



Meeting or Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	11 December 2023
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Oxford Street Programme (OSP) - Complementary Schemes
Wards Affected:	West End and Marylebone
Policy Context:	Fairer Economy – A reimagined and revived Oxford Street and West End that delivers a world class offer and experience to residents, businesses and visitors supporting a diverse, resilient, and successful economy that delivers growth in Westminster.
Key Decision:	Yes, impacts on two Wards.
Financial Summary:	<p>The Capital Strategy was approved by Full Council on 8th March 2023 and includes an expenditure budget of £124.4m for the Oxford Street programme from 2022/23 onwards.</p> <p>This report outlines the complementary schemes at Davies Street, Grosvener Square and James Street to be delivered through the Oxford Street Programme, and the benefits and proposed funding approach for each.</p>
Report of:	Bernie Flaherty, Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Health and Deputy Chief Executive

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Cabinet Member Report (CMR) of 1st November 2022 set out a revised scope of works for the Oxford Street Programme (OSP). The programme scope is sectioned into three areas and focused on delivering an enhanced public realm for Oxford Street and Oxford Circus (primary schemes) supplemented by highway schemes (highway schemes) and complementary schemes in the area (complementary schemes).
- 1.2 Three complementary schemes have been identified at Davies Street, Grosvenor Square and James Street. These projects are deemed to deliver the strongest positive impact on public realm and pedestrian experience and complement the primary Oxford Street scheme.
- 1.3 Design work on OSP projects such as Oxford Street, Oxford Circus and the highway schemes has commenced, however design on the complementary schemes is yet to be started, bar any designs developed under the previous Oxford Street District (OSD) programme. This is the final area of the programme to be progressed. These schemes will only develop if appropriate third-party funding is secured. The Davies Street scheme will be funded through existing s106 contributions, and both the Grosvenor Square and James Street will progress upon agreement of 50% third party funding.
- 1.4 This purpose of this report is to:
 - a) Set out location, scope and benefits of the OSP complementary schemes along with design milestones; and
 - b) Provide an outline funding approach for each project.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet agree to:

- 2.1 Approve the activation of the final area of the programme and commencement of design for the three proposed OSP complementary schemes; and
- 2.2 Approve the funding approach for the three complementary schemes.

3. Reasons for Decision

- 3.1 The complementary schemes seek to extend the public realm benefits being achieved on Oxford Street into adjacent neighbourhoods through an improvement of pedestrian access and comfort, additional seating and greening, enhanced lighting and better-quality surfacing materials.

Furthermore, they will create new or improved amenity areas for potential future activation. The decision was made to retain the three schemes from a larger number of possible schemes contained in the previous OSD programme based on their contribution to achieving the benefits noted above.

- 3.2 The Davies Street scheme provides a vital gateway on Oxford Street to Mayfair and the recently opened Elizabeth Line station. The street is currently open to vehicular traffic and the proposed closure will secure an additional and safer space for pedestrians leading to Oxford Street. This will also create a new public amenity space and provide an opportunity for seating and greening resulting in a more comfortable and attractive experience.
- 3.3 The Grosvenor Square scheme will provide safer pedestrian and cycling facilities, reducing the dominance of the carriageway around the square. This will be achieved through the delivery of wider footways and the improvement of pedestrian crossings.
- 3.4 The James Street scheme is intended to provide a pedestrian and cycle friendly environment in James Street south along with operational changes to Barrett Street, Picton Place, James Street north. An improved public realm space is envisaged to the north of Bird Street and permanent footway build outs are proposed at the junction of Picton Place with James Street to convert a temporary measure introduced during the pandemic.
- 3.5 Approval to proceed through the design stages and subsequent construction of these projects will be sought through Cabinet Member Reports.

4. Background

- 4.1 In 2019, Westminster City Council (WCC) developed plans for a district-wide approach for the investment required to address public realm, safety, transport, and economic challenges faced by Oxford Street and the wider area. A Place Strategy and Delivery Plan, and a business case approving £150 million capital funding from the Council, were subsequently approved for the 'Oxford Street District' programme.
- 4.2 Following the local elections in May 2022 the new administration considered how best to proceed with the Oxford Street District programme. In accordance with the Fairer Westminster manifesto the decision was made to focus council funding on improvements required for Oxford Street itself, along with selected side streets, rather than a whole district approach. The programme was renamed the 'Oxford Street Programme' (OSP).
- 4.3 The programme scope includes three complementary schemes to the north and south of Oxford Street, namely at Davies Street, Grosvenor Square and James Street. These projects were retained as they were deemed to deliver the

strongest positive impact on public realm and the pedestrian experience and complement the primary Oxford Street scheme.

5. Design Progress and Scope

- 5.1 The outline design stage and scope for the three complementary schemes are addressed in turn below. Please refer to appendix A for a project location plan. The designs and construction will be led by the OSP team in collaboration with the programme design and build contractor – Murphy Carey Joint Venture (MCJV).

Davies Street

- 5.3 The northern section of Davies Street has been identified as a significant gateway onto both Oxford Street and Mayfair. The Bond Street underground station brings a high volume of pedestrians out onto Davies Street and the opening of the Elizabeth Line station has further added to the pedestrian congestion in this area. Currently there is no public amenity available, but a large space connecting Davies Street to Oxford Street.
- 5.4 As a key pedestrian thoroughfare, the proposed scheme will provide a safe and comfortable route, through the restriction of vehicular traffic, between the Weighhouse and Oxford Street junctions. The scheme will create a new amenity space off Oxford Street providing additional greening and seating, as well as facilitating future activation opportunities for this area.

The proposed project scope includes:

- a) The creation of a new amenity space through the closure of a section of the street between Weighhouse Street and Oxford Street
 - b) Improving pedestrian safety and experience through the removal of a section of the carriageway
 - c) Introduction of new seating, lighting, trees and planting through the area
- 5.5 A Stage 1 design for the Davies Street project area was developed under the previous iteration of the programme (OSD), however the scope has since been revised and reduced to focus on the northern section of the street. This design will be reviewed and utilised where possible to deliver a revised Stage 1 design for the new scope area.

Grosvenor Square

- 5.6 The Grosvenor Square scheme was retained in the OSP due to its benefits to the pedestrian environment around Grosvenor Square and its close proximity

to Oxford Street. The garden square is to be redeveloped by The Grosvenor Estates to provide a high-quality public amenity space providing calm and respite, and enhanced biodiversity, at the heart of Mayfair. It is expected that this square transformation will result in more visitors to the area. These plans along with the development of a hotel have prompted the OSP to consider a number of improvements to road layouts and the public realm of adjacent streets.

- 5.7 The square is currently dominated by carriageway with two-stage crossings over large traffic islands, which provide a barrier to accessing the green space. The footway at the circumference is narrow and can be difficult to navigate particularly for families or those using a wheelchair.

The proposed project scope includes:

- a) A review of the road layout to reduce the dominance of vehicular traffic;
 - b) Improving pedestrian safety and access to the re-designed square through wider footways and better crossings and therefore connectivity to the garden square;
 - c) Upgrading the footways around the square with high quality surfacing materials and identifying opportunities for lighting and planting whilst avoiding clutter; and
 - d) The accommodation of additional cycle and e-scooter parking, and cyclists' provision on the carriageway to the east of the square.
- 5.8 A concept design has been developed for the public realm proposal for Grosvenor Square. This will be developed into a Stage 1 (feasibility) design by MCJV. The scheme design will focus on the northern, eastern and southern sides of the square due to the development of the Rosewood Hotel which will capture the western side. Construction of the scheme will consider and co-ordinate with the redevelopment of the garden to minimise disruption.

James Street

- 5.9 The original scope of the James Street scheme was identified by the previous District programme and included James Street, Barrett Street, Picton Place and Bird Street. During the pandemic the previous programme introduced temporary footway buildouts on James Street south and Picton Place to support social distancing. The scheme was retained in the current programme as it seeks to create a more appealing and accessible pedestrian and cycle friendly environment through streetscape enhancement.

The scheme proposals include:

- a) A high-quality pedestrian priority area on James Street south of the junction with Barrett Street with temporary footway buildouts made permanent;
- b) Upgrade of temporary footway buildouts on Picton Place;
- c) Resurfacing of Barrett Street including widened footways and flush pedestrian crossings;
- d) The creation of an improved pedestrian space on Bird Street north; and
- e) Upgrade of lighting and enhancing greening across the project area.
- f) Creation of a north-south cycle link between James Street and Gilbert Street.

5.10 A Stage 1 design was carried out for the project area under the previous OSD programme. This design will be reviewed and utilised where possible to deliver a revised Stage 1 design for the area.

6. Financial Implications

Capital Budget

- 6.1 The expenditure budget approved by Full Council in March 2023 was £124.4m for 2022/23 onwards. The total budget allocation is £127.592m taking into consideration costs incurred prior to 2022/23 which can be utilised by the new programme. The budget was based on the delivery of the historic district wide programme and there was recognition that this would need to be revised based on new delivery workstreams and more aspirational funding expectations.
- 6.2 The budget is expected to cover works on Oxford Street and Oxford Circus, as well as enabling highway and complementