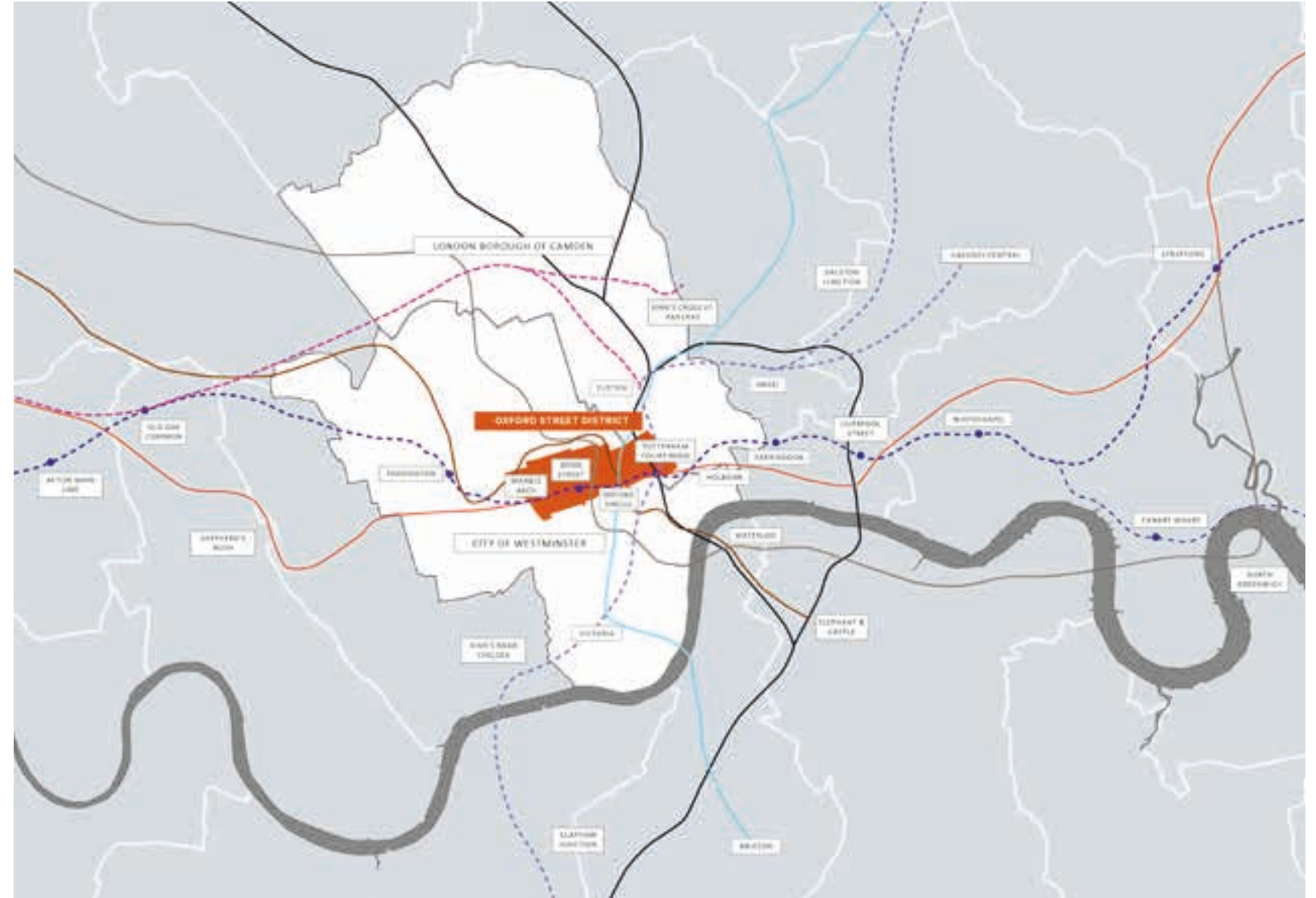
Transport

Accessibility for all

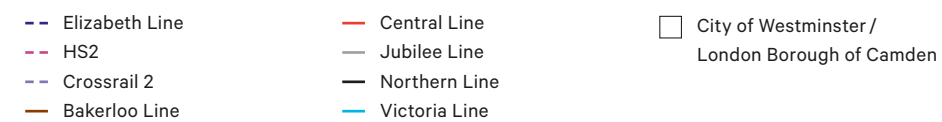
Accessibility for all people, including those with a physical, visual or mental impairment is crucial for those who live in, work and visit the Oxford Street District. Accessible Elizabeth Line underground stations are due to open in 2019. Additionally, a number of measures that provide significant enhancement to accessibility are proposed as part of this strategy:

- Wider, less crowded, decluttered and more comfortable footways on Oxford Street and throughout the district that improve conditions for all pedestrians and wheelchair users.
- A large number of new controlled pedestrian crossings that will provide accessible routes for walking and wheelchair users throughout the district.
- Retaining accessible bus services on Oxford Street.
- Review of blue badge parking to ensure suitable locations are provided close to Oxford Street and throughout the district.
- Taxi ranks designed and located to assist wheelchair access.
- The potential for future consideration of disabled access to Oxford Circus underground station.
- Ensure that any areas that restrict direct access for vehicles at any time retain accessibility for those that need it.
- Provide more rest and quiet spaces for people with different needs and requirements.

Throughout the process of developing specific designs for the streets that make up the Oxford Street District there will be opportunities for accessibility groups to meet with Westminster City Council to discuss and comment on proposals. The palette of design measures will be developed with careful consideration of the needs of disability groups.



Elizabeth Line connections to Oxford Street District



Management

Feedback provided from the Oxford Street District consultation has highlighted issues around management and concerns for the potential for these issues to be exacerbated as a result of the opening of the Elizabeth Line.

The Council has listened carefully to the community about the current challenges experienced in the district – including issues of waste, cleansing, crime and anti-social behaviour – and understands that delivering a significant improvement to public safety, street management services and highway maintenance is just as important as enhancing the streetscape and public realm.

Westminster City Council is therefore collaborating closely with NWECC and the Metropolitan police (i.e. the agencies principally responsible for management matters), and reviewing what changes we can make to services and policies, to design a robust partnership Management Plan that will outline the collective commitments to deliver an ambition of providing world class services to everyone who lives, works and visits the district.

Improvements in the district have already begun and include:

- **New Multi-Agency District Team:** Since January 2019 the district has had a new dedicated team of Council City Inspectors, NWECC security services and Rough Sleeping Outreach support. Along with a new partnership governance structure, this team provides a proactive and co-ordinated response to management issues that arise in the area. Discussions are also ongoing with the Police to secure support to this team within the new West End BCU model. The team will liaise with partners such as contractors, local residents, businesses and property owners as well as other internal teams within their respective organisations.
- **Improved Highways Maintenance:** We have increased the frequency of planned repairs and maintenance for the footways and highways within the District to ensure a more timely response to defective and damaged pavements and roads. We have also co-ordinated the schedules of utility companies to better align their repair and upgrading works, to reduce the number of times the highway is dug up and disrupted, and where these works need to be carried out the areas will be replaced with the same standard of materials.
- **New Street Entertainment Policy:** Oxford Street will be a pilot area for the Council's new street entertainment policy. This policy is currently being developed with stakeholders, and aims to ensure that street entertainment will continue to bring culture and vibrancy to the district whilst minimising the risk to pedestrians caused by crowds on the already crowded street, and adverse impact of noise on businesses and residents. We anticipate the public consultation on the new policy to begin in Spring 2019.
- **Improved Street Cleaning:** From April 2019 both NWECC and the Council have committed to increase the number of cleansing vehicles deployed to the street each day as well as increase the number of times the District is deep cleansed.

Whilst we have already started to make improvements in the area, all agencies want to be able to deliver much more. However, the ambition of world class management is contingent on additional resources and / or funding and the agencies are working together to identify new opportunities for enhanced funding and resources so that any improvements in management can be sustained.

It is also recognised that some areas of concern cannot be addressed through an enhanced Management Plan alone. For example we want to do more to support rough sleepers find sustainable routes away from the street, and take stronger action against pedicabs who operate dangerously or anti-socially. However, whilst we are able to make some improvement in these areas through additional resources, the powers currently available to the respective agencies are limiting, which in turn limits the ability to effectively sustain longer term improvements in these areas. Our strategy is therefore to continue our lobbying of government to make the essential changes needed to enable us to improve our response.

Pedi-cabs

It is considered that the activity currently associated with pedi-cabs within the Oxford Street District causes a number of issues. Blocking of carriageways and footways by pedi-cabs contributes to the existing pedestrian and vehicle movement issues and the noise generated by pedi-cabs is considered to be a nuisance. Westminster City Council will continue to work with national and local government to seek the powers required to regulate pedi-cabs, and to restrict them from behaviour that is considered detrimental to the area. Resolving the issues caused by pedi-cabs is a key objective of this project.

Monitoring and evaluation

Westminster City Council is committed to the ongoing monitoring of the impacts of schemes that it introduces to ensure that benefits are realised, impacts are identified and any unforeseen effects are understood. In the case of the Oxford Street District, monitoring will include the survey of traffic flows on potentially affected streets before and after scheme implementation, continuous monitoring of air quality across the district, ongoing assessment of road user collision records, kerbside occupancy (parking and loading), traffic regulation infringements and specific issues and complaints from the public.

The programme of monitoring for the Oxford Street District will dovetail with existing monitoring strategies for the Baker Street Two-Way and Tottenham Court Road Two-Way schemes, meaning that there will be the opportunity to measure and understand the combined effects of all schemes and develop measures for mitigation should they be required.

Westminster City Council will monitor the levels of traffic on all streets within or adjacent to the Oxford Street District. The scheme will be designed with the aim of minimising traffic displacement into residential streets, however if it is shown that this objective has not been achieved at a particular location then the Council will commit to work with local groups to devise and implement appropriate measures to mitigate any Impacts. This could include measures that would restrict or calm traffic movement, alterations to the scheme where elements of it are shown not to be working as desired, or other measures that would provide benefits that are desired by the local community.

Broader measures to reduce traffic on a district wide and or city-wide level including, but not limited to, better management and consolidation of freight will also be explored by the Council as part of its overall role as the highway authority.

Wayfinding and legibility

The Oxford Street District has seen many recent changes, which have altered routes and connections and understanding of the area for people working and visiting to the area. As the district adapts and changes it needs improved signage and wayfinding interventions, building upon the existing Legible London maps to make it understandable and easy to navigate throughout short periods of change and a longer-term strategy to ensure it is as understandable as possible. Major gateways to the district can be confusing for those unfamiliar to the area. When exiting from Oxford Circus underground station, many people find it difficult to orientate themselves due to limited signage.

Smaller streets off Oxford Street need to be improved as the entry points into other neighbourhoods through enhancing and clearing sightlines and making material changes.

The Place Strategy will be developing a set of objectives, including but not limited to the below:

- Emphasise the major gateways of Tottenham Court Road, Oxford Circus, Bond Street and Marble Arch and highlight important nodes and connections (including transport hubs and stops) to the wider West End.
- Characterise London Underground and Elizabeth Line rail stations as identifiable arrival points into the district through artistic collaborations to create unique and innovative signage that reflects the Oxford Street character.
- Enhance the network of side streets and passageways off Oxford Street by clearing clutter to improve the natural and intuitive wayfinding across the district, enhancing sightlines, and increase pedestrian priority within the public realm, facilitating better legibility and movement through the district.
- Incorporate clear signage at eye level and Wi-Fi for route-finding apps as an essential means of wayfinding for visitors and those less familiar with the district.
- Enhance the presence of other uses and institutions in the public realm.
- Improved signage could enhance visitor experience by better linking up key attractions and showcasing world-class destinations such as the British Museum, Photographers’ Gallery and Wallace Collection.
- Ensure all methods of wayfinding are accessible to the district’s diverse demographic, which includes children, those with visual and hearing impairment, and those for whom English is not a first language, through innovative use of symbols, colour, textures, and multiple languages.
- Highlight entrances and key routes into neighbouring areas with considered design of the public realm that is complementary to the identity of the district.

Precedents



Escale Numérique, Paris
Urban seating and wi-fi hotspot areas
Designed by Mathieu Lehanneur



Culture Trail, Indianapolis
An eight mile urban walking and cycling path connecting neighbourhoods, parks and cultural amenities



Remscheid
On-street wayfinding in Remscheid, Germany



Walk Rio, Rio de Janeiro
Suggested walking routes connect points of interest throughout the city



Gare de Lyon
Bus stops with Wi-Fi and wayfinding



Subway stations, Hong Kong
Bold use of colours throughout the system, aiding wayfinding



Walk Philadelphia
Legible on street wayfinding signage



National Theatre, London
Use of colour to identify main circulation spaces

Amenity

Oxford Street lacks the amenities to support its status as a highly successful retail destination. People can be observed across the district looking for a place to sit, or a quiet area away from the main pedestrian flows. This is particularly acute on and around Oxford Street itself. The current benches on Oxford Street are poorly located, uncomfortable and not well-used for resting spaces as they most often situated adjacent to the carriageway with a view only of the road.

In addition the user group is very diverse and includes (but is by no means limited to):

- Its resident, worker and London-wide visitor population
- Groups visiting Oxford Street and looking for places to meet and rest, including educational groups
- Families and visitors with children
- Visitors for whom the district will be their first destination in London and so will be unfamiliar with the street pattern, signage and transport system

The Place Strategy will be developing a set of objectives, including but not limited to the below:

- Provide much needed amenities for residents, workers and visitors of all ages.
- Commission a series of Oxford Street District drinking water fountains, to be located in side streets spaces just off the main pedestrian thoroughfare of Oxford Street, and across the district, at regular intervals
- Locate additional moveable seating in improved public spaces.
- The street furniture elements provide an opportunity for a special design commission.
- Integrate playable features into the district to ensure spaces are for all ages and encourage families to visit and stay in the area (see also Play).
- Provide accessible leisure and play for young people, teenagers and adults such as sports and activities in the many green spaces across the district.
- Explore opportunities for underused spaces within buildings to accommodate facilities.
- Provide additional cycle parking.
- Provide additional public toilets across the district.

The City Plan is undergoing a refresh, and Westminster City Council consulted on a new draft Plan in November to December 2018.

For more information, please refer to City Plan 2019 – 2040 Draft policies at <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/cityplan2040>

Precedents



Bryant Park, New York
Reading room



Industry City, New York
Example of moveable furniture in external spaces



Borough Market, London
Drinking water fountain



Rambla Villa Franca
Integrated lighting and seating



Kiosk, Shanghai, China
Integrated local amenities, Wi-Fi and cash points



Flat Iron Square, London
Temporary public seating

Play

The Oxford Street District has limited play provision for young children and teenagers. Westminster City Council has identified much of the district as deficient in both play space and open space for informal play. Play space is predominantly located in the garden squares and parks across the district however it lacks variety and does not include play for all generations.

The Draft New London Plan (Policy S4) states that incidental, playable space should be incorporated into large-scale public realm developments, and a 2012 GLA Special Policy Guidance (SPG) on play and informal recreation states that “public and communal spaces should be designed so they are multifunctional and offer a range of leisure and recreation opportunities for users of all ages, as well as being playable”.

Play is a generous and welcoming way of civilising a world city. The mayor of Bogotá, Enrique Peñalosa, has famously claimed that “children are a kind of indicator species. If we can build a successful city for children, we will have a successful city for everyone.” Similarly, in a 2017 report on urban childhoods, Arup concluded that “child-friendly urban planning is a vital part of creating inclusive cities that work better for everyone”. By designing streets that are suitable for use by children, we improve the quality of the urban environment for all users.

The improvements to the public realm in the Oxford Street district will provide a safe and welcoming environment for families and children. The following objectives, currently being developed as part of the Place Strategy, including but not limited to the below:

- Develop a play strategy for the district, referring to best practice in the design of playable spaces.
- Ensure that public open spaces and community facilities are accessible to and well used by children and young people.
- Provide playable space in areas where there may be limited play provision, particularly near schools and in areas of deficiency for example Riding House Street.
- Encourage varied play, both social and physical, across the district, providing children with a range of activities.
- Significant play opportunities could be made available in the parks and garden squares across the district.
- Allow provision for managed play in appropriate public spaces to create a varied calendar of events to encourage families to return to the district.
- Work with retailers and businesses in the area to support and encourage the Young Enterprise scheme for teenagers and young adults.
- Continue to consult with WCC youth council in the development of proposals.

Precedents



Playable Alphabet, Broadgate, London
Temporary installations



Camden Four Spaces, Camden, London
Features and amenity in the public realm



Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children
Use of digital technology to create interactive play for children



Playable City, Bristol
Use of lighting and technology in the evenings



Banyoles Old Town Square, Spain
Playable features in the public realm



Public spaces, Lisbon
Footway surfaces can encourage play



Mirror Labyrinth, Olympic Park, London
Features and sculptures within garden squares and parks



SNUG by Play KK, Kings Cross
Temporary soft play for children

Architectural quality

There are 13 conservation areas covering the Oxford Street District within the City of Westminster and the London Borough of Camden, reflecting the characterful, distinct and historic built environment, beautiful vistas and elegant garden squares.

Oxford Street has a mix of architectural characters with buildings of many sizes and ages such as the department stores and the iconic architectural set piece of Oxford Circus at the junction with Regent Street.

There is a mixed quality of frontages on Oxford Street from outstanding to many which are undervalued particularly on the return frontages often covered with vinyl. Rear side entrances are not currently prominent with the exception of Selfridges' new Duke Street entrance and Liberty who embrace all sides of the building.

Westminster City Council aims to work with landowners, developers and owner-occupiers to ensure that Oxford Street and district are recognised for the eclectic mix of architecture and heritage which already exists but also for world class, high quality design of buildings in the future.

The Place Strategy will be developing a set of objectives, including but not limited to the below:

- Promote world-class architecture along Oxford Street.
- Encourage high-quality design of buildings and public space in the district that protects, celebrates and contributes to the eclectic architectural character and heritage of Oxford Street.
- Consider the Oxford Street District as a showcase for exemplary new buildings, enabled by a framework of architectural and design expertise.
- Set a new frontages guide for Oxford Street to improve shop fronts and exteriors, carefully designing the corners, unit frontages, materiality and lighting on side streets immediately off Oxford Street. Frontages of new public spaces are part of the enclosure of the space and will need to be carefully designed to help frame the space.

The City Plan is undergoing a refresh, and Westminster City Council consulted on a new draft Plan in November to December 2018.

For more information, please refer to City Plan 2019 – 2040 Draft policies at <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/cityplan2040>

Precedents



Selfridges, Duke Street entrance, London
Striking design for the secondary entrance helps activate the side street
Designed by David Chipperfield Architects



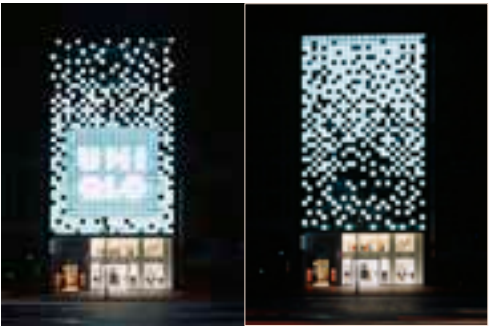
Uniqlo, Oxford Street, London
2016 renovation converted all 5 levels into retail space, animating the whole façade
Designed by Wonderwall



Yayoi Kusama, Selfridges shop windows, London
Curated shop windows are a destination and add spectacle to the street



Reiss HQ, Barrett Street, London
Beautiful architecture terminating the street view
Designed by Squire & Partners



Uniqlo, Ginza, Tokyo
Designed by Klein Dytham



150 – 155 Oxford Street, London
Renovated handsome upper level façade

Materials

The quality of materials across the district is inconsistent. On Oxford Street the paving is in poor condition. Other major retail streets in the area have recently undergone significant improvements with Regent Street and Bond Street paved with high quality, unifying material palettes complementing the built fabric and function of the street spaces.

The Westminster Way, Westminster City Council’s streetscape guidance ‘aims to build on established best practice advocating a generally minimalist, but co-ordinated and holistic approach that considers whole life costing and sustainability in design, implementation and management of the public realm’. It sets out detailed guidance for street design and the material palette for the district’s conservation areas. It also sets out the criteria and guidance, for special projects, providing an opportunity to address the material palette of Oxford Street and the district.

The Place Strategy will be developing a set of objectives, including but not limited to the below:

- Create a material palette specifically for Oxford Street.
- Zones of Oxford Street have a different character and function, and should be designed accordingly.
- There is an opportunity for special paving to be designed at specific locations for example at Oxford Circus and the forecourt to Selfridges’ Oxford Street façade. Consider the private forecourts of buildings on Oxford Street as an opportunity for special paving for example at entrances to the department stores .
- Carefully select materials on side streets immediately off Oxford Street to help maintain a clear transition between areas, distinguishing thresholds between Oxford Street, Soho and Fitzrovia to protect the heritage and identity of distinct adjacent character areas.
- Prioritise options for sustainable materials, considering provenance alongside performance, which are durable and can be effectively cleaned.
- Clearly define pedestrian priority spaces and areas for vehicle movement to reduce conflict and ensure surface materials are legible for everyone.
- Design a palette for street furniture and enhance the details of the street such as tree pit surrounds and drainage covers, which should be identifiable to the District .
- Ensure to design for all road users including those with a disability, visual impairment and ensure that the design is dementia friendly.

Key considerations for the material palette for Oxford Street:

Technical constraints

- Quality, lead time, cost, availability and consistency of supply
- Sustainability and provenance
- Durability and wear under very high footfall
- Maintenance – including weight of cleaning equipment, potential staining
- Limited depth below surface in many areas
- Accessibility including visual distinction, tactile paving and kerb heights
- Designing in safety features from the outset

Design considerations

- Width, scale and character of different sections of the street
- Format size and pattern, colour and tone
- Treatment and finishes
- Multiple entrances and forecourts with different materials
- Effect of seasons, day and night
- Effect of lighting
- Street furniture and features: tree pits, service covers and special details

Precedents



Granary Square King’s Cross, London
Durable and high quality materials with varied colour palette and formats



Castle Street, Carlisle
Natural stone and raised loading bays



Hanover Square sample, London
Elegant, high quality materials to complement the built fabric



Hans Crescent, Kensington
Clear distinction of kerb lines on streets with flush surfaces



Centenary Square, Sydney
Varying textures and finishes



Borås Fashion Centre, Borås, Sweden
Special paving in public spaces

Lighting

Lighting provision must strike the balance of being functional, attractive and sustainable. The current lighting arrangements on Oxford Street do not reflect the status of international shopping street. Similarly, the lighting of some adjacent streets in the district is not appropriate to the scale and character of the streets. The existing lighting specification consists of a variety of fittings, lamp types, colours and wattages, and is outdated. The levels of illumination are often not adapted to the use of the space, and do not complement the architecture, scale or character of certain areas. In terms of management, the lighting technology used is not the most efficient or flexible compared to current lighting technologies, and is not suited to the needs of an evolving public realm.

Lighting that is managed privately, for example from retail frontages, is often overly bright, and spills too much light across the street. The balance between public street lighting and lighting from retail and office spaces needs to be carefully balanced. Well designed and managed retail and commercial lighting can make a positive and very important contribution to the public realm after dark by animating the street, enhancing its character and improving perceptions of security. Privately managed lighting must however be carefully controlled and balanced to ensure that light trespass and pollution (which constitute wasted energy) are avoided, and that the lighting to any one property does not dominate. Similarly, the scale and mounting of public street lighting equipment and the colour and intensity of light cast should help complement the character of the street, and should not overpower architectural or shop front illumination.

The emergence of new technologies and the increasing recognition of healthier, more sustainable and resilient urban environments creates a wide range of opportunities to rethink the design and function of Oxford Street at night. Westminster City Council is committed to improving the quality and flexibility of lighting in the district, by providing the right amount of light at the right time and in the right place.

The Place Strategy will be developing a set of objectives, including but not limited to the below:

- Lighting on Oxford Street will be planned holistically to unify and strengthen the identity and legibility of the street. A new set of lighting columns will be introduced along the length of the street, unifying its full length.
- Highways illuminance and uniformity levels for Oxford Street should be determined by patterns of use, character, surrounding context and safety. A nuanced approach should be adopted, ensuring that light levels are minimised wherever and whenever possible without compromising safety, are balanced with the existing context and are sensitive to the character of illumination on adjacent streets.
- Where possible, the system installed should be flexible and allow variable light levels to be applied according to use. The future conditions of the street, such as wider footways and reduced vehicle speeds, should be considered.
- Opportunities for site-specific special lighting should be considered across the district; highlighting landmarks, meeting places, key junctions and façades terminating vistas can help aid legibility and wayfinding, as well as enhance the various characters long the street.
- The scale and style of lighting equipment across the district must be designed with respect to the width of the footways, scale and character of architecture.
- Locations for lighting columns must complement the character and use of the street and help protect key vistas to landmarks and features.
- The colour temperature and colour rendering of light will be considered in relation to the character of the street and the surrounding context.
- Glare, light trespass and light pollution must be minimised as far as possible.
- Lighting should be considered in relation to retail frontages and illumination to architecture, landscape and features.

Precedents



Uniqlo, London
Lighting of retail frontages and upper floor windows



St. James's Market, London
Lighting frontages



Exhibition Road, London
Unifying lamp columns



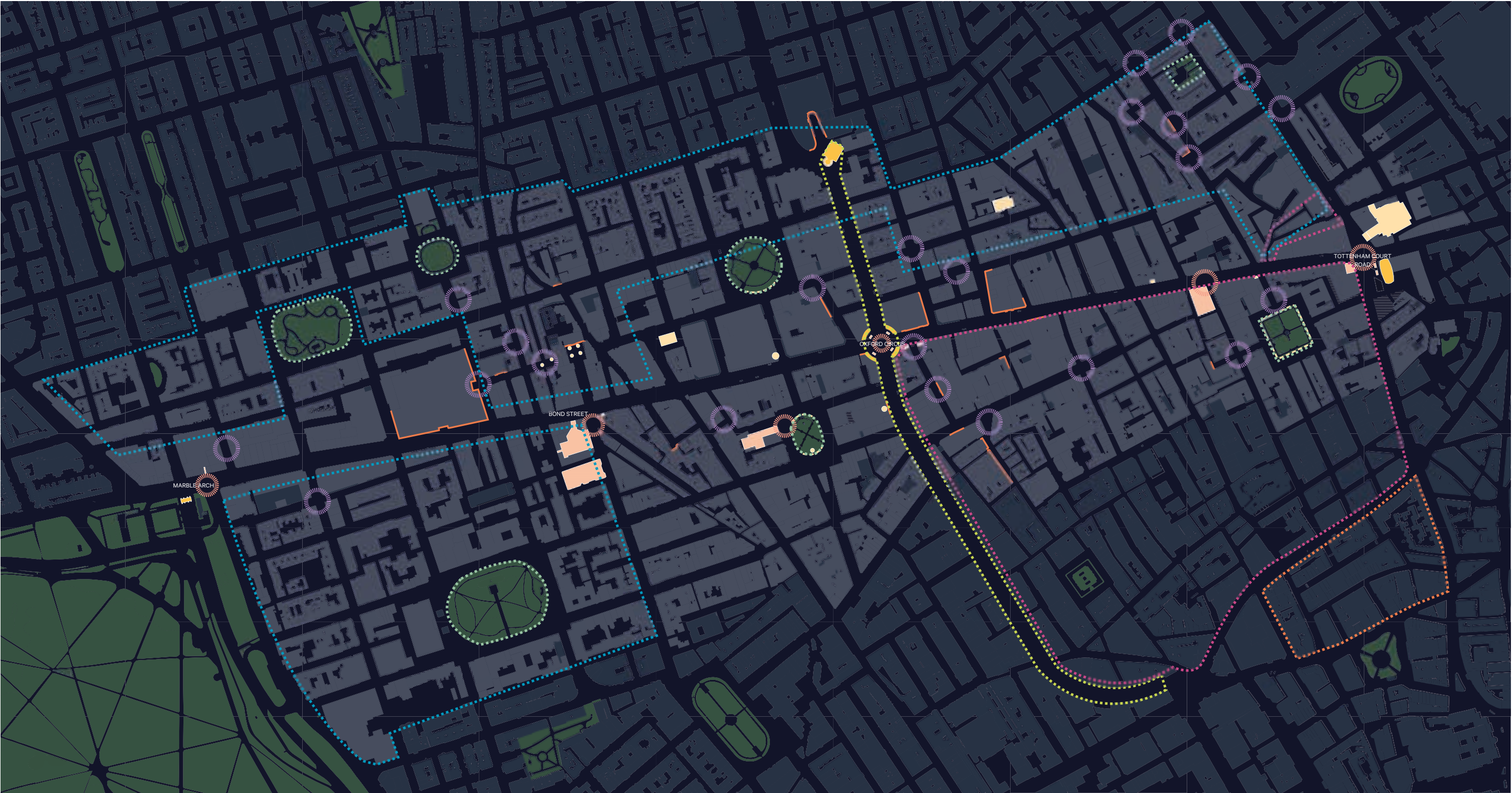
Lumiere 2018, Berkeley Square, London
Providing opportunity for event and spectacle



Exmouth Market, London
Special lighting of cafe and restaurant areas



Dubrovnik, Croatia
Lighting of landmarks



CHARACTER AREAS

- Green area
- Residential or commercial area
- Soho area
- Regent Street area

DISTRICT FEATURES

- Local building
- Local feature (tree / art)
- Landmark

VISTAS

- Façade terminating vista
- Park terminating vista

NODES

- Transport meeting place
- Evening venue

Landscape

The Oxford Street District has a wealth of green spaces with Hyde Park at its western end and a series of handsome garden squares to either side of Oxford Street along its length. The beautiful green spaces of the gardens are far more attractive than the streets surrounding them, with difficult connections to the entrances and restricted sightlines to the gardens. Some of these challenges are currently already being addressed through the redesign of Hanover Square which is underway and future works to Grosvenor Square is also in consideration.

There are plans for additional trees and greenery across the whole district, with additional new street trees improving street spaces such as Old Quebec Street and Marylebone Lane. The footways across the area and on Oxford Street are narrow and have services running underneath which can make accommodation of street trees difficult. However, potential footway widening has made greenery possible in a greater number of places. Unlike Regent Street, Oxford Street trees are part of its character.

Property owners in the area are finding ways to contribute to the biodiversity of the area through the Wild West End initiative which aims to enhance biodiversity and encouraging wildlife into the West End of London, to create a better place to live, work and visit.

The Place Strategy will be developing a set of objectives, including but not limited to the below:

- Assess every street and space in the district and potential new trees and greenery exploring all options for tree planting. When building out footways whilst ensuring important sight lines and pedestrian connections across and along the street are retained, in addition to maintaining healthy mature trees.
- Provide additional street trees and greenery, to enhance the environment and character, across the whole district, giving shelter and shade in places where people gather and rest, particularly in new public spaces with opportunity for much more greenery in spaces just off Oxford Street.
- Celebrate and revitalise the historic garden squares. Ensure excellent quality of landscaping and diversity of species in Soho Square and Cavendish Square as exceptional places to spend time.
- Improve connections to green spaces within the district, including Hyde Park, to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of everyone who visits, lives and works in the district.
- Include a variety of tree species, increasing the area’s biodiversity, which would also create a range of colours and changing natural environment across the seasons.
- Create a green corridor on Great Portland Street to enhance the historic street and connections from Oxford Street to the adjacent neighbourhoods.
- Where permanent greening is not possible, consider temporary green parks on rooftops.
- Commission a landscape and planting strategy.

Precedents



Mariahilferstrasse, Vienna
A tree-lined boulevard in the centre of the city



Bonnington Square, London
Lush planting in small public spaces



Colville Place, London
Greening of quieter streets



Rue de Tresor, Paris
A range of planting and tree species on side streets



Caixa Forum, Madrid
Green wall in Madrid's cultural centre



Handyside Garden, London
A pocket park and children's play area in King's Cross



Southbank Centre rooftop, London
Opportunities to improve biodiversity in central London



Pocket spaces, Urban Garden, Favara
Adding variety through temporary parks

Culture and public art

Oxford Street has a rich cultural heritage as a place of entertainment, music, fashion and innovative retail experiences. The bazaar, a Victorian building typology and new way of shopping, was first introduced on Oxford Street. Making innovative use of existing buildings for retail and leisure, the bazaars were defined by their spatial openness and multi-functional spaces that would host a variety of traders under one roof. Many included winter gardens, picture galleries, tea rooms, and spaces for entertainment. The Soho Bazaar was opened in 1816 on Soho Square, within a renovated warehouse building. This was followed by the Pantheon Bazaar in 1834, within the Pantheon Theatre (now Marks & Spencer's east Oxford Street store).

The area has a rich history of design and manufacture – with the Arts and Crafts movement originating here, which pioneered new consumer markets in accessible household goods at the turn of the century, exemplified by the fashion and artefacts in Liberty and a number of other department stores.

In the 1900s the area also was host to a number of dance halls and theatres. The Paramount Ballroom or Paramount Dance Hall on Tottenham Court Road held the first jitterbug dance competition in 1939, marking the first event of the popular dance craze. Adjoining the ballroom was the Paramount Theatre, one of the three largest cinemas in the West End, after the Empire and Dominion Theatres, both also located on Tottenham Court Road.

Today, the land-uses are primarily retail and commerce, particularly on Oxford Street itself. The 100 Club is the only live music venue left on the street, after the club Plastic People relocated to Shoreditch and the venue in the former HMV flagship store was closed, though the district will celebrate its first 21st century theatre when the Nimax opens on the site of the old Astoria at Tottenham Court Road in 2020.

The rich cultural heritage of the area includes extraordinary works by Eduardo Paolozzi, Barbara Hepworth and Jacob Epstein in the public realm and the district has hosted seminal temporary commissions, for example Michael Landy's 2001 ArtAngel works Breakdown, staged in the former C&A department store on Oxford Street in 2001 or the recent Lumiere programme. Alongside major commissions and public art, the district hosts institutions, galleries and museums including the Handel & Hendrix museum, the Wallace Collection, the Photographer's Gallery and the galleries of Eastcastle Street. Artists, writers, designers and musicians have long lived and worked across the district, particularly in Soho and Marylebone and Oxford Street itself, as well as the historic neighbourhoods benefit from an extraordinary array of extremely fine buildings representing a range of different architectural periods. The cultural strategy for the area has a significant legacy to build upon.

The opportunity to raise the quality and diversity of cultural programming of the Oxford Street District will be a fundamental aspect of the ongoing success of the area. Retailers are increasingly staging an engaging and exciting shopping experience, whether in their interiors, on building elevations or using the display windows, and the Oxford Street District has the capacity for even greater cultural spectacle hosting a great range of cultural, leisure and entertainment uses of all types and scales alongside, and as part of, the retail of the district.

The evening and night time have been the backdrop for recent major cultural events such as Lumiere that give people a different perspective on the streets and spaces that make up the West End, as well as smaller every day interventions that can

encourage people to look up, explore a new place or stay longer. Our understanding of spectacle in cities is rapidly evolving with use of social media making the imagery of spaces ever more important. Setting culture at the heart of London's most iconic shopping street – making it a golden thread running through the district's urban life – will be consistent with Oxford Street District's international profile, it will extend the life of the street into the evening, and create a more engaging place for residents, workers and visitors.

Principles

A cultural strategy will be commissioned in the next stage of the project that will build upon the district's extraordinary existing culture and arts programming, architecture and institutions, revealing and celebrating what is currently hidden in plain sight. The principles for the strategy include:

- Identify, draw upon, safeguard and support existing cultural assets, creative networks, cultural and commissioning programmes and initiatives in order to enhance the local identity, culture and creative enterprise that already exists in the district.
- Celebrate the distinct characters and identities of the different neighbourhoods and parts of Oxford Street, whilst providing a unifying, integrated framework.
- Redesign the settings of some of the district's cultural treasures, such as the Photographer's Gallery.
- Embrace variety and ensure an integrated series of art commissions, events, activations and initiatives.
- Consider a new commissioning and governance structure for cultural activities and commissioning in the Oxford Street District.
- Encourage experimentation to ensure that a diverse range of art forms, perspectives and innovation are present in the cultural programming and commissioning.
- Use and enhance the district's street infrastructure, for example benches, bus stops, drinking fountains and lighting, as well as display windows, architecture and elevations.
- Celebrate the seasons and the cultural calendar of events in London, allowing for a layering of activity to enliven the district at all times of year.
- Include international commissions to reflect the district's world-class status.
- Integrate with existing London-wide cultural programmes, engaging local London artists.
- Emphasise approaches to making culture accessible and inclusive for people of all ages across the borough.
- Incorporate digital technology into programming, event curation and spectacle in playful and engaging ways, and to underpin other strategic elements such as wayfinding and play.
- Explore all opportunities for studio or makers spaces, to bring back the street's legacy of making within the district.
- Encourage creative and cultural meanwhile uses for new development sites across the district.

Precedents



Sculpture in the City, London
An annual open-air contemporary sculpture exhibition in the Square Mile



Nuit Blanche, Toronto
An all-night art and culture event running annually since 2006



Winterlude, Ottawa
An annual winter festival making use of the frozen Rideau Canal and cold weather



Backyard Cinema, London
Screenings in public spaces



Kulturnatten, Copenhagen
An annual culture night held across 250 venues and public spaces in the city



Madonna and Child by Barbara Hepworth, Cavendish Square – A wealth of existing public art can be found in Oxford Street District



Identified Flying Object (IFO), London
The IFO was installed outside King's Cross in 2011 as part of RELAY – a contemporary art programme in the area



Fiesta Mayor de Gracia, Barcelona
Annual local festival

This chapter sets out a full list of projects identified for the whole district. Every street and space in the district has been studied in regard to how it works currently, if any changes are required and how it might be included as part of district-wide improvements.

To achieve the objectives and principles set out in the Place Strategy, 97 projects across 88 streets and spaces have been identified, across nine zones. Some projects will be relatively modest, others are major public realm schemes, all are included for their potential to create meaningful change and their contribution to district-wide improvement.

The potential projects include revitalised garden squares, a whole series of new public spaces off Oxford Street and improved streets which provide better connections to London Underground and Elizabeth Line stations or enhanced settings for retail, cafés and restaurants. Oxford Street itself is set out as multiple projects, reflecting its varied character and function in different areas.

All sites have been considered in relation to existing public realm schemes in construction or design stages and adjacency of any potential major developments.

The matrix lists the streets and spaces geographically through zones A – I.

Existing public realm projects

Streets and spaces for improvements

Project matrix

Existing major public realm projects



- PROJECTS AT DESIGN STAGE**
- 11 Conduit Street
 - 12 Sutton Row
 - 13 St. George Street
 - 14 Riding House Street
 - 15 Berners Street
 - 16 Princes Street

- PROJECTS IN CONSTRUCTION**
- 20 Baker Street two-way
 - 21 Wigmore Street (east)
 - 22 Davies Street Elizabeth Line station
 - 23 Dean Street Elizabeth Line station
 - 24 West End Project
 - 25 Centrepoint Plaza

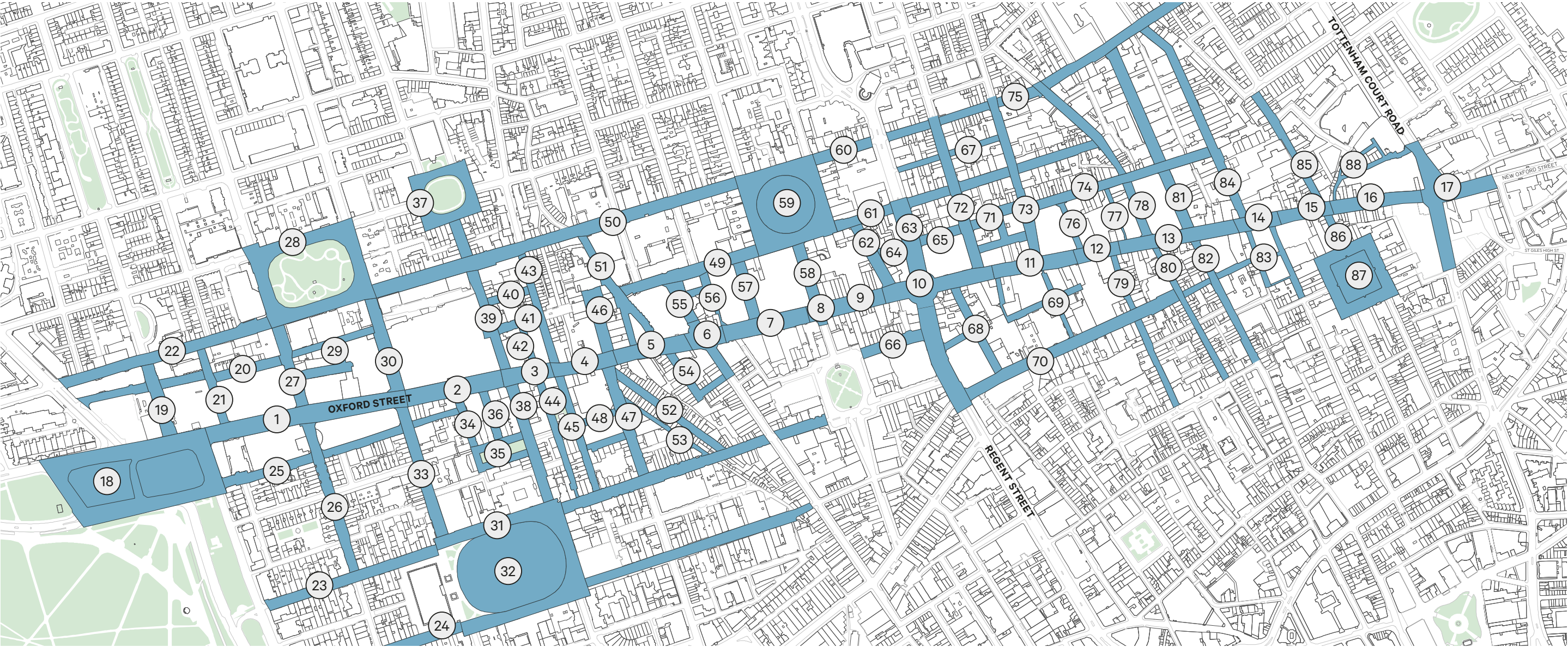
- 26 1 Oxford Street public realm
- 27 Hanover Square and gardens
- 28 Tenterden Street
- 29 Harewood Place
- 30 West side of Grosvenor Square
- 31 Marble Arch Place

- RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS (WITHIN THREE YEARS)**
- 30 Grosvenor Hill
 - 31 Rathbone Place
 - 32 Cambridge Circus
 - 33 Tottenham Court Road Elizabeth Line station
 - 34 Bond Street

- 35 Brook Street
- 36 Savile Row
- 37 Duke Street (north)
- 38 Marylebone Lane (north)
- 39 Marylebone Lane (south)

- 310 Glasshouse Street
- 311 Berwick Street
- 312 Old Quebec Street

Streets and spaces for improvements



For full list of projects, see p.74

Project matrix

Zone			Name
Oxford Street	B	1	Oxford Street, Great Cumberland Place to Orchard Street
	C	2	Oxford Street, between Orchard Street and Duke Street
	C	3	Oxford Street, Duke Street to James Street
	D	4	Oxford Street, James Street to Stratford Place (outside Bond Street station)
	D	5	Oxford Street, Stratford Place to New Bond Street
	D	6	Oxford Street, Junction Bond Street / Vere Street / Oxford Street
	E	7	Oxford Street, New Bond Street to Holles Street
	E	8	Oxford Street, Junction Harewood Place and Holles Street
	E	9	Oxford Street, Holles Street to John Princes Street
	F	10	Oxford Circus. Oxford Street, John Princes Street to Great Portland Street
	G	11	Oxford Street, Great Portland Street to Winsley Street
	G	12	Oxford Street, Winsley Street to Poland Street
	G–H	13	Oxford Street, Poland Street to Great Chapel Street
	H	14	Oxford Street, Great Chapel Street to Dean Street
	H	15	Oxford Street, Dean Street to junction of Soho Street and Rathbone Place
	I	16	Oxford Street, Soho Street to Tottenham Court Road
	I	17	Oxford Street, Junction of Tottenham Court Road / Oxford Street / Charing Cross Road
A	18		Marble Arch
	19		Great Cumberland Place
	20		Bryanston Street
	21		Old Quebec Street
	22		Seymour Street
	23		Brook Street
	24		Grosvenor Street
B	25		North Row
	26		Park Street
	27		Portman Street
	28		Portman Square surrounds
	29		Portman Mews South and Granville Place

Zone		Name
C	30	Orchard Street
	31	Grosvenor Square surround
	32	Grosvenor Square Gardens
	33	North Audley Street
	34	Balderton Street
	35	Brown Hart Gardens surrounding streets
	36	Lumley Street
	37	Manchester Square surrounds
	38	Duke Street (south)
	39	Duke Street (north)
	40	Picton Place
	41	Barrett Street
	42	Bird Street
	43	James Street
	44	Binney Street
	45	Gilbert Street
D	46	Stratford Place
	47	Davies Street
	48	Weighhouse Street and St Anselm’s Place
	49	Henrietta Place
	50	Wigmore Street
	51	Marylebone Lane (South)
	52	South Molton Street
	53	South Molton Lane
	54	Woodstock Street
	55	Vere Street
	56	Chapel Place

Project matrix

Zone		Name
E	57	Old Cavendish Street
	58	Holles Street
	59	Cavendish Square and Gardens
	60	Cavendish Place
F	61	Margaret Street
	62	John Prince’s Street
	63	Regent Street
	64	Great Castle Street (west)
	65	Great Castle Street (east)
	66	Princes Street
	67	Little Portland Street
	68	Argyll Street and Place
G	69	Ramillies Street and Place / Hills Place
	70	Great Marlborough Street / Noel Street / Hollen Street
	71	Market Place
	72	Great Portland Street
	73	Great Titchfield Street
	74	Eastcastle Street
	75	Mortimer Street
	76	Winsley Street
	77	Adam and Eve Court
	78	Wells Street
	79	Poland Street
	80	Berwick Street (north)

Zone		Name
H	81	Berners Street
	82	Wardour Street
	83	Great Chapel Street
	84	Newman Street
	85	Rathbone Place
	86	Soho Street
	87	Soho Square and Gardens
I	88	Hanway Street and Place
ALL		Southern alignment cycle grid
		Northern alignment cycle grid
		Freight engagement
		Lighting strategy
		Culture and public art strategy
		Landscape and planting strategy
		Street trading strategy
		Play strategy
		Study to accelerate the adoption of low emissions vehicles

The project list outlines the streets and spaces that are included within the scope of the strategy. The phasing of the projects and the level of intervention will be developed during the design process with engagement from stakeholders. Some projects will be relatively modest e.g. street scape enhancements such as tree planning / greening whereas other projects will propose major public realm improvements. All projects are included in the strategy due to their potential to deliver a positive change to the district.

Example sites

The example sites represent how the design principles of the strategy could be applied in ten areas across the district. As sites they have been chosen both because changes are already occurring which will affect the experience of these areas – newly opened points of arrival with the Elizabeth Line, potential changes in patterns of use – but also because of the opportunities they present, such as extraordinary historic architectural settings, interesting contemporary uses or access to green space. Each site will be developed with stakeholders and delivered independently, and as a whole would represent significant improvement to the quality of the public realm of the Oxford Street District.

As a set, they also illustrate the different layers of the strategy, demonstrating the potential of a coordinated strategy of individual projects to strengthen the aesthetic, technical and functional relationships between the variety of places that comprise the district.

These projects show how a public realm strategy, emerging from careful study and use of existing qualities, could make Oxford Street more enjoyable for all and more resilient in the face of change.

Each example site is described in the following way:

1. A short description of the sites as background to the approach to the site.
2. A site plan drawing showing the existing condition.
3. A key visual reference to inspire engagement with aspects of the site’s character and qualities.
4. A mini photographic portrait journeying across the site and describing key issues at present.
5. A bullet point list describing how principles of the district strategy could be met in this site.
6. A selection of precedents showing comparable projects and ideas.
7. An axonometric drawing showing potential projects across the site.

The projects do not imply priority, but are simply illustrative of the strategic approach.

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Marble Arch: the western gateway to the district

Background

Marble Arch, a Grade I listed monument, is a gateway in the broadest sense of the word. It forms a key arrival point to the Oxford Street District and, for a large variety of people, to London. Around the arch are exits from the London Underground, as well as stops for TfL buses, sightseeing / tour buses, and coaches travelling nationally.

This area formed the historic boundary of the county of Middlesex, and as such this site has always represented the western edge of Oxford Street. It was used as the site for executions, which is commemorated by a plaque on one of the traffic islands. The arch was designed for Buckingham Palace but was deemed too small when the palace was enlarged and moved to its current location in time for the Great Exhibition of 1851. London City Council road improvements first severed Marble Arch from Hyde Park in 1908, setting it within its island site. The widening of Park Lane in the early 1960s further isolated the arch and that scheme means that fourteen lanes of traffic now separate Hyde Park from Oxford Street. The arch was granted its listed status in 1970.

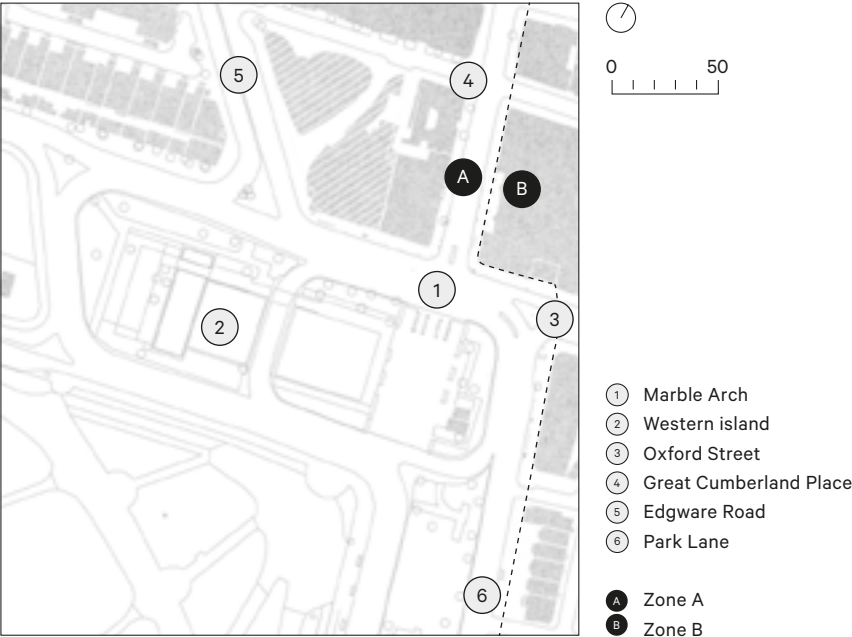
Proposals to dramatically redefine this area would need to be carefully staged, considering the site as part of the Strategic Road Network and the multiple and overlapping ownership of the site.



Homecoming of Prince Edward at Marble Arch in 1922

Source: Aerofilms Collection, Historic England, Britain From Above

Site plan



Marble Arch: the western gateway to the district

Current Condition



Although animated, areas surrounding Marble Arch lack clear focus



Key views of the arch compromised by clutter and layout of the public realm



The immediate environs of the arch are cluttered and the setting is not one of a major monument



Public art appears stranded within large expanses of lawn



At present the western island is lacking a clearly defined programme of use



Pedestrian crossings from Oxford Street are forbidding

Marble Arch: the western gateway to the district

Design principles

Marble Arch

A study will look at all options for phased improvements to March Arch in its entirety including the islands, pedestrian and vehicular movement and the potential for the creation of public space. Westminster City Council will work with stakeholders and other statutory authorities to create a world class public space for London at Marble Arch on the eastern island, which will be the western gateway to the Oxford Street District.

- The space available at Marble Arch, in such close proximity to intensely used spaces of Oxford Street and Edgware Road, means that it could offer much more as a public space.
- Investigate and test opportunities to reconfigure the road layout around Marble Arch and the islands to address the long standing severance of Marble Arch from Oxford Street and Hyde Park. Alternative alignment of roads could unlock opportunities to introduce a gateway space at the western end of the district and a more direct connection to Hyde Park.
- Test options for pedestrian crossings between the islands.
- The setting of public art should be reconsidered and coordinated with changes to both islands.
- Reconfigure the existing fountains to provide a new pool and introduce new planting. Improve lighting to allow safe movement across the islands at night.
- Introduce new lighting to aid wayfinding with respect to views to the listed monument.
- Ensure pedestrian safety features, including hostile vehicle mitigation, are considered as integrated elements of a coordinated public realm design from the earliest design stages.
- The setting of the arch should be redesigned with new hard landscaping as an appropriate setting for the listed monument. This would restore the historic axis between Great Cumberland Place and Park Lane.
- A new design for the public realm should reset the hierarchy between the listed arch, other structures, underground entrances, planting and public art.

- Consider creating two new pavilion structures framing the hard landscape, coordinated with the improvements to the setting of the arch. This could allow introduction of a lift to provide step-free access to the island from the London Underground ticket hall, improving accessibility. The western pavilion structure could also be designed to support events and provide facilities for ticket sales and catering, and public toilets.
- Events and cultural use should be designed for and encouraged. Redesign the open space currently used for events to build in the appropriate technical infrastructure required for temporary programmes, which could be accommodated to help animate the space.
- There is opportunity for some food and drink operations to be incorporated within a well-designed new public space on the Marble Arch islands for the benefit of all visitors to the district.
- Improve pedestrian crossings to and from the islands and onwards to Hyde Park. Introduce well-designed, clear walking and cycling routes directing movement through and around the islands on desire lines wherever possible.
- Improve all signage to and on the islands and ensure it is in appropriate locations. Introduce clear signage within subways, guiding people out to the three exits from when they cross the barriers to encourage the use of the two south exits.
- Remove street clutter to frame key views and introduce new street furniture in suitable locations.
- Introduce new cycle parking.
- Review and renew greenery through further street tree planting, soft planting, and introduce a succession strategy.

Precedents



Place de la Republique, Paris



Stortorget, Kalmar



Somerset House Courtyard, London



Darling Quarter, Sydney



Täby Torg, Täby



Innichen, San Candido, Italy

Illustration showing opportunities for Marble Arch as a western gateway to the district



-- Core study area for future phases

Oxford Street: opportunity for a new public space

Background

The stretch of Oxford Street between Orchard Street and Duke Street is home to the Grade II listed Edwardian department store building of Selfridges. It is one of the most prominent and high-quality buildings on Oxford Street. Facing the store on the south side of Oxford Street are smaller retail units, behind which is a predominantly residential area of Victorian red-brick industrial dwellings and Brown Hart Gardens.

The department store’s founder, Henry Selfridge, purchased a series of Georgian buildings at the western end of Oxford Street and in 1909 opened the store’s exuberant building designed by the American architect, Daniel Burnham, responsible for similar stores in the United States. The Victorian industrial dwellings of the Grosvenor Estate were constructed in the late 1880s centred on Brown Hart Gardens, a landscaped garden. The garden was replaced by an electricity substation in 1906, over which sits an Italianate terrace, re-opened as a garden in 2007.

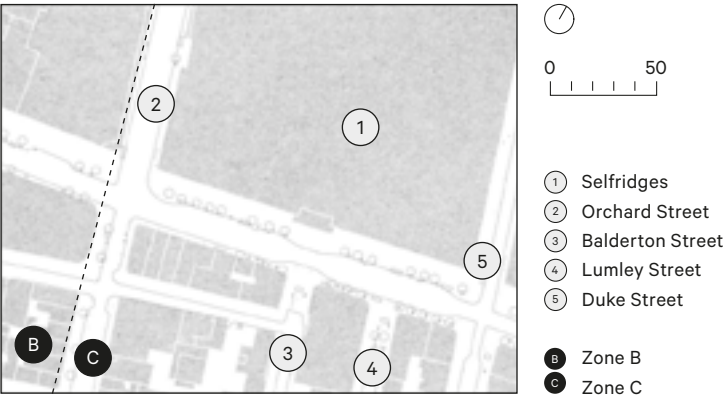
The enduring attraction of this area and its proximity to Bond Street station and the opening of the Elizabeth Line here means it will, in all likelihood, become busier. The Oxford Street ends of Lumley and Balderton Streets are both closed to traffic and offer opportunities for improved public spaces. Improvements are already underway to the public realm of Duke Street. Although the street is lined by rows of pear trees on both sides, further improvements could distinguish the landmark status of this stretch of Oxford Street.



Selfridges window display, Apple’s takeover of window displays for the launch of Apple Watch

Source: Wallpaper*

Site plan



Oxford Street: opportunity for a new public space

Current Condition



The open space in front of Selfridges is not distinguished from other parts of the street



Crossings connect directly to the main entrance



The view along Balderton Street from Brown Hart Gardens is presently obscured



Kiosks, telephone boxes and other street furniture occupy the street entrances



Tree planting lines Oxford Street in this location but there is little to distinguish the landmark setting



The view of Selfridges frontage is emphasised by the incline of the street towards the building

Oxford Street: opportunity for a new public space

Design principles

Oxford Street

This stretch of Oxford Street benefits from a landmark within the district and offers one of the best opportunities for a great public space strengthening connections with the areas around it. From an improved space here, connections can be made to Grosvenor, Portman and Manchester Squares.

- Create a high-quality design for the ground surface, coordinated with distinctive lighting, street furniture and public art. Create distinctive elements in the streetscape which remain related to the district as a whole but highlight the landmark status of this particular section of the street.
- Activate spaces in front of Selfridges to create a high quality and vibrant attraction.
- Increase footway width. Review and rationalise servicing bays to allow the space to be used by pedestrians at certain times.
- Relocate and rationalise bus stops.
- Introduce additional tree planting and soft landscaping.
- Introduce new playable landscape features.
- Introduce new seating.
- Ensure pedestrian safety features, including hostile vehicle mitigation, are considered as integrated elements of a coordinated public realm design from the earliest design stages.

Balderton Street and Lumley Street

- Redesign the public spaces at the ends of Lumley and Balderton Streets as pocket parks.
- Declutter the spaces.
- Consider integration of public toilets with other structures.
- Increase provision for cycle parking.
- Introduce soft landscaping, new seating and a drinking fountain.

Precedents



Mariahilferstraße, Vienna



James Street, Covent Garden, London



Port Vieux Pavillion, Marseilles



Street Kiosk, Lisbon

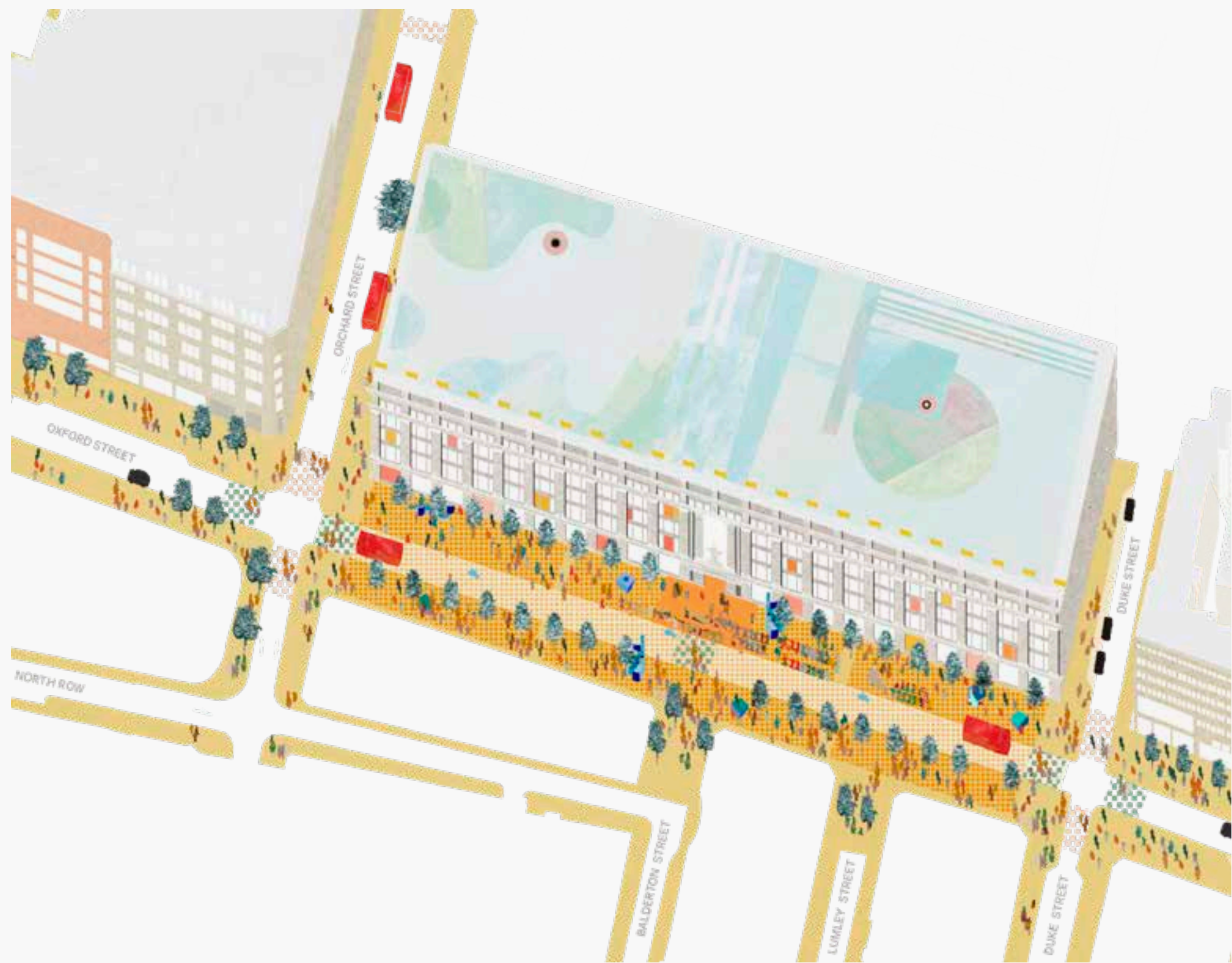


Bahnhofstrasse, Zurich



A Very Small Part of Architecture, Highgate, London

Illustration showing opportunities for a new public space



James Street, Bird Street and Barrett Street: a network of streets and passages

Background

Duke Street runs along the east side of Selfridges connecting Manchester Square and Grosvenor Square and forming the western edge of a neighbourhood of smaller streets.

Unlike other parts of the district developed under single estate ownership, multiple ownership has meant there is more variety of materials, styles and age of buildings than in other areas in the district. The east side of the neighbourhood is formed of the historic north-south pedestrian connections of St Christopher’s Place and Gee’s Court, linking Oxford Street and Wigmore Street.

The new entrance to Selfridges on Duke Street, designed by David Chipperfield Architects and opened in 2018, suggests a level of ambition for future improvements. At present the network of streets east are a popular dropping off and picking up point. Bird Street is closed to through traffic at its south end so this is mostly focused in James Street and Barrett Street. Maintaining vehicle access for essential vehicle movement whilst making a better setting for the popular concentration of restaurants and bars centred on St Christopher’s Place will be key to the success of improvements in this area.



View east along Barrett Street from the new entrance to Selfridges on Duke Street

Source: David Chipperfield Architects

Site plan



James Street, Bird Street and Barrett Street: a network of streets and passages

Current Condition



Restaurant seating lines the lower end of James Street



Blank frontages along the west side of James Street



Barrett Street offers a connection to Selfridges' new entrance on Duke Street



Views south along James Street are frequently obscured



James Street is a key north south connection, joining Oxford Street to Wigmore Street



The varied material palette and fine grain terraces characterise this neighbourhood

James Street, Bird Street and Barrett Street: a network of streets and passages

Design principles

Make better connections from Oxford Street and Bond Street stations towards this hub of cafés and restaurants centred on St Christopher’s Place.

James Street

- Introduce a pedestrian priority area at the south end of James Street to improve connections to Gee’s Court and Barrett Street, with timed access for servicing.
- Review and rationalise kerbside uses, parking and servicing bays to allow the space to be used by pedestrians at certain times.
- Engage stakeholders to explore possible activation of blank frontages.

Bird Street

- Redesign Bird Street as a pocket park for the Oxford Street District and this neighbourhood. Introduce special paving design and introduce additional tree planting, soft landscaping, lighting and a drinking fountain.
- Explore ways to activate blank areas of frontage.

Barrett Street

- Improve Barrett Street as a key connection between St Christopher’s Place and Selfridges. Improve surfaces, widen footways and introduce new street lighting.
- Declutter and maintain sightlines along the street.
- Review and rationalise kerbside uses, parking and servicing bays to allow the whole space to be used by pedestrians at certain times.
- Engage stakeholders to explore possible activation of blank frontages.

Neighbourhood-wide

- Support diversity of use along these streets to animate the neighbourhood.
- Require new development to respect the scale and material quality of the neighbourhood at street level.

Precedents



Storefront for Art and Architecture, New York



Urban Outfitters, Stockholm



Playing Streets, Glasgow



Corso Como, Milan

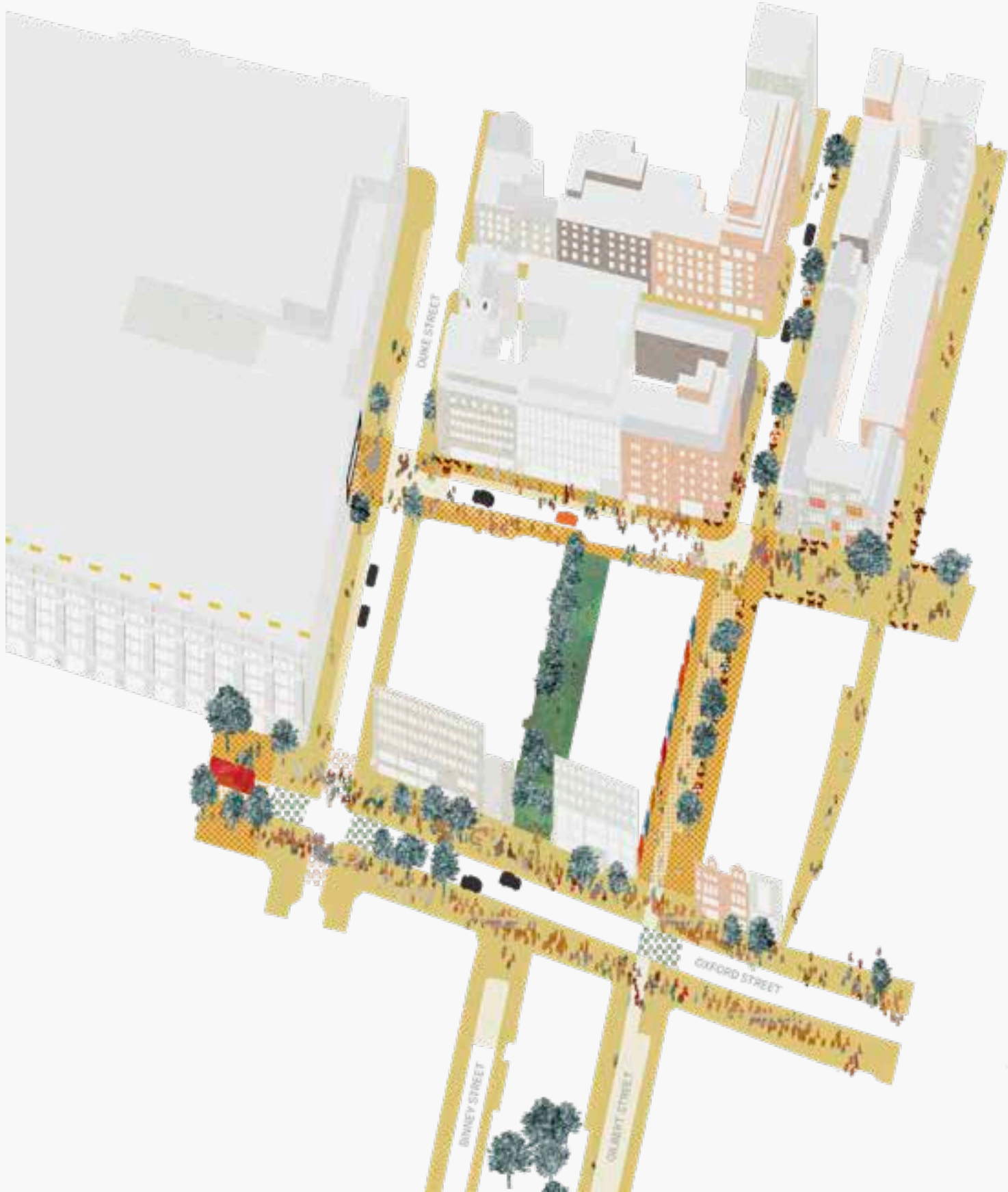


Court Square, Boston



Monmouth Street frontages, London

Illustration showing opportunities for enhancing a neighbourhood north of Oxford Street



Davies Street and Stratford Place: memory of the Tyburn river landscape

Background

Davies Street leads south from Oxford Street along the east side of the West One Shopping Centre, the open space widening as it meets South Molton Street and South Molton Lane. Stratford Place leads north from Oxford Street; a short street with a square at its northernmost end addressed by the symmetrical façade of Stratford House.

Before its development this site was the location of the Tyburn River. Davies Street formed a major north-south connection across the Grosvenor Estate but for a long time did not meet Oxford Street, extending only as far as Weighhouse Street where South Molton Lane took up the route. Stratford Place was created in 1772 as a somewhat autonomous venture north of Oxford Street with building parcels for 22 houses (13 remain). The earliest plan shows a circular feature in its square, most likely a fountain, of 20 foot diameter. Davies Street was extended to meet Oxford Street when the London Underground station was constructed and the West One Shopping Centre entrance first defined the north end of Davies Street as a place of arrival.

When the new Elizabeth Line station opens Davies Street will become a key threshold to Oxford Street. Transformation of the streetscape in this area will be essential to visitors’ first impression of the district. The opportunity presented by Stratford Place is to create a new public space surrounded by buildings of exceptional quality, significantly enhancing the experience of this part of Oxford Street for all.



Stratford Mill by John Constable hung in the ballroom of Stratford Place during its life as a gallery

Site plan



Davies Street and Stratford Place: memory of the Tyburn river landscape

Current Condition



The route to the new Elizabeth Line Station on Davies Street



The station entrance on the corner of Weighhouse Street will bring new prominence to Brown Hart Gardens



There is little sense of arrival from the existing entrance to the underground on the east side of the West One Shopping Centre



The convergence of South Molton Street, Davies Street and Oxford Street has created a large open space



From Davies Street Stratford Place and the elegant Oxford street façade of the 'Sykes' building (formerly Lilley & Skinner shoe emporium) is almost completely hidden



In spite of its elegance Stratford Place fails to invite attention, but it could be a wonderful public space

Davies Street and Stratford Place: memory of the Tyburn river landscape

Design principles

Davies Street

- Enhance the moment of arrival for visitors to the district and make a better public space.
- Define the open space at the intersection of Oxford Street, Davies Street and South Molton Street with a coordinated and high quality urban design.
 - Create a new public space with no through traffic at the top of Davies Street on Oxford Street with seating, planting and public art.
 - Improve north-south pedestrian connections from the new Elizabeth Line station and Oxford Street. Widen footways where possible.
 - Ensure clear sight lines towards the new Elizabeth Line Station on Davies Street and towards Stratford Place from Oxford Street. Highlight the long view into Mayfair down Davies Street.
 - Explore ways to support more animated frontage along the east side of West One to face onto this area.
 - Introduce raised loading bays to minimise carriageway area, and consolidate parking.
 - Expand the existing pedestrian priority area at the top of South Molton Street to the opening of South Molton Lane, allowing for timed vehicle access.

Stratford Place

- Heighten perception of Stratford Place as a beautiful space off Oxford Street and Davies Street, day and night.
- Create a new high quality public open space in front of Stratford House. This should relate to the material palette, character, proportions and historic and present uses of the architectural setting.
 - Introduce a unified, refined, high quality paving treatment suitable for low-level vehicle use.
 - Introduce a water feature highlighting Stratford Place’s historic connection with the waterway beneath it to attract attention from the south.
 - Introduce new feature landscape elements across the site which celebrate this area’s historic connection to water.
 - Introduce further planting of willow trees and further ‘water-source’ plants where possible. Introduce new seating and public art.
 - Illuminate existing and proposed elements to highlight the presence of Stratford Place from within and from Oxford Street.
 - Ensure clear visibility of return elevations that frame the entrance to Stratford Place on Oxford Street.
 - Heighten the sense of spectacle for visitors to the Oriental Club through feature lighting of Stratford House.

Across the site

- Consider crossing locations on Oxford Street in relation to connections between Davies Street and Stratford Place.

Precedents



Banyoles Square, Girona



Banyoles Square, Girona



Covent Garden, London



MORELONDON, London



Xi'an Qingyue demonstration area, Xi'an



Planted wild garden in the Serpentine Pavillion, London

Illustration showing opportunities for new public spaces and water features recalling the Tyburn river



Marylebone Lane, Vere Street and New Bond Street: the historic heart of the district

Background

Immediately south of Henrietta Street the south section of Marylebone Lane splits in two. East of the lane Vere Street connects Chapel Place to Oxford Street forming a junction with New Bond Street on the south side of Oxford Street.

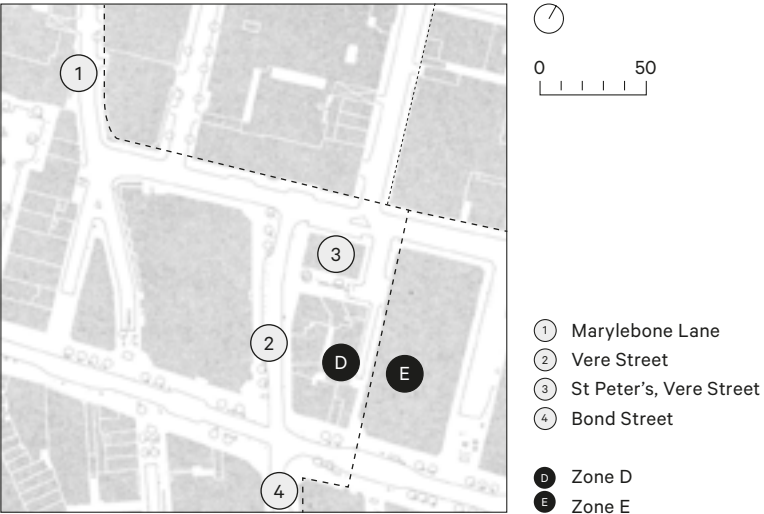
Marylebone Lane linked the villages of Marylebone and Tyburn and is among the most historic connections within the district. The island between the lane’s east and west sides, where the Radisson hotel sits, is most significant. The parish church stood around this location and from the 1730s until the First World War a court house and watch house. This was the administrative centre of the parish, later borough, of St. Marylebone. Vere Street was developed in the 1720s and the Oxford Chapel, known since 1832 as St Peter’s, Vere Street, was completed in 1724.

Momentum for change already exists across the site. Improvements have already taken place along Marylebone Lane north of Wigmore Street and improvements to Bond Street are nearing completion. Planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of the Wellbeck Street car park as a 10 storey hotel, to be designed by Eric Parry Architects. These adjacent streets have the capacity to offer two vital new public spaces adding character to the district as a whole and joining together already improved areas north and south.



Edward Burne-Jones altarpiece for St Peter’s, for which the glass was made in William Morris’s factory off Oxford Street

Site plan



Marylebone Lane, Vere Street and New Bond Street: the historic heart of the district

Current Condition



Improvements have been undertaken to the streetscape in the western part of Marylebone Lane where it meets Oxford Street



A telephone box obscures the view to the famous HMV façade on Oxford Street



The point at which in which the lane splits is extremely large with an interesting spatial configuration presenting a great opportunity for a new public space



Between the Radisson's blank east frontage and Debenhams side return the lane is almost completely filled by the cycle hire station



St Peter's Vere Street is among the few original elements of the estate's development



Marylebone Lane winds north to Wigmore Street and is an important walking connection

Marylebone Lane, Vere Street and New Bond Street: the historic heart of the district

Design principles

Heighten perception of the significance of this historic location and build upon its existing cultural heritage in the creation of new public spaces.

Marylebone Lane

- Define the large open space at the fork of Marylebone Lane as a new public space with a coordinated and high quality urban design. This could include new surfaces, new street tree planting, new soft landscape, public art and lighting.
- Extend the paving material palette from the improved section of Marylebone Lane north of Wigmore Street to Oxford Street.
- Create active uses at ground floor level on the north east corner of Marylebone Lane (Wellbeck car park site).
- Support the use of new public spaces for cultural programmes to activate this street.

Chapel Place and Vere Street

- Define Chapel Place as a public space off Oxford Street framing the chapel. Explore ways to extend the material quality of the south side space around all four sides of the church.
- Continue the Bond Street alignment northwards into Vere Street and widen footways.
- Introduce additional tree planting and soft landscaping.
- Increase provision of public seating.
- Rationalise parking on the west side of the street and increase footway width.
- Redistribute cycle hire stands along the west side of Vere Street and the east side of Chapel Place.
- Declutter the space to open long views into Marylebone.

Bond Street

- Introduce a high quality, integrated and tailored paving design at the junction to create a memorable gateway to Bond Street.
- Introduce special lighting to emphasise the threshold from Oxford Street.
- Introduce a central element, such as public art or other feature, to unify the threshold space of New Bond Street and mark it as a special place on Oxford Street. This could take the form of catenary artwork centred above the junction.
- De-clutter the junction space at the north end of Bond Street.
- Introduce improved wayfinding directing visitors to Bond Street.

Precedents



Pink Ghost, Paris



Pitt Street Mall, Sydney



Kulturnatten, Danish Architecture Centre



Flat Iron Square, London



Marylebone Lane (north of Wigmore Street), London



140 William Street, Melbourne

Illustration showing opportunities for improvements to the historic heart of the district



Cavendish Square: a revitalised garden square

Background

North of Oxford Street, Cavendish Square contains over a hectare of open space enclosed by buildings on all sides. The north side is formal, being symmetrical and aligned with the Harewood Place approach from the south, The Royal Society of Medicine and the Royal College of Nursing both sit on the west side, the back of John Lewis and the former BHS building occupy the south side and historic Georgian buildings run along the east side of the square. The circular garden in the middle is accessed from gated entrances at each of the four corners of the square and a car park is located beneath the square, accessed by a ramp on the south east corner.

Cavendish Square established an axis with Hanover Square in the early 1700s extending new west end development. Financial uncertainty made the intended uniformity difficult to achieve as the square was slow to be enclosed with buildings. In spite of this the north side became, as intended, the most stately and prominent. The gardens were not originally landscaped but simply grassed as at Hanover Square and at one point hired for grazing. Public access was granted in the 1970s when the car park was also constructed.

Improvements to Hanover Square, and to Harewood Place and Holles Street suggest the Square as the final grand project of a renewed axis. To give direction to such a project it may be worth reflecting on the square’s historic relationship with both caring professions and with women and children. This square could develop its identity as the less formal partner of Hanover Square.

Site plan



Madonna and Child by Jacob Epstein hangs inside the Kings Fund building on the north side of Cavendish Square

Cavendish Square: a revitalised garden square

Current Condition



View to the Royal College of Nursing from Oxford Street along Great Cavendish Street



Corner views into the square are obscured and the crossings do not correspond to desire lines



The car park is framed by low brown brick walls which do not relate to the material quality of the surrounding buildings



The relationship between buildings and gardens is interrupted by walls



Large areas of footway are given over to the car park walls



The gardens are well-landscaped and popular and could incorporate a greater variety of uses

Cavendish Square: a revitalised garden square

Design principles

Cavendish Square is a significant green space with the capacity to offer additional vital amenity in a number of ways.

Cavendish Square Gardens

- Redesign the gardens with new tree planting, soft landscaping and pathways. Remove existing brick walls where possible which inhibit enjoyment of the square from outside and reduce the quality of its setting.
- Create a new entrance in the centre of the south side of the square with new hard landscaping to frame the statue of Lord George Bentinck and restore its relationship with Hanover Square.
- Strengthen relationships between buildings along the west and east sides of the square and the gardens by reintroducing the original entrances to the square in the middle of the east and west sides to give access to enlarged areas of footway. Explore ways to reconfigure existing planting to open up views from the east and west sides of the square.
- Create a landmark playground or other family amenity in Cavendish Square for all in the district. This could enrich the experience of the district and be an attractive activity for a family day out, a shopping or cultural trip. The space available in Cavendish Square, in such close proximity to intensely used spaces of Oxford Circus, means it could offer a hugely beneficial quiet and restful space. This could be incorporated with the existing gardens by introducing elements for natural play.
- Support the introduction of a cultural programme in the gardens.
- Minimise bus standing and stops along Harewood Place to maintain views into Cavendish Square from Hanover Square, Harewood Place, and Oxford Street.
- The setting of all public art in the square should be reconsidered and coordinated with changes. New public art could also be considered.
- Introduce low-level lighting to allow enjoyment of the square during the evening.

Cavendish Square Streets

- Enlarge areas of footway along the east and west sides of the square. Introduce new surfaces reflecting the heritage and material character of the square, improving accessibility throughout.
- Consider new public art and seating.
- Introduce a raised crossing at the top of Holles Street providing a connection to the new entrance on the south side of the square.
- Maximise views along Holles Street and Harewood Place towards Hanover Square to strengthen understanding of their connection.

Precedents



Elizabeth Street Sculpture Garden, New York



Bryant Park, New York



TREExOFFICE, London



Plaza Urdanibia, Irun



Dinton Pastures Nature Play Space, Wokingham



Bedford Square, London

Illustration showing opportunities for a revitalised garden square



Oxford Circus: the architectural set piece

Background

Oxford Circus is not in the middle of Oxford Street, but nonetheless forms its centrepiece. The circular space is lined by Portland Stone-faced quadrant shop buildings. In front of each is a curved stairway leading to the London Underground station below. The station also exits onto Argyll Street which runs diagonally southeast from Oxford Street. Also in the vicinity is Great Portland Street which connects Oxford Street to Marylebone Road. John Prince’s Street links to Cavendish Square on the northwest side.

The quadrant buildings which frame Oxford Circus date from the Crown’s reconstruction of Regent Street before and after the First World War but the design for a circular open space is original to Nash’s plan for the intersection of Regent Street and Oxford Street. The circus’ rebuilding in the 19th century altered its proportions with taller buildings constructed on each side. The station entrances were added with the construction of the Victoria Line for which the entire surface was raised and replaced. Older station entrances which flank the northern end of Argyll Street offer two different styles of competing railway companies.

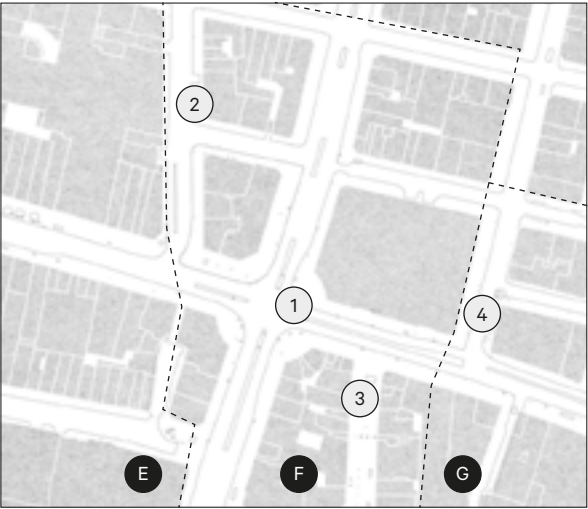
Oxford Circus is a destination, an important transport interchange and a gateway to the West End. Its current condition is problematic in terms of safety, comfort, function and appeal. Though Oxford Circus will continue to be one of the busiest stations on the network the junction is designed to facilitate bus turning movements. Revisiting transport movement and therefore space allocated to different modes could bring much needed improvement. Its transformation would represent a major improvement in perhaps the most significant part of the shopping street.



Regent Circus (now Oxford Circus) in 1870

Source: London Stereoscopic Company / Getty Images

Site plan



- ① Oxford Circus
- ② John Prince's Street
- ③ Argyll Street
- ④ Great Portland Street
- E Zone E
- F Zone F
- G Zone G

Oxford Circus: the architectural set piece

Current Condition



The circus is the hectic combination of a major junction and one of the busiest stations on the Underground network



The northern pavement of Argyll Street is persistently crowded with space heavily constrained by restaurant seating, a kiosk and signage



View back to Regent Street up Little Argyll Street



Street clutter constrains pedestrian movement on Argyll Street



In spite of its heritage Great Portland Street lacks a distinctive identity



Long straight views north highlight the opportunity to introduce streetscape improvements to this handsome street

Oxford Circus: the architectural set piece

Design principles

Oxford Circus

Redesign the junction at Oxford Circus to create a centrepiece for the district. Improve pedestrian safety, comfort and connections at this key location, including links to Regent Street, Hanover Square and the Elizabeth Line, Cavendish Square, Mayfair, Soho, Marylebone and Fitzrovia.

- Strengthen the character of the circus as a set piece, and a location of global renown. The design of Oxford Circus’ public realm should emphasise the spatial coherence of the circus as a whole. Designs must be tailored to the distinct character of Oxford Circus, its listed architecture, relationship to Regent Street and its other approaches.
- Review function and operation of the circus to allocate more space to pedestrian movement. Through traffic modelling, test and increase the pedestrian priority area immediately east and west of the circus. Simplify pedestrian crossing of the junction. Alleviate overcrowding of the footway around the London Underground station and better connect east and west Oxford Street at this key area.
- Design thresholds into Oxford Circus that both define and frame the space, but also connect with the wider district, to enhance the experience of arriving at the circus from adjacent streets.
- Introduce high-quality paving, lighting and other features within the circus that help to unify the space visually and provide a robust and flexible framework able to support the requirements of day-to-day uses and special events, and appropriate vehicle access.
- Declutter key views to landmarks and junctions.
- Support enhancements to building façades overlooking the circus which clarify their architectural form and strengthen the cohesion of the set piece when viewed both from a distance and close by. Support improvements to façades, window openings and window framing to create greater consistency. Support renovations to interior spaces, soffits and lighting adjacent to windows to reveal activity within and improve experience of the public realm.
- Support uses within buildings which increase public access to upper floors which might animate this key attraction from the street.
- Support the refurbishment and upgrade of the London Underground station to enhance visitor experience from platform to street level, day and night. Work with London Underground to investigate improving accessibility to and from Oxford Circus station. Changes to the junction might unlock opportunities for access to and from Oxford Circus ticket hall.
- Create attractive, pedestrian-friendly spaces and meeting places adjacent to Oxford Circus.

- Improve legibility of pedestrian connections and experience of movement to and from the circus in neighbouring areas through greenery, lighting, art, special paving, signage and wayfinding.
- Ensure pedestrian safety features, including hostile vehicle mitigation, are considered as integrated elements of a coordinated public realm design from the earliest design stages.
- Support the introduction of landmark lighting of the public realm and buildings that reveals and enhances their spatial layering and material qualities after dark.

Argyll Street

- Redesign the public realm of this important pedestrian street and connector to allow ease of movement and improve pedestrian safety and comfort and declutter connections to and from Oxford Circus.
- Improve frontages at gateways to adjoining streets.
- Remove outdoor seating at cafés and restaurants in particular at the northern end of the street where space for pedestrians is limited.
- Introduce new paving, seating, planting, sensitive lighting and wayfinding and consider sites for public art.

Great Portland Street

- Introduce a strategy to define and distinguish the character of Great Portland Street. Elements to include new surface treatment, additional tree planting, street lighting, street furniture and consideration of public art.

John Prince’s Street

- Improve the quality of the public realm as a pedestrian connection and space in this large expanse of carriageway and footway between Cavendish Square and Oxford Circus, while accommodating its necessary transport and servicing roles. Encourage use of John Prince’s Street by improving pedestrian areas. Introduce new paving, seating, planting and lighting.

Precedents



Campo de Fiori, Rome



Chiado, Lisbon



Theatre des Champs d'Elysees, Paris



Lumiere, Oxford Street, London



Vartov Square, Copenhagen



Born Market, Barcelona

Illustration showing opportunities for improving the setting of Oxford Circus



Great Marlborough Street: a well-used connection

Background

Great Marlborough Street runs parallel to Oxford Street offering numerous connections into Carnaby Street and Soho, and to Oxford Street via Argyll Street, Ramillies Street and Poland Street. Marks and Spencer has a rear entrance onto the street. The mixed-use character of the street creates a variety of different frontage conditions. This continually active street space results from the large number of functions accommodated, with high levels of pedestrian movement.

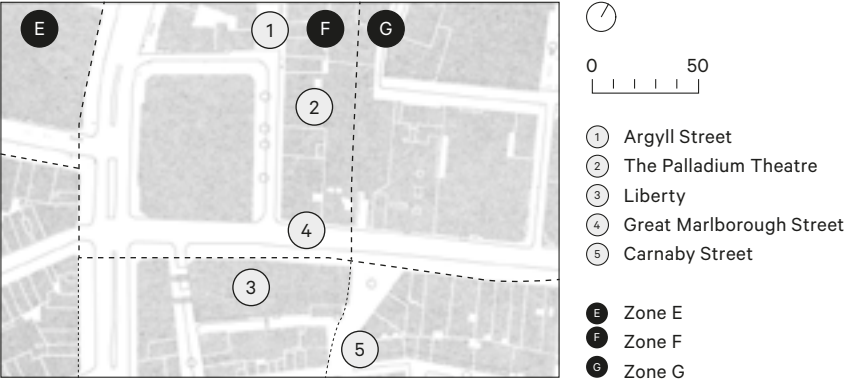
The street was laid out in 1704 on the Millfield estate as far as the open space at the head of Carnaby Street. It was later extended to join the recently constructed Regent Street. A number of important buildings are situated around the junction of Great Marlborough Street and Argyll Street. Marlborough Street Magistrates Court, the UK’s second oldest court dating back to the late 1800’s, played host to a number of sensational trials, such as that of Christine Keeler and the Marquess of Queensbury, and has recently been converted into a hotel. On Argyll Street and with stage door access from Great Marlborough Street, the Palladium theatre was constructed in 1910 on a site with a long-standing connection to entertainment. In previous incarnations it housed Hengler’s Circus and the Corinthian Bazaar. Liberty was designed in the 1920’s at the height of a revival of Tudor building style and was constructed from timber reclaimed from the HMS Impregnable and the HMS Hindustan.

The continued appeal of this street and its surroundings is embedded in the diversity of its use and character. The improvement of its public realm would be an important element of overall changes.



The timber frame frontage of Liberty is a key landmark at the end of Great Marlborough Street

Site plan



Great Marlborough Street: a well-used connection

Current Condition



The street is usually busy because of the numerous connections it offers to Soho, Regent Street, Oxford Circus and Mayfair



The flower shop of the Liberty main entrance is among the most enjoyable moments along Great Marlborough Street, though often blocked from view



The east side of Liberty is a popular social space lined by small cafés and is a gateway to Carnaby Street and Soho beyond



Footways along Great Marlborough Street are narrow and often crowded



Long cycle hire stands separate places to cross by some distance



The Palladium façade is a significant but underplayed feature of the south end of Argyl Street

Great Marlborough Street: a well-used connection

Design principles

Strengthen the distinct character of Great Marlborough Street as a key connecting street, a major gateway to Soho and a handsome street in its own right.

Great Marlborough Street

- Redesign the public realm to define and distinguish the character of Great Marlborough Street along its length. Introduce unifying elements including surface treatment, tree planting, street lighting, street furniture and public art, where there is space, at pedestrian side street junctions.
- Redesign the public space at the junction with Carnaby Street, at the east of Liberty. Create a rationally set out and decluttered space for visitors to the district. The space should provide a setting appropriate to Liberty’s landmark status and a gateway to Carnaby Street.
- Introduce further soft landscaping and elements of floral planting to unify the south end of Argyll Street and open space east of Liberty.
- Ensure safe and easy access to the Palladium for pedestrians and operational vehicles.
- Provide additional seating and a drinking fountain.
- Widen footways where possible, introducing raised loading pads to enlarge footways.
- Enlarge the crossing at the south end of Argyll Street to match desire lines towards Carnaby Street.
- Locate parking in areas without active frontage wherever possible.
- Redistribute long cycle racks to ensure clear crossing spaces are maintained.
- Celebrate the diverse mix of uses along the street. Explore ways to activate street frontage in service areas.
- Introduce wayfinding to the Photographers’ Gallery at Ramillies Place.

Precedents



Carnaby Street, London



Liberty, London



Greely Square, New York



Cyclehoop stands, London



Inside Out Project, New York



Silence!, Riga

Illustration showing opportunities to heighten the character of Great Marlborough Street and improve function.



Market Place, Great Titchfield Street and Winsley Street: a growing quarter of small restaurants, cafés and bars

Background

Market Place sits immediately north of Oxford Street between Great Castle Street and Eastcastle Street. Great Titchfield Street runs along the east side of Market Place. To the east of Winsley Street connects to Oxford Street.

This area formed the eastern edge of the Cavendish-Harley estate and was built up from the 1730s. Initiated with the estate the covered hall of Oxford Market was demolished in 1881 and the art deco Kent House built on its site in 1938. The varied character of Great Titchfield Street relates to its incremental construction, being somewhat patched together from street developments; its south end was previously known as Market Street. It was used by street traders from the 1850s and a market survived into the twentieth century. Winsley Street was originally home to a large brewery along its western side which remained until the early 19th century. Facing Winsley Street across Oxford Street was the Pantheon, a celebrated entertainment venue, opened in 1772 and which gives name to the Grade II listed Marks & Spencer building constructed in 1938.

This site holds potential for impactful transformation to realise the potential of two spaces which do not presently work as well as they might. Recent improvements to the public realm of Market Place and the oasis space at the south end of Great Titchfield Street could be enhanced by further improvements, supporting and extending an already successful restaurant quarter.



Oxford Market, now demolished

Site plan



Market Place, Great Titchfield Street and Winsley Street: a growing quarter of small restaurants, cafés and bars

Current Condition



Small cafés and restaurants line the north side of Market Place



The oasis space at the south end of Great Titchfield Street could provide a much better space, just off Oxford Street



The view across Oxford Street is blocked. This is a key view into Ramillies Place, leading to Great Marlborough Street beyond



Further cafés and restaurants along Eastcastle Street and the north end of Winsley Street



Winsley Street frames the view to the façade of the Pantheon on Oxford Street



From Oxford Street the view along Winsley Street is animated by the presence of the spire of All Saints, Margaret Street

Market Place, Great Titchfield Street and Winsley Street: a growing quarter of small restaurants, cafés and bars

Design principles

Strengthen connections between Market Place, Great Titchfield Street, Eastcastle Street and Winsley Street as a network of pedestrian priority spaces with a high quality café and restaurant culture centred on Market Place.

Market Place and across the site

- Add greenery, lighting, public art, special paving, signage and wayfinding.
- Widen footways where possible. Introduce raised loading pads to enlarge footways.
- Create additional wayfinding along Oxford Street to draw people north to this quarter.

Great Titchfield Street

- Redesign the oasis space with additional greenery, lighting, public art, special paving, signage and wayfinding. Declutter where possible. Open up sightlines onto Oxford Street and across to Ramillies Street. Engage stakeholders on either side of the oasis space at the south end of Great Titchfield Street to develop more active use of the frontages flanking this space.
- Introduce a strategy to define and distinguish the character of Great Titchfield Street as a succession of delightful neighbourly spaces. Introduce unifying elements including surface treatments, tree planting, street lighting, street furniture and public art.
- Explore further opportunities for pedestrian spaces along the street.
- Work with the neighbourhood forum who have been developing ideas for these streets and spaces.

Winsley Street

- Draw attention to the Winsley Street axis between the church and the Pantheon.
- Introduce elements of colour along walls and ground surfaces to animate the street.
- Explore timed access options for Winsley Street to create additional space for pedestrians.

Precedents



Storefront for Art and Architecture, New York



Duke Street, Mayfair



Marylebone Lane, London



Rembrandtplein, Amsterdam



Street Cafés, Nakasu, Japan



Elephant Grounds Cafe, Hong Kong

Illustration showing a quarter of restaurants and bars centred on Market Place



Soho Street and Hanway Street: connecting Soho and Bloomsbury

Background

Soho Street leads from the north side of Soho Square towards Oxford Street. Further east along Oxford Street is the narrow entrance to Hanway Street and Hanway Place which leads to Tottenham Court Road.

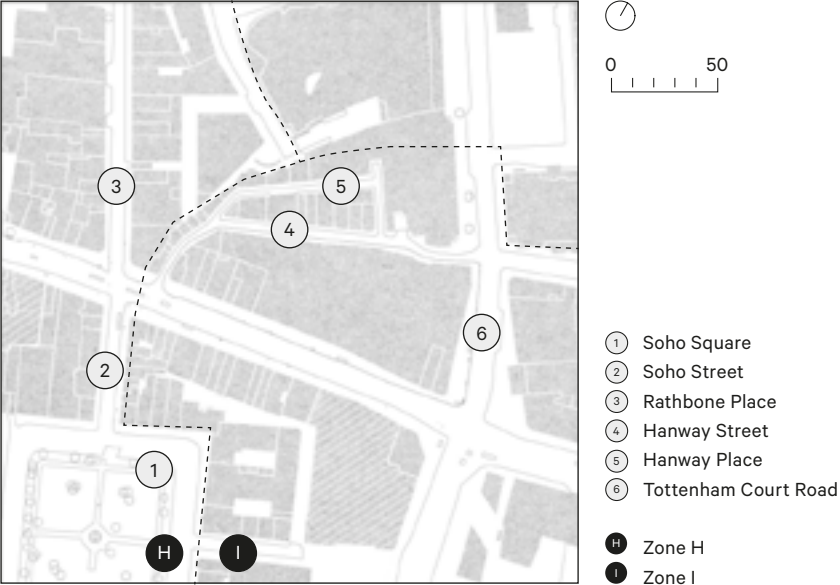
Development at this end of Oxford Street originated in Soho where the square was formed in 1681. Rathbone Place was formed in 1716 as the first speculative street development north of Oxford Street and as an extension of Soho Street. Hanway Street and Hanway Place followed from 1718 and its street layout was designed to form a connection between the two major roads at either end, while avoiding yards around the perimeter. A modest scale of frontages allowed it to adapt to this irregular course. Bradley’s Spanish Bar which opened in the 1960s forms part of the street’s identity as a ‘Little Spain’. Hanway Street was admired by the architect Cedric Price who likened it to a film-set version of London.

Both Hanway Street and Soho Street offer connections to key parts of the district and its wider surroundings but also serve important functions including servicing, however they also suffer from anti-social behaviour. A reinvigorated Hanway Street has the potential to add character to an area where extensive development has taken place.



Hanway Street has served as a filming location numerous times.
Clockwise from top left: The Danger Man, 1964. Play it Cool, 1962. Expresso Bongo, 1959.

Site plan



Soho Street and Hanway Street: connecting Soho and Bloomsbury

Current Condition



The layout of Hanway Street creates a sense of intrigue for what lies around the corner



The street straightens as it bends east towards Tottenham Court Road



Footways are narrow along Hanway Street



The street is used for servicing from the eastern end and blank frontage offers opportunities for animation



Soho Square is the termination of the view along Soho Street from Rathbone Place



Soho Square is a popular and well-used social space

Soho Street and Hanway Street: connecting Soho and Bloomsbury

Design principles

Encourage use and enjoyment of this key connection to Bloomsbury’s attractions, including the British Museum, from the Oxford Street District.

Hanway Street

- The historic character of this street is extremely unusual and appealing. Celebrate its unusual and historic charm through a design for its public realm including material upgrades to surfaces and a programme of public art.
- Consider raising the carriageway or unifying street materials to maximise the area of pedestrian space available.
- Define a lighting strategy for these streets.
- Create additional wayfinding to highlight Hanway Street as a route to key attractions in the surrounding area.
- Coordinate with London Borough of Camden and the West End Partnership in order to improve pedestrian crossing where Hanway Street meets Tottenham Court Road to improve connections to Great Russell Street.
- Support use of Hanway Street as an important location for nightlife.
- Engage stakeholders in regard to necessary coexistence of street life and servicing requirements.

Soho Street

- Improve Soho Street as a key gateway to Soho.
- Maintain sightlines down Soho Street towards Soho Square, removing clutter.
- Review and rationalise kerbside uses, parking and servicing bays to allow the space to be prioritised for pedestrians at certain times.

Precedents



Who is Chelsea Manning?, New York



Exmouth Market, London



Playable City Shadowing, Bristol



Rush, Sydney

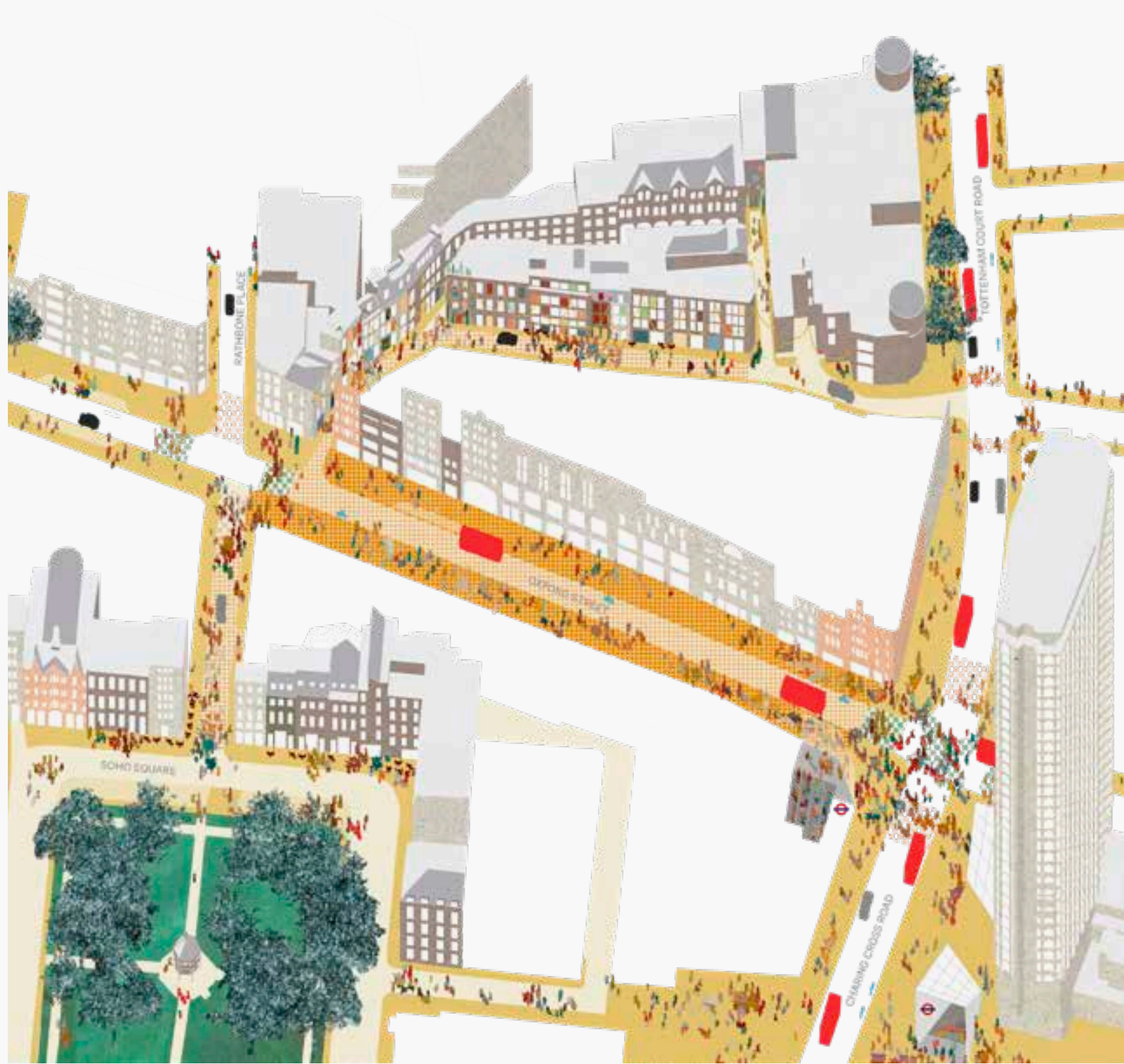


Lancashire Court, London



Rayen Restaurant Installation, Madrid

Illustration showing opportunities for enhancements to Soho Street, Hanway Street and Hanway Place



Appendix
Supporting studies

An extensive evidence base of studies and research into the existing conditions of the Oxford Street District provided an understanding of the range of issues and opportunities to inform the development of the Place Strategy. The following is a selected extract of the most relevant studies.

Contents
The evolution of Oxford Street
Selection of relevant Westminster City Council policies and strategies
Selection of relevant GLA / TfL policies and strategies
Changing trends in retail
Conservation areas and listed buildings
Frontages
Predominant upper floor land use
Ground floor: food and drink
Ground floor uses open at 9:30pm
Wider area attractions
Existing play opportunities
Public art
Trees and landscaping
Road safety and collisions

The supporting studies from this audit are based upon on-street surveys, fieldwork and desk based research undertaken between August – September 2018, translated to qualitative findings and presenting qualitative assessments, aiming for the greatest accuracy possible.

The evolution of Oxford Street

The forthcoming study of Oxford Street by the Survey of London clearly defines the evolution of Oxford Street, examining ‘how it was that Oxford Street became the most continuously prosperous shopping street not just in London but, arguably, anywhere.’ The survey begins by laying out the basis for understanding its development over time:

‘Three stages in the road’s evolution can be identified. It started out from Roman times as just one section of a major road in and out of London. Then in the eighteenth century it became the boundary between wealthy parishes and communities that had grown up on the western fringes of London. Finally from the 1830s onwards it began to take advantage of the various means of long-distance access to its shops, by bus, cab, and underground train.’

Excerpts from this study which have been kindly shared by its author, and the previously published Survey of London: *South-East Marylebone: Volumes 51 & 52 (2017)*, supported by other sources, form the basis of this interpretative description of the development of Oxford Street and its surrounding district. Our role has been to study the research and present, very much in outline, its most pertinent findings as regards this strategy.

The geography, the road and early settlement

The early history of the Oxford Street District is characterised by its role as a road from Londinium. Foundation of the Roman city established major trading routes across England leading to the large port city. Among these, and in spite of its change in course, Oxford Street formed a section of the east-west route, Watling Street. The name Oxford Street confirms its continuity with Edgware Road, this being the direction by which Oxford was reached. The road followed the contour of the land at the edge of a gravel terrace, crossing the River Tyburn, and passing above the lower marshier terrain which would become Mayfair. Little is known of settlement along the road at this time.

During following centuries the location of Oxford Street became significant in relation to the Saxon settlement of Lundenwic west of the Roman city and the settlement of Thorney Island from 1016, where the Tyburn River met the Thames, which would become the Palace of Westminster. The road remained in use as a trade route, stringing together disparate settlements. Tyburn Manor is recorded in the Domesday book in 1086, as a possession of Barking Abbey. From the thirteenth century its church would become the first parish church of St Marylebone. With shifts in the power structure following the Norman invasion the area was ceded to Robert de Vere, 3rd Earl of Oxford, in 1200. The second settlement in the area, further east, was St Giles which originated from a 700 AD Saxon foundation, later becoming St Giles Hospital, a hospital for sufferers of leprosy (St Giles being the patron saint of lepers). This established the longstanding eastern termination of Oxford Street at Tottenham Court Road. Tottenham Court Road originated at this time as the route to Tottenhall Manor. The ancient parish of St Martin in the Fields also resulted in the establishment

of routes south. Executions took place at Tyburn from 1196 with occasional executions even taking place on Oxford Street itself. Rituals accompanied last journeys from Newgate along the street along with chaos and bad behaviour.

Urbanisation of the district as estates

The act which dissolved the monasteries from 1536 initiated a radical shift in land ownership patterns and Oxford Street and its surroundings acquired new significance. This was first as an area bordered by newly Crown-owned grounds. Land originally belonging to Westminster Abbey became the hunting ground known as Hyde Park by 1637. Regents Park and Soho Fields, also under the ownership of the Crown, also became royal parks. During the following century some of the land acquired through the act was sold to members of the aristocracy. The south part of Marylebone, for example, was sold by James I in 1611; In 1698 the King granted the 1st Earl of Portland the freehold of most of Soho Fields.

Oxford Street itself formed ‘a peppering of ribbon development – brick fields, taverns, animal pounds and the like – relieved by occasional elm trees’. Alleyways led to the back of precincts along the street, of which Adam and Eve Court remains. Two elements in the area indicated its position at the furthest northwest edge of London; 1654 Marchant’s waterworks and the relocation of the cattle pound to 1656 St Giles’, accompanied by a gallows and cells. The only more formal structure before 1700 was the Lord Mayor’s Banqueting House, built in 1565 for inspection of the city’s water supply on the Conduit Mead Estate.

During the following centuries Oxford Street’s definition as the boundary between areas of estate development became firmly established. Naturally, in relation to the built up area of London at this time, the first stage of development began in Soho, extending towards the present south section of Regent Street. During the 1660s ownership of Soho was ceded to Henry Jermyn, first Earl of St Albans. In 1704 Great Marlborough Street was formed on part of Millfield close. A little later development extended north of Oxford Street. In 1716 Rathbone Place would become the first speculative street development north of Oxford Street, as an extension of Soho Street.

The larger estates then fall into place. To the west end of the district Grosvenor Square was laid out in 1721. In 1717 – 18 building started on Cavendish-Harley Estate.

Compared with other areas across the Oxford Street District, dominated by one or two landowners, Fitzrovia was developed in a more piecemeal fashion. This led to a predominance of small and irregular streets compared with neighbouring areas which developed more schematically, with stronger grid patterns and a greater number of squares.

Boundaries between estates were established by natural features or existing routes, and in many cases both. Well Street, for example, formed the boundary of the former Cavendish-Harley, later Portland, and later again Howard de Walden Estate. The Cavendish-Hanover Square axis, which sought to give presence to a then remote part of London, also offered a vital north-south connection. In other

locations connections were not so well made, for example in the area between the Portland and Portman Estates where poor coordination between estates led to dead ends. In this regard roads such as Wigmore Street which traversed estates were a considerable achievement. The ‘New Road’, now Marylebone and Euston Road was constructed in the late 1750s. This relieved pressure for trade use but traffic management would continue to trouble the district.

The grand gesture of the Crown

Movement across the West End continued to increase and although the New Road diverted some traffic from Oxford Street east-west, north-south connections remained limited, mainly to Great Portland Street. The Crown’s initiative for Regent Street sought both to improve this situation and to link to Crown development projects at Regent’s Park. In large part, plans for Regent Street followed the pre-existing course of Swallow Street. This was connected to Piccadilly and was laid out from south to north from 1671. It is shown as connected to Oxford Street with a wider section named Great Swallow Street by the time of John Rocque’s map of 1746. Nash’s plan was of an altogether different scale however, taking its lead from the boulevards then appearing in other European cities. Although the first plans show a wide, straight street connecting directly into the southern end of Portland Place and crossing Oxford Street further west than was eventually built, the location and scale of the circus and Regent Street were altered to preserve the gardens of the grand residential houses on the east side of Cavendish Square. Resulting from the realignment, Nash created Langham Place as a linking device (later demolished to make way for The Langham Hotel and Broadcasting House) with All Souls’ Church as its centrepiece. Of this part of the new street Nash stated, ‘From the nature of the bend of the Street, the portico and Spire will together form an object terminating the vista from the circus in Oxford Street along the New Street.’ Construction of the circus was fraught. In 1816, worried about escalating costs, the treasury tried to omit Oxford Circus but, ‘Nash with his sense of tactics saw the circus as a key to the great enterprise’s success and defended it doughtily.’ The circus was, however, considerably reduced in size. Nash was disappointed further by the circus emerging appearance, declaring in 1821 that, ‘the whole has a neglected appearance highly detrimental to the undertaking.’

Reconstruction of Regent Street was planned from 1898 and ‘there was no desire on the Crown’s part to retain the Nash ensemble’. Rebuilding took place between 1910 – 1925 in more formal Portland Stone with splayed or rounded corners, and shopfronts set between piers. The new buildings were required to reach to the principle cornice making the new Regent Street and Oxford Circus far weightier than Nash’s design. A limited competition for the circus redesign was won by George Tanner Jr. with a French-style submission. The southwest and east of the Circus were rebuilt in 1911, and the northwest and east after the First World War in 1920 – 23. The headquarters of the BBC, Broadcasting House, was built the following decade in 1932 forming the final of the three figures which now define what had been Langham Place (the others being All Soul’s and The Langham Hotel).

The evolution of Oxford Street

The last major changes to the built fabric in Oxford Circus and the surrounding area followed the bomb damage of the Second World War. In many cases bombed sites allowed for comprehensive redevelopment of an entire urban block. At around the same time as many of these sites were rebuilt the Victoria Line construction required the enlargement of Oxford Circus underground station, and it appears to be at this time that the road intersection's cobblestone surface was replaced with asphalt.

The material of the street

The eighteenth- century estate developments relied on better road access for Oxford Street. In 1721 an Act of Parliament created a St Marylebone Turnpike Trust intended to manage the length of Oxford Street and Edgware Road. Trustees were enlisted from other parishes with Oxford Street frontage but Marylebone dominated. The road along Oxford Street was first raised with gravel and flint, and then paved from mid-1730s with a cambered stone surface in cobbles. The estates themselves also became involved. Development of Berners Estate lead to the creation of footways, six-feet wide and paved in Purbeck stone. In 1770 another Act of Parliament took management of Oxford Street away from the Turnpike Trust and gave it to the St Marylebone Paving Commissioners. At this time the whole road was repaved with deep granite blocks laid to camber, with renewed gutters and footways in Purbeck Stone. 'The 1770 paving marked the critical change heralding the transformation of one particular section of an old arterial route into a major West End destination for consumers, comparable with Piccadilly and the Strand.' Gas lamps were introduced in 1824. A more comprehensive scheme of centrally placed street lighting was introduced in 1906, and replaced in 1963 – 4. In the 1780s Tyburn executions ended, bolstering the street's commercial, rather than morbid, identity. In 1825 the road was again surfaced with a Macadam (loose chippings) surface, which was widely seen as unsuccessful. By 1838 trials of 14 different materials were deemed necessary and these included bitumen, wood block and granite. Responsibility for upkeep of the road remained with the St Marylebone Borough Council until 1965 when Westminster City Council took over management.

Emergence of the commercial life of the street

Correlated to estate development and coinciding with repaving of the street, Oxford Street began its new life as home to London's most fashionable shops. This retail-based identity began from the 1770s with small shops growing out of houses and associated with workshops, mainly east of Oxford Circus. A long-standing relationship with *in-situ* making was formed. A number of covered bazaars and arcades, shopping and entertainment centres influenced by those in Paris, began to open (between 1830 and 1870). These included, in 1816, the Soho Bazaar, on the north west corner of Soho Square and the Royal Bazaar, in 1827. The latter would become the Queen's Bazaar, and then the Princess Theatre in 1840, followed by HMV and now Sports Direct in 2014. The Crystal Palace Bazaar was formed in 1858 behind Oxford Circus.

The somewhat haphazard grain of Oxford Street is the result of its longevity and the multiple ownerships of frontages. Until around 1870 frontages remained

as illustrated by Tallis – 'a typical London jumble of stucco or grey-brick façades over shop fronts of scant architectural worth.' Both the Portland and Grosvenor estates attempted to introduce more uniformity through lease conditions.

Department stores, their origins mainly in drapery, also consolidated the appearance of entire city blocks, emerging from the 1870s. First was Marshall and Snelgrove on Vere Street. It is observable that all occurred on the north side of the street which, aside from the reason of being the better lit side, was also better provided with potential service streets. The department stores became powerful players in the continuing evolution of the street. This is nowhere more evident than in the example of John Lewis which took on the Howard de Walden estate to obtain full beneficial ownership of the site – 'a turning point in the history of London commercial tenure'.

The great social change which followed the First World War was also a factor in the street's emerging centrality to the life of the West End. This 'everyman' appeal was played upon by retailers as shopping became a popular pursuit. All department stores had restaurants and were seen as a day out in comfortable surroundings. 'Increasingly the street was understood to be for women' or as 'the ladies' or womens mile'. Entertainment also accompanied the commercial nature of the street and remains most vibrant in the form of the 100 Club, established as a jazz venue in 1942.

Residential areas neighbouring Oxford Street

The district has also been characterised by the great social mix of its residential areas. Although the estates were formed as predominantly residential enclaves many became home to a great number of commercial premises, partly on account of their size. Less affluent neighbourhoods such as the St Giles rookery, a dense slum which formed the setting for numerous works by Hogarth, leant the eastern end an edgier appeal. The large area of Peabody housing, the western section of the street surrounding Brown Hart Gardens, is among the finest of this kind of industrial dwelling resulting from philanthropic action to relieve dire living conditions in the rapidly growing metropolis.

Transport infrastructure interventions and urban redevelopment projects

After road improvements came mass transit. Cabs and omnibuses emerged from the 1830s and a 'monster' cabstand was reported to stretch from Rathbone Place to Oxford Circus. Pressure on the road was alleviated in 1847 when New Oxford Street was constructed for the Crown. Trams were persistently opposed by the Vestry. With the coming of the underground transportation system, 'Oxford Street was allotted no less than four stations, closer to one another than elsewhere on the railway in view of its commercial value – Marble Arch, Bond Street, Oxford Circus, and Tottenham Court Road.' In 1908 Marble Arch congestion was tackled by the London County Council. The northeastern section was taken from Hyde Park separating the arch from the park. This was later expanded with the present gyratory system in 1962. Similarly vehicle centric changes were made from the 1920s with new parking provision. This

accelerated in the 1960s-70s with the Wellbeck Street Car Park. The large underground garage constructed under Cavendish Square marked the last large-scale vehicle project. During the 1970s traffic aside from buses and taxis was removed from the western section of the street during the working day under instruction of the Greater London Council.

Selection of relevant Westminster City Council policies and strategies

A City for All, 2018

This outlines Westminster City Council’s ambition to create a city that benefits all its residents. This follows five themes:

- City of opportunity
- City that offers excellent local services
- Caring and fairer city
- Healthier and greener city
- City that celebrates its communities

Westminster City Plan, 2016

The City Plan sets out its approach to the West End in Policy S7: West End Special Retail Policy Area (WESRPA). This states that the unique status and offer of the WESRPA as a global shopping destination should be maintained and enhanced through:

- Improved retail space.
- Appropriate retail growth throughout the WESRPA, including provision of A1 retail along the Primary Shopping Frontages at least at basement, ground and first floor levels.
- Improved pedestrian environment to manage the significant pedestrian flows and address the adverse impacts of pedestrian congestion.
- Improved public transport provision and access to it, including Elizabeth Line stations at Tottenham Court Road and Bond Street.
- Development of oasis areas of rest, including seating areas, and café and restaurant uses where appropriate to support the main retail areas.
- Improved linkages to and from surrounding retail areas and visitor attractions
- Provision of appropriate service uses where they complement the shopping environment.

Similarly, Policy S5 concerning the Tottenham Court Road Opportunity Area requests A1 retail use at basement to first floor level for all frontages onto Oxford Street within the opportunity area, due to its role as the eastern gateway to the Oxford Street district.

The Oxford Street district falls into two Stress Areas, West End and Edgware Road, identified in the City Plan as areas where a saturation of night time entertainment uses limits new uses.

Conservation Areas

The Oxford Street District is across several different conservation areas, designated by Westminster City Council on the basis of ‘special architectural and historic interest.’ Additional planning permissions apply in these areas in order to protect their unique characters. These are:

- Portman Estate
- Stratford Place
- Mayfair
- Harley Street
- Regent Street
- East Marylebone
- Soho
- Hanway Street

Westminster Way, Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), 2011

The Westminster Way is a public realm manual created to provide advice and direction on the design and maintenance of Westminster’s public realm. It contains the Westminster Code, which is a set of ten principles, established to guide intervention in the city’s public realm. “The Westminster Way aims to build on established best practice advocating a generally minimalist, but co-ordinated and holistic approach that considers whole life costing and sustainability in design, implementation and management of the public realm together with priority for the pedestrian and a truly inclusive public realm. It advocates that all parties within the council and partners need to ‘join-up-the-thinking’”.

Walking Strategy, 2017

Westminster City Council’s latest Walking Strategy seeks to provide ‘an opportunity to enhance Westminster’s excellent quality of life and its historic environment.’ It advocates environmental improvements that ‘make walking easier and more attractive, which can improve air quality and thus the health and lives of residents, workers and visitors and the local economy.’ The strategy states Westminster City Council’s target to ‘increase the number of walking trips by residents from 84% to 92% of all potentially walkable trips’. The objectives of the strategy are stated as:

- Provide capacity to support current walking demand and accommodate future growth.
- Improve the quality of the walking environment and the public realm to make walking more comfortable.
- Make walking more intuitive by increasing legibility and permeability of walking routes.
- Ensure walking is a safe option for everyone.
- Make the pedestrian environment more accessible for everyone.
- Encourage behaviour change to realise the potential of walking.



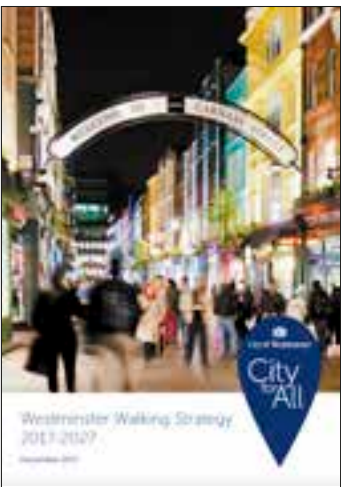
City for All, 2018/19



Draft Westminster City Plan, 2019



Westminster Way, SPD, 2011



Walking Strategy, 2017

Selection of relevant Westminster City Council policies and strategies

Trees and the Public Realm, SPD, 2011

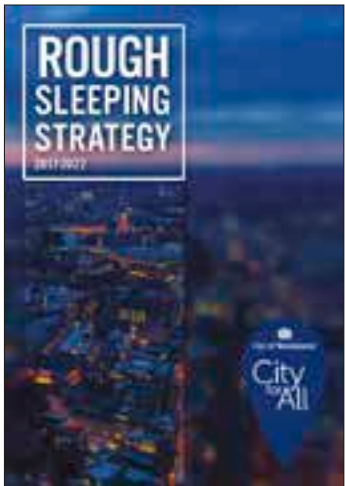
This document provides guidance for appropriate tree planting throughout Westminster. Most of the Oxford Street district is categorised as an ‘area for caution’, where new street trees could detract from the historic character of the area, although may be considered in some circumstances as part of the evolving landscape. Side streets off Oxford Street, however, might provide opportunities for tree planting, and other opportunities for greening should be considered.

Rough Sleeping Strategy, 2017 – 2022

Westminster City Council’s Rough Sleeping Strategy outlines the measures that the council will take, in partnership with others, to deliver their ambition of significantly reducing rough sleeping and the harm it brings to individuals and communities in Westminster.



Trees and the Public Realm SPG, 2011



Rough Sleeping Strategy, 2017 – 2022

Marylebone Low Emission Neighbourhood

Marylebone’s Low Emission Neighbourhood (LEN) was established in July 2016, and is a scheme aimed at improving air quality and promoting sustainable living in the area. Funded by the Mayor of London’s Air Quality Fund and led by a partnership formed of Westminster City Council and local stakeholders, it serves as a test site for green innovations and parking-related initiatives. Projects underway address:

- Cleaning the air through planting
- Air quality for schools
- Anti-idling in Marylebone
- Green freight and delivery
- Smart deliveries

Soho Public Realm Study

In 2014 Westminster City Council, in conjunction with TfL and the London Borough of Camden, commissioned a study of streets and spaces in Soho. The resulting Soho Public Realm Study examines the conditions in the neighbourhood and suggests recommendations and ideas for the improvement of pedestrian movement and cycling provision in Soho’s streets and alleyways. The document sets out principles and makes recommendations for the area as a whole.

City of Westminster Cycling Strategy 2014 – 2026

The Cycling Strategy sets out a plan for how Westminster intends to support the delivery of the Mayor’s 2013 Vision for Cycling at a local level, to increase the level of cycling, and see it ‘normalised’ by encouraging a broader cross section of people to take up cycling. The strategy highlights opportunities and challenges associated with the increase in cycling, and how growth will be encouraged through a wide range of schemes and initiatives. Over the next 10 years, the Mayor’s vision will be delivered using an estimated budget of £913m, a portion of which will be made available to boroughs working to support the delivery. Four high-level objectives have been set out by Westminster City Council:

- Creating safer and more legible routes, with actions including the implementation of a Central London Cycling Grid, and working in partnership with the Royal Parks to improve access points in parks from the highway.
- Improving road user interaction, education and enforcement, with actions including free cycle training, and safety training aimed at HGV and LGV drivers.
- Facilitating bicycle ownership / access and parking, with actions including trialling a bike loan scheme, and installing secure bicycle parking.
- Raising awareness and participation in cycling, with actions including the launch of a cycling-incentive scheme, and encouraging schools to develop active travel plans.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Westminster 2017 – 2022

The strategy sets out how people, public services, businesses, and voluntary and community groups in Westminster will all play a part in creating a city in which everyone has access to opportunities to be healthy, stay well, and live well, supported by a collaborative and cohesive health and care system.

Westminster experiences unique challenges due to its central location and its position as a hub for business, culture, and tourism. The borough also has an ageing population and a high prevalence of childhood obesity.

The key priorities are:

- Support for children, young people and their families to live healthier lives.
- Helping people to prevent the onset of long-term health conditions such as dementia and heart disease.
- Improving mental health services through prevention and self-management.
- Improving the way we work to offer better health and social care.

Greener City Action Plan

The Greener City Action Plan is designed to ensure that all of Westminster’s services and policies work together to create a more sustainable and liveable city, while adapting to the challenges of a changing climate and increased population.

The 11 policy priorities for the ten-year strategy are:

- Addressing noise pollution across the city
- Making better use of the city’s waste resources
- Delivering affordable, secure and low-carbon energy supplies
- Improving local air quality
- Supporting a sustainable transport system for Westminster
- Making the best use of open and green spaces
- Ensuring that sustainability is delivered through economic development
- Supporting a sustainable growth
- Managing water use
- Addressing flood risk
- Communicating and encouraging people into environmental action

Selection of relevant GLA / TfL policies and strategies

Draft New London Plan, 2017

The Draft New London Plan sets out the economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the strategic and sustainable development of London over the next 20 – 25 years. It was released for public consultation from December 2017 to March 2018 and a final version is expected to be published in winter 2019/2020. Relevant draft policies include:

- Policy T2 states new development should adhere to the Healthy Streets principles as set out in Healthy Streets for London (2017).
- Policy SD4 The Central Activities Zone (CAZ) states that ‘the vitality and viability of the international shopping and leisure destinations of the West End and Knightsbridge together with other CAZ retail clusters should be supported’, and also ‘The attractiveness of the CAZ to residents, visitors and businesses should be enhanced through public realm improvements and the reduction of traffic dominance’.
- Policy D1 states that Development Plans, area-based strategies and development proposals should address the form and layout of a place (for example using land efficiently; facilitating an inclusive environment; having clearly defined public and private environments; provision of active frontages and reciprocal relationships between the buildings and public realm; and facilitate active travel) and the development design should respond to local context, be of high quality and sustainable, respect heritage assets, provide urban greening, and achieve comfortable and inviting environments, inside and outside buildings.
- Policy D3 states that development proposals are required to achieve the highest standards of accessible and inclusive design.
- Policy D7 specifies how the public realm should be designed, for example: safe, accessible, attractive, easy to understand; relating to the historic context; ensuring it encourages active travel; being based on an understanding of the role of the public realm in an area; balancing ease of movement with the creation of a place; ensuring a mutually supporting relationship between the space, surrounding buildings and uses; ensuring buildings activate and define the public realm; good management and maintenance arrangements; incorporation of green infrastructure; creation of shade and shelter; an engaging public realm for people of all ages; non-continuous / non-dominant on-street parking; free drinking water.

Central Activities Zone (CAZ), Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), 2017

This SPG sets out specific policy guidance for the CAZ, within which the Oxford Street District sits. It builds on the policies in the London Plan, adding detail on how to support and enhance the special nature of this area, by:

- Protecting London’s vibrant commercial heartland and ensuring it can remain a key driver of the UK economy for decades to come.
- Striking an appropriate balance between office and new residential development including the removal of office to residential permitted development rights when the current exemption expires in May 2019.
- Managing the attractions of the area as a global destination for culture, entertainment, shopping and tourism.
- Outlining the potential for additional housing capacity in central London without compromising the business, culture and other key functions of the zone. This could be done by building new homes in specific parts of central London, including the Opportunity Areas and by renewing existing housing.
- Promoting movement by walking and cycling and encouraging investment in existing and new transport infrastructure to support development.
- Recognising the value of central London’s unique heritage and supporting a quality of environment that befits the core of a world city.

Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment, 2014

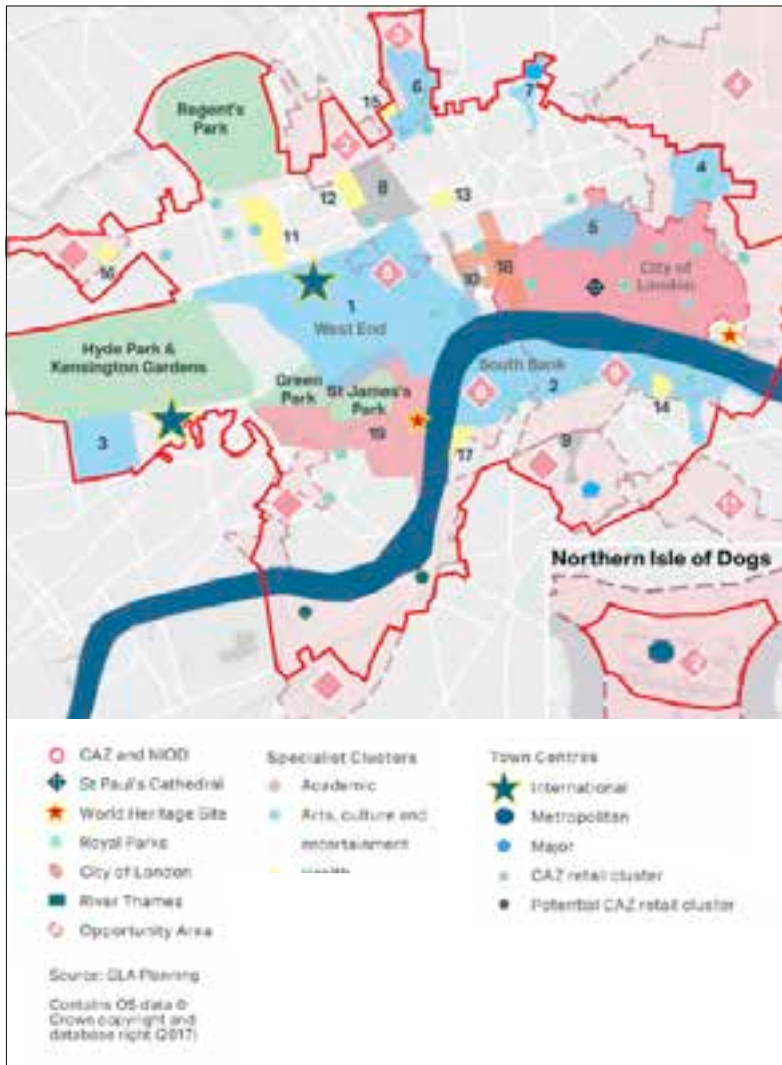
This SPG includes guidance on the London Plan policies creating and promoting an accessible and inclusive environment and gives local planning authorities advice on how to incorporate and implement them. It explains the principles of inclusive design and how these principles should be applied in London and includes ideas for designers on where to find good technical advice and guidance. It also provides information on what to expect from planning in London for disabled people, older people and others who experience barriers in the built environment.



Draft New London Plan



Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment, 2014



CAZ Diagram from the Draft New London Plan, GLA

Selection of relevant GLA / TfL policies and strategies

The Mayor’s Transport Strategy, 2018

The Mayor’s Transport Strategy promotes prioritising human health and experience and changing London’s transport mix so that it works better for everyone. Key policies and proposals include:

- Policy 1 states that the Mayor will ‘seek to make London a city where people choose to walk and cycle more often by improving street environments’.
- Proposal 2 states that the Mayor, through TfL, will work with the central London boroughs to transform the experience of the walking and cycling environment in central London by reducing the dominance of vehicular traffic, including by transforming Oxford Street.
- Policy 7 states that transport schemes should protect existing and provide new green infrastructure to deliver a net positive impact on biodiversity.
- Proposal 15 intends to improve the efficiency and safety of freight, an issue that is likely to affect the Oxford Street District, given the delivery and servicing needs of Oxford Street.

Healthy Streets for London, 2017

Healthy Streets for London prioritises walking, cycling and public transport to create a healthy city. It is supplemented by the 2018 Walking Action Plan.

The ten Healthy Streets indicators are:

- Pedestrians from all walks of life
- People choose to walk, cycle and use public transport
- Clean air
- People feel safe
- Not too noisy
- Easy to cross
- Places to stop and rest
- Shade and shelter
- People feel relaxed
- Things to see and do

Walking Action Plan, 2018

The Walking Action Plan sets out the Mayor’s aim to make London the world’s most walkable city, with ‘80 per cent* of all trips in London to be made on foot, by cycle or using public transport by 2041.’

**From a base of 63 per cent in 2015.*

Vision Zero Action Plan, 2018

The Vision Zero Action Plan sets out the Mayor’s aims ‘for no one to be killed in or by a London bus by 2030, and for all deaths and serious injuries from road collisions to be eliminated from London’s streets by 2041.’

Mayor of London’s Draft Culture Strategy, 2018

Culture for All Londoners, the draft Mayor’s Culture Strategy, sets out the Mayor’s programmes for investment in London’s cultural offer, with a focus on inclusivity and community engagement. The strategy remains at draft stage following a public consultation in spring 2018.

A number of commitments in the strategy affect the future of culture in the Oxford Street District. The strategy also aims to also support Business Improvement Districts to develop cultural strategies, commits to publishing a Cultural Infrastructure Plan which can identify gaps where greater support is needed, and to improving licensing practice across the capital to support the Mayor’s plans to transform London into a 24-hour city.

Culture and the Night-Time Economy SPG, 2017

The Mayor of London’s SPG for culture and the night time economy sets out how London can move towards a 24-hour city model. It emphasises the need to support existing venues in the face of widespread closures. The Central Activities Zone (CAZ) is given particular prominence; the country’s largest concentration of night-time activities should be recognised, improved and managed by the Mayor, boroughs and other agencies. The West End’s special characteristics should be promoted, enhanced and protected as a Strategic Cultural Area.

The SPG supports extending the opening hours of existing daytime facilities like shops and cafés, and integrating leisure and other uses to create bridges between the day and night-time economy and diversify the range of activities and promote access for a range of audiences. Licensing should balance the interests of residents with the functions of the night time economy.

The document also emphasises the need for safe, convenient and accessible public transport throughout the day and night, and a public realm where the fear of crime does not undermine the quality of the experience.



The Mayor’s Transport Strategy, 2018



Healthy Streets for London, 2017



Walking Action Plan, 2018



Vision Zero Action Plan, 2018



Draft Culture Strategy, 2018



Culture and the Night-Time Economy SPG, 2018

Changing trends in retail

Many of Oxford Street’s local and international competitors illustrate a response to the wider trends influencing the retail sector. In 2016 Publica undertook desk-based research to identify key trends in retail, to understand their potential impact on Oxford Street as a retail destination. This text is from *Oxford Street Today, 2016*.

Despite its sustained high footfall numbers and sales figures, for Oxford Street to remain a globally renowned retail destination it must retain a distinctive, comparative advantage over both domestic and international competition. With the rise of online shopping, a concentration of retail opportunities will no longer be enough to encourage people to visit Oxford Street and the wider area. Retailers are increasingly recognising that they must provide shoppers with an enjoyable and memorable ‘experience’ that may include entertainment, engagement and learning, as well as excellent amenities and accessibility.

Shopping will be regarded as a leisure and entertainment activity, rather than solely the purchasing of goods

Already, a quarter of all British shoppers state that they go to the high street to socialise with friends and family, and a third go there to eat and drink*. Around half (51 percent) go to be entertained, and three quarters of all shoppers go to be inspired.

Retail is evolving to incorporate new uses including cafés and bars, leisure, entertainment and education facilities; seeking to encourage shoppers to engage more with products, brands, and even spaces within shops themselves.

Expanding the traditional retail offer while maintaining high standards of customer service and ensuring a pleasurable shopping experience has required retailers to adopt new approaches, including:

- Personalisation – of both products and the shopping experience itself;
- Reimagining and designing retail units (and conceiving their value) as places of leisure rather than commerce; and
- Telling the stories of products, and aligning products with shoppers’ lifestyles (often involving increasing use of data to better understand target shoppers).

The role of the physical retail unit is changing, but shops will retain a critical role in overall sales

Shops are no longer simply the location where shoppers make purchases. Increasingly they are where shoppers go for inspiration, and to touch and feel products; they are showrooms for brands. They are also places where people can seek advice and obtain technical details about products. The role of shop assistants is therefore also evolving, as they begin to be regarded as experts and advisers rather than sellers.

Rather than online shopping reducing the demand for physical shops, some online-only brands such as Amazon and Made.com are now establishing physical shops to reach new types of shoppers, and enhance the shopping experience.

Online shopping will continue to increase, specifically via mobile devices

By 2020, 21.3 percent of all retail sales in the UK (totalling £77.6 billion) will take place online. The rate of increase in this share of total sales will be rapid; in 2012, just 11 percent of all sales were online.

Within retail design there is a shift away from providing the technology for people to shop online, such as in-store kiosks and touch-screen devices, towards enabling them to use their own personal devices inside shops. Many retail units are providing free Wi-Fi and mobile-responsive websites, to facilitate shopping online within shops. In 2012, £0.2 billion of sales were completed via a mobile device while the shopper was inside a shop. This figure is expected to rise to £3 billion by 2020.

Retailers are investing in ‘big data’, in order to be able to personalise marketing of products and target shoppers; for example, sending personalised offers, invites and incentives to shoppers via email, text message and Instagram.

Many shoppers will continue to shop both on the high street and online. Hence, brands will continue to establish multi-channel retail strategies and to constantly innovate in-store in order to keep their customers engaged and entertained.

Many shops are now also places for shoppers to collect products that they have bought online; seven percent of all retail sales will be ‘click and collect’ purchases by 2020. Even with the rise of online shopping, physical shops still influence an average of 89 percent of all sales.

**All figures quoted from O2 (2014) ‘The Future of Retail’ (which outlines changes to the UK retail sector), unless otherwise specified.*

Precedents



Burberry’s flagship store on Regent Street hosts live events, making use of integrated digital technology on the shop floor



Shoppers are encouraged to ‘join the conversation’ by engaging with brands via their social media channels, as seen here during London Fashion Week in autumn 2014 at Topshop’s flagship store on Oxford Street



Many retail units – including Gap on the western section of Oxford Street – host temporary pop-ups which incorporate new uses in their stores



Online retailers – such as Made.com – are opening showrooms (as seen here on Tottenham Court Road)

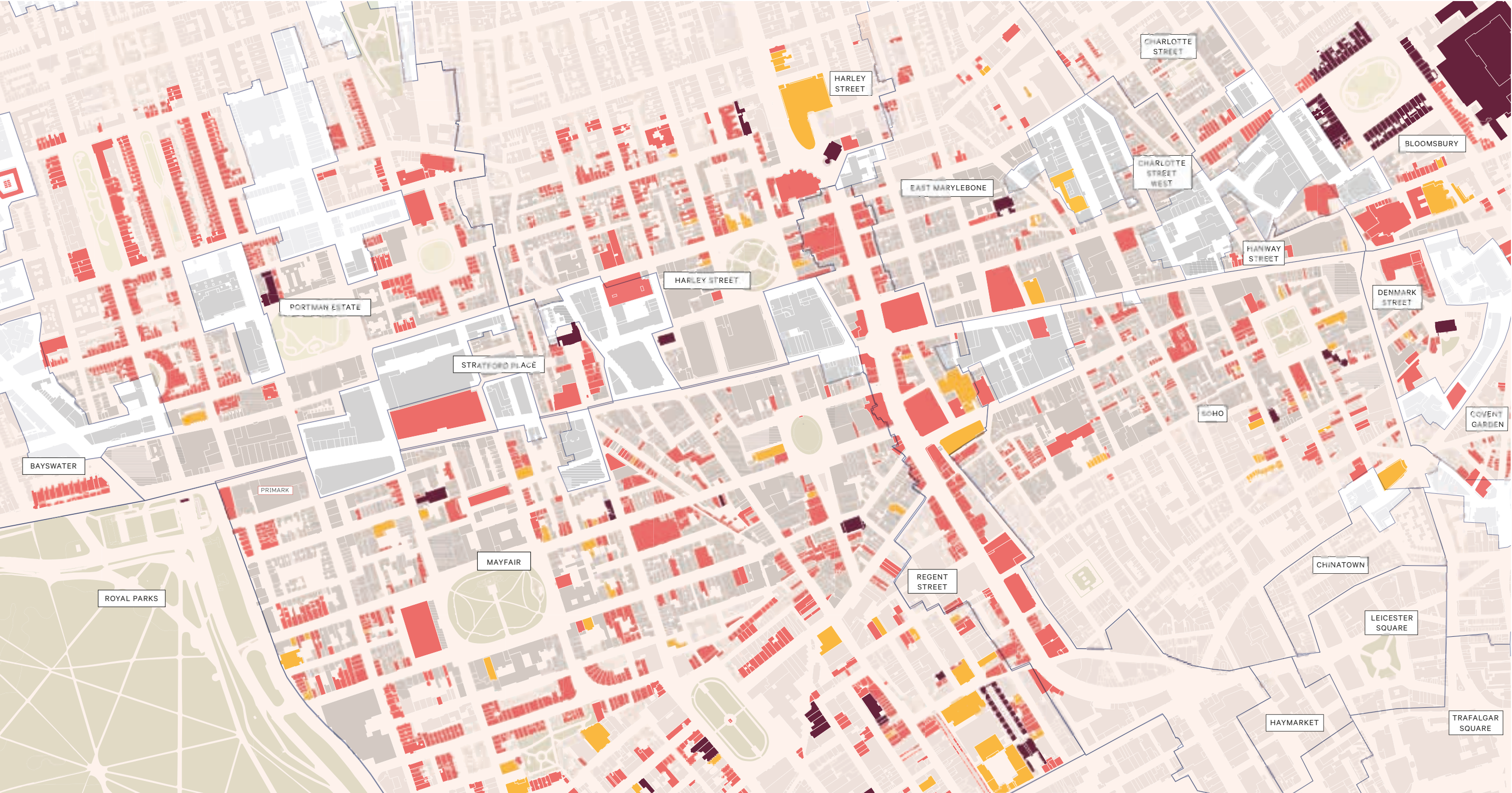


Retailers such as sportswear brand, Sweaty Betty, offer free fitness classes inside their shops



Nike by Melrose, Live concept store, West Hollywood uses technology and data to customise shoppers experience

Conservation areas and listed buildings



Map of conservation areas and listed buildings, August 2018.
Source: Westminster City Council data

- Grade I listed buildings
- Grade II* listed buildings
- Grade II listed buildings
- Conservation areas

Frontages



Wardour Street to Berwick Street facade



Charing Cross Road to Soho Street facade



Poland Street to Ramillies Street facade

Frontages



Argyll Street to Hills Place facade

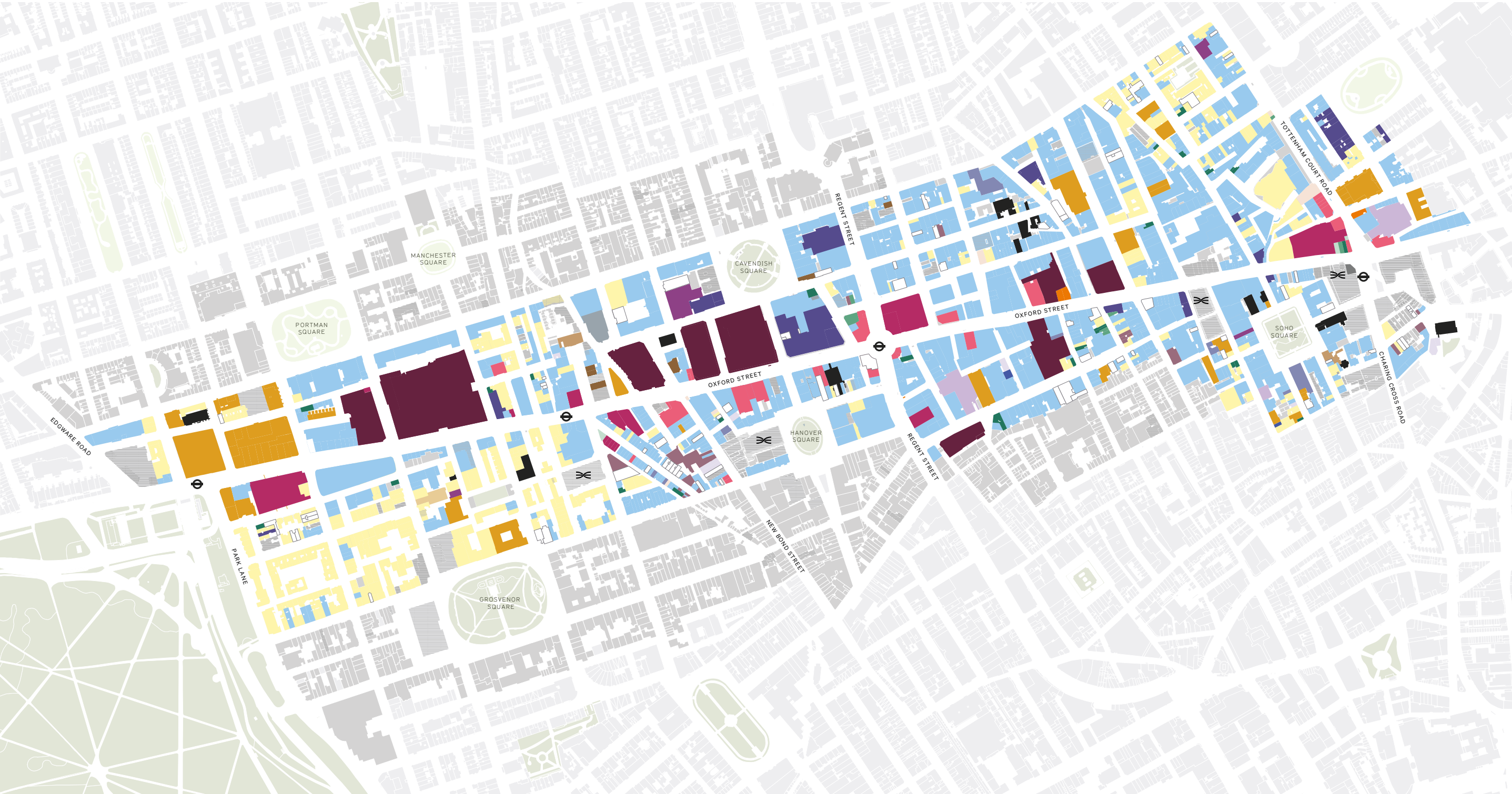


Holles Street to Old Cavendish Street facade



Balderton Street to North Audley Street facade

Predominant upper floor land use



Map of upper floor use from survey August 2018

- RETAIL**

 - Department store
 - High street retail
 - Flagship
 - Specialist
 - Tourist
 - Local
- CAFÉS, BARS AND RESTAURANTS**

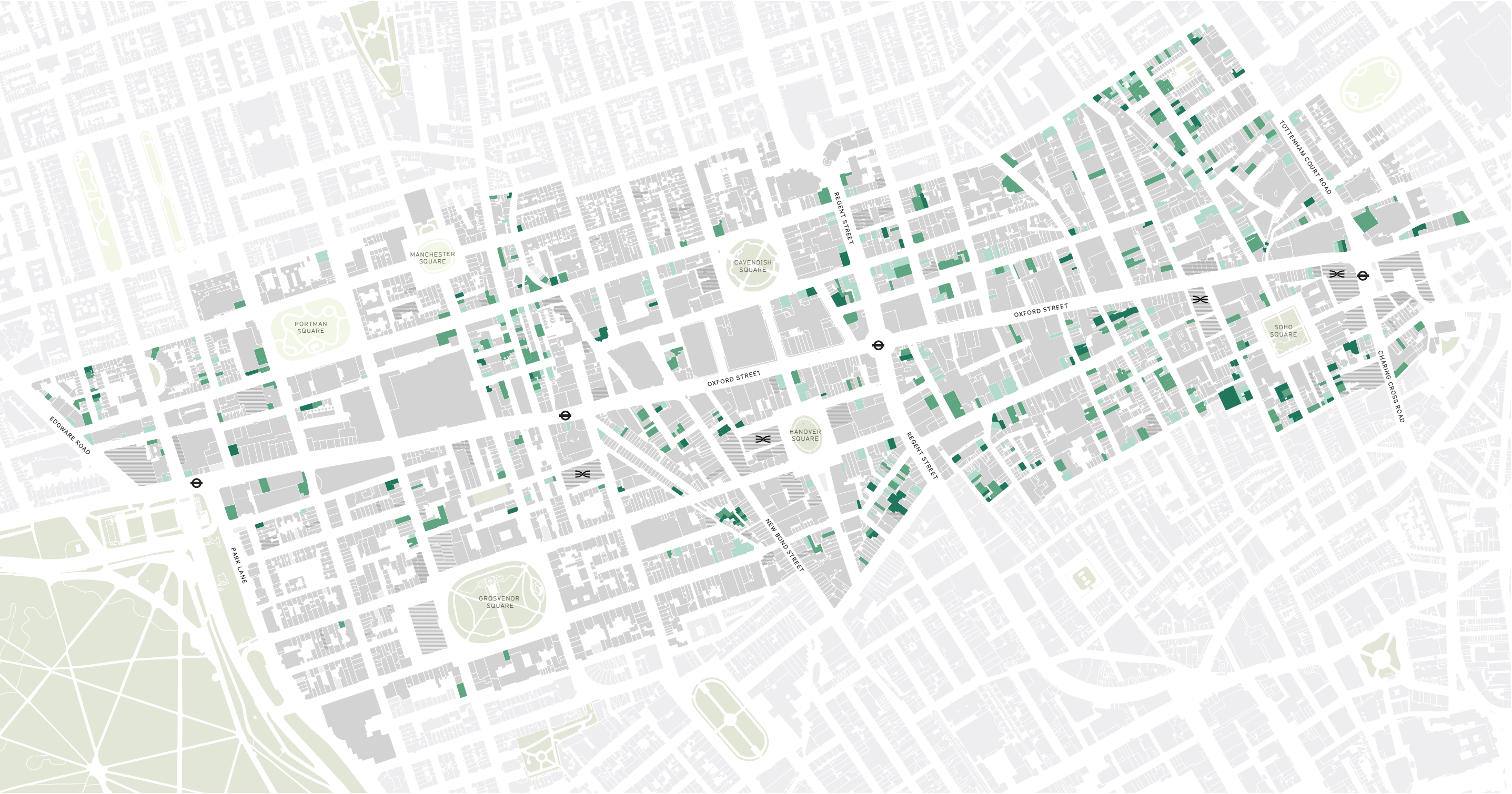
 - Pub / bar
 - Restaurant
 - Café / takeaway
 - Commercial
- RESIDENTIAL**

 - Hotel
 - Residential
- CIVIC AMENITY AND CULTURE**

 - Embassy / high commission
 - Private members' club
 - Events / venue / casino
 - Theatre / museum
 - Art gallery
 - Institution
- OTHER**

 - Education
 - Health
 - Fitness / leisure
 - Religious
 - Car park
 - Vacant
 - Under construction
 - Transport
 - Focus area

Ground floor food and drink



Map of ground floor food and drink from survey August 2018

CAFÉS, BARS AND RESTAURANTS

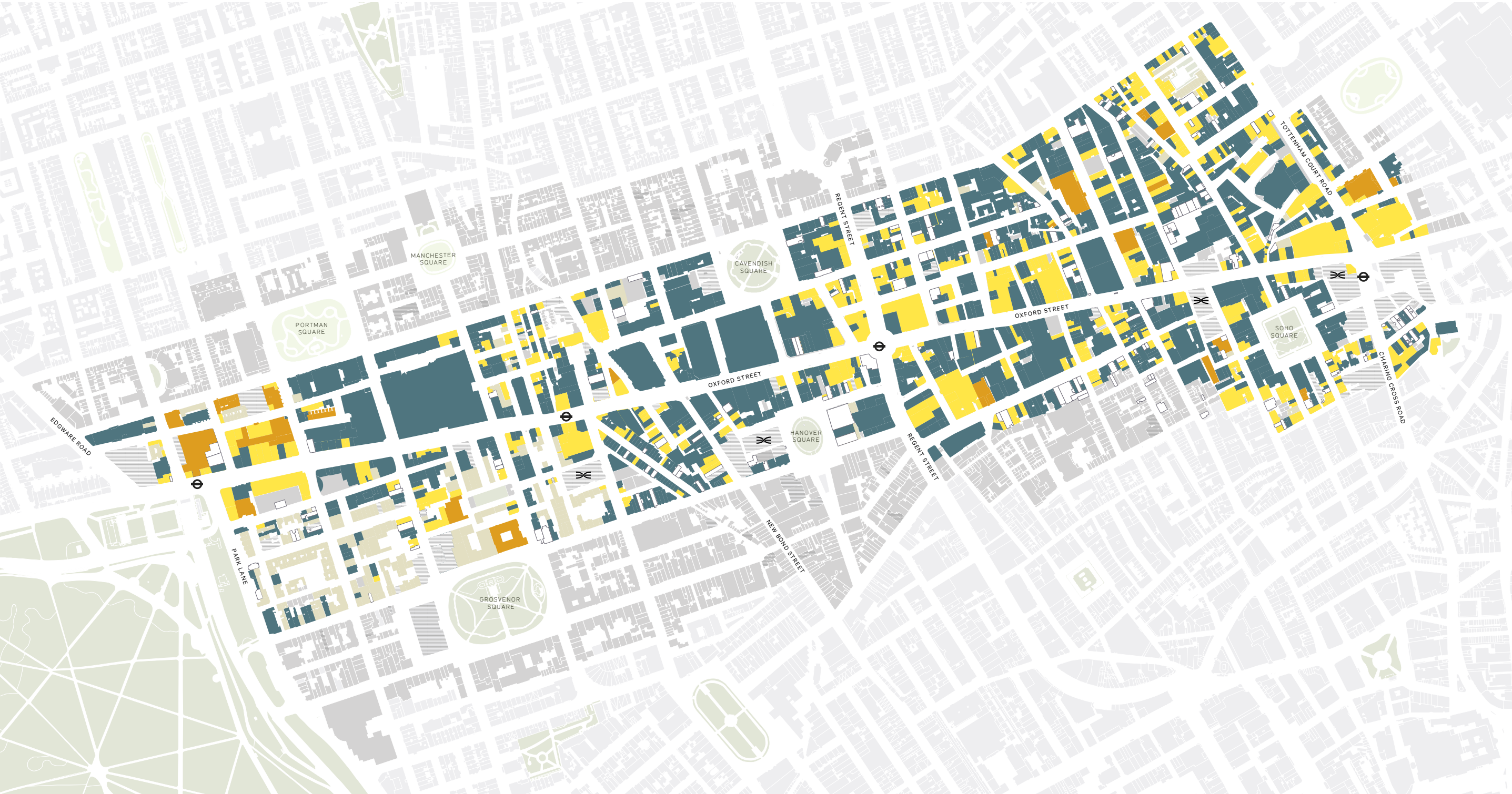
Pub / bar

Restaurant

Café / takeaway

Focus area

Ground floor uses open on Wednesday at 9:30pm



Map of opening times from survey August 2018
Survey references opening hours on Wednesday at 9.30pm

- Open

Closed

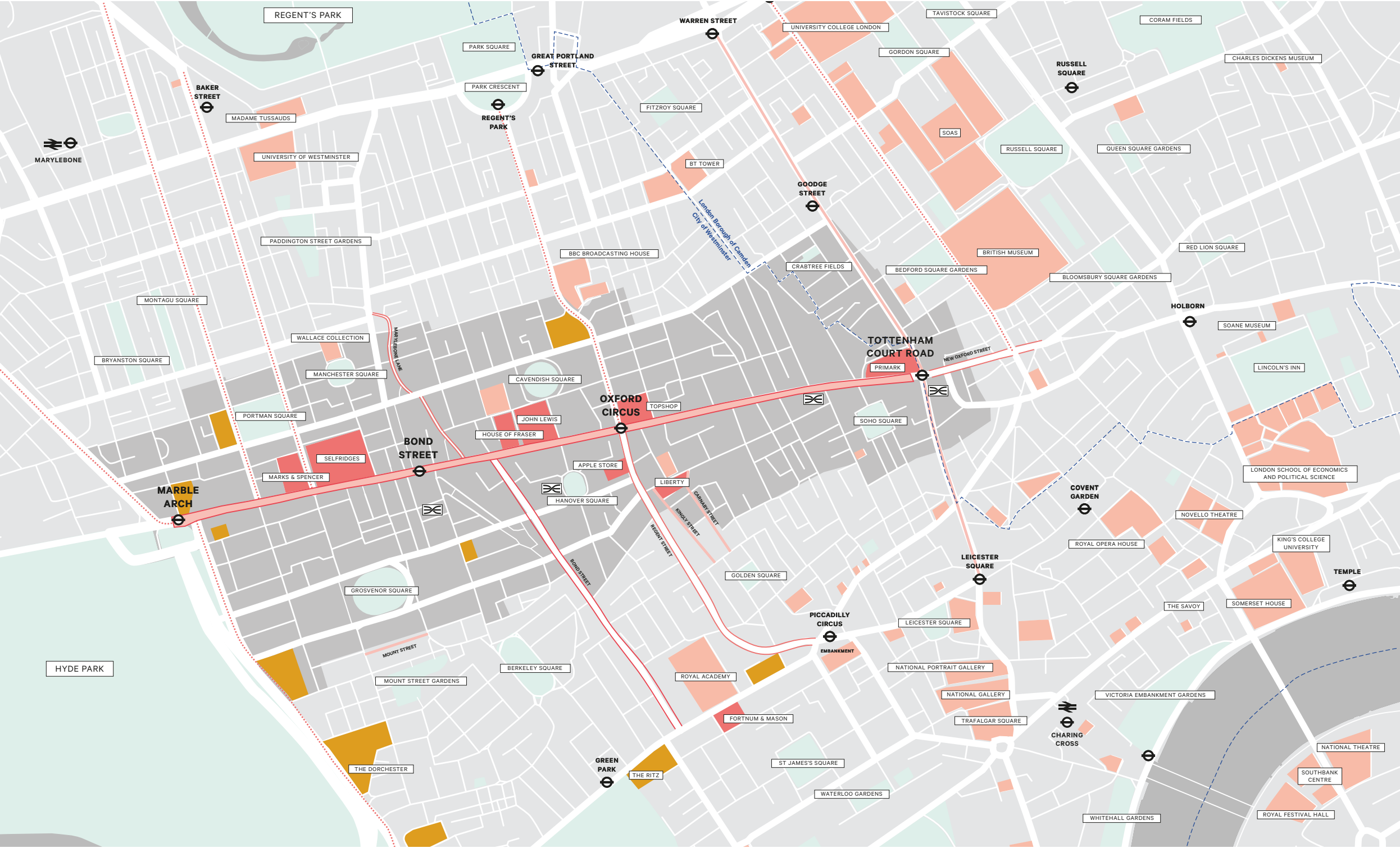
Hotel

Residential

Vacant
- Focus area

Under construction

Wider area attractions



Map of wider area attractions from survey August 2018

- Destination retail

Cultural attractions

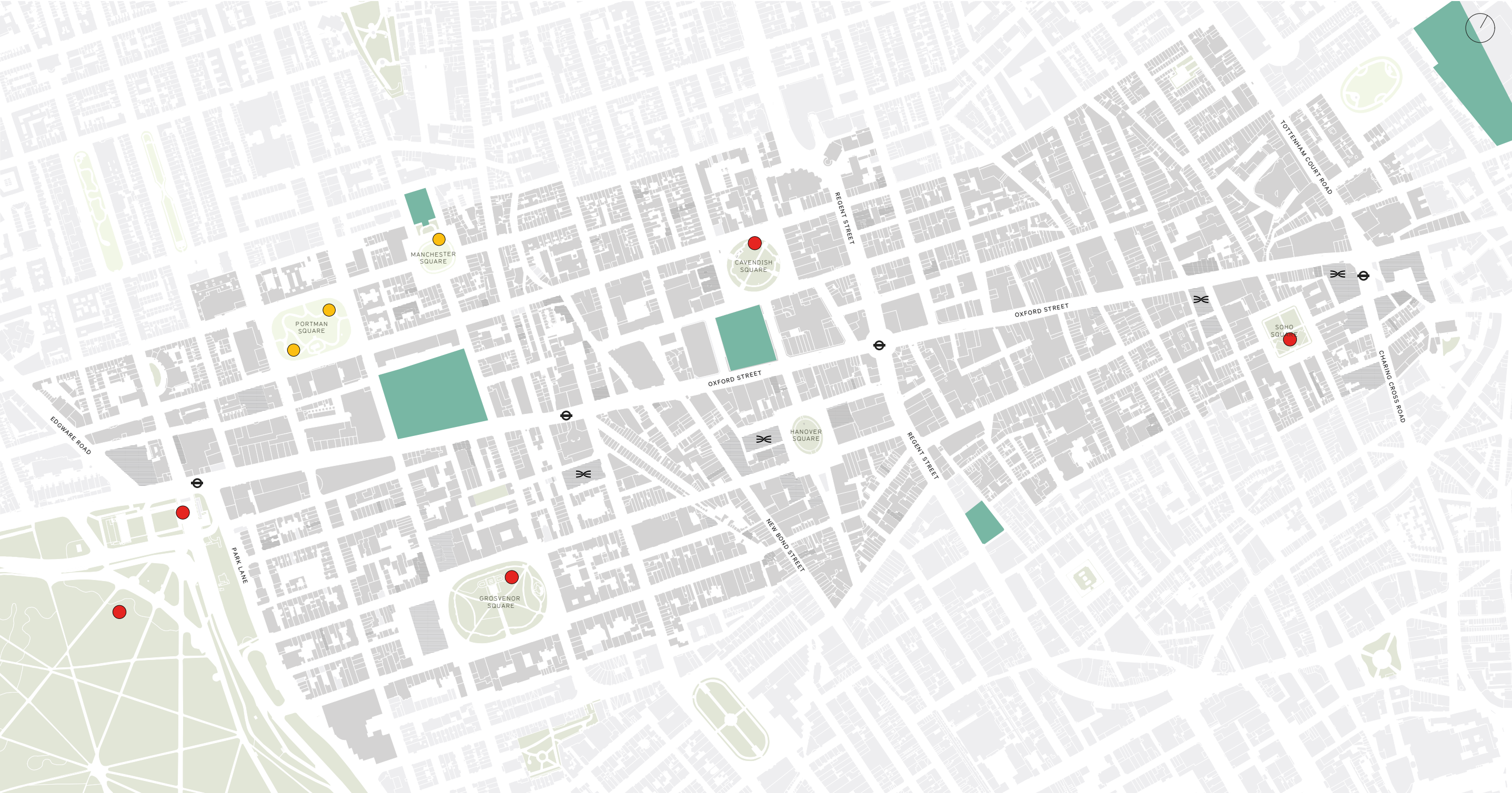
Hotels

Parks and squares
- Oxford Street

Retail streets

Secondary retail
- Focus area

Existing play opportunities



Map of play from survey August 2018

- Existing publicly accessible play feature (e.g. tennis tables)
- Existing private play feature
- Family attractions and facilities
- Focus area

Public art



Mosaic by Eduardo Paolozzi, Tottenham Court Road



ROOM by Anthony Gormley, Beaumont Hotel, Brown Hart Gardens



William Pitt statue, Hanover Square



Eagle by Eero Saarinen and Theodore Roszak, Grosvenor Square



Girl by Michael Rizzello, Plaza Oxford Street



Statue of George II by Caius Gabriel Cibber, Soho Square

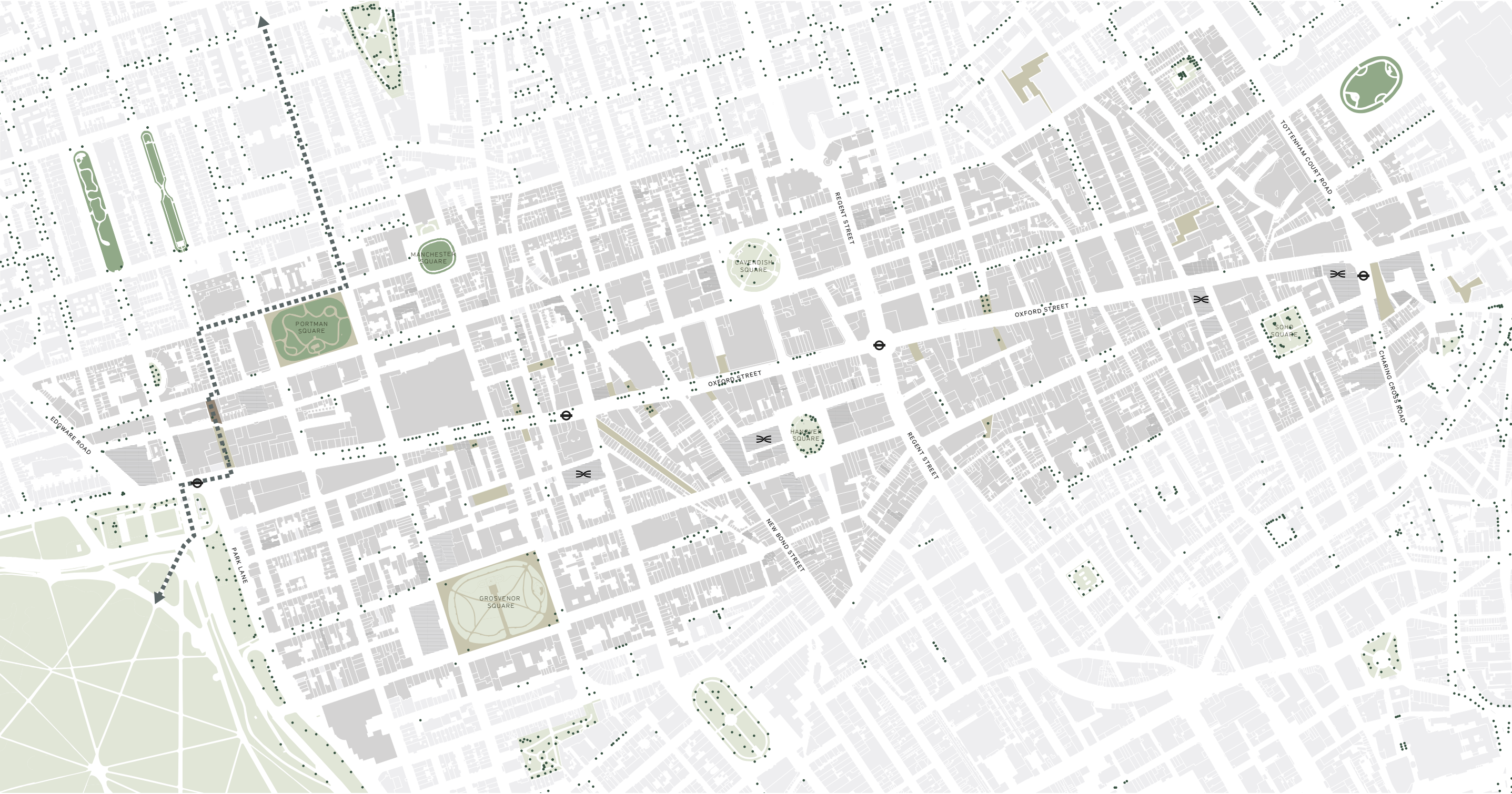


Winged Figure by Barbara Hepworth, John Lewis



Madonna and Child by Jacob Epstein, Cavendish Square

Trees and landscaping



Map of trees and landscaping from survey August 2018
Additional data source: WCC data

- Existing publicly accessible green space
- Existing private or communal green space
- Existing hard landscaping
- Temporary hard landscaping
- Park to park walking route
- Existing tree
- Focus area

Trees and landscaping



Oxford Street, Pear trees (*Pyrus calleryana* 'Chanticleer')



James Street, Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)



Cavendish Square, London Plane trees (*Platanus hispanica*)



Great Titchfield Street, Maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba*)



Stratford Placet, Willow trees (*Salix alba*)



Brown Hart Gardens, a variety of planting and tree species

Road safety and collisions



Source: GLA London datastore

- Fatal collision (2010 – 2016)
- Serious collision (2010 – 2016)
- Focus area

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N.B. Changes have been made to this document since the previous issue of the Consultation Version on 26 October 2018, to reflect comments and feedback received during consultation.

The maps and visual materials include the results of on-street surveys, fieldwork and desk-based research undertaken between 07/2018 and 10/2018, translating to qualitative findings and presenting qualitative assessments, aiming for the greatest accuracy possible. It also references fieldwork and desk-based research undertaken for *Oxford Street Today*, written by Publica, Volterra and Gerald Eve, published June 2017.

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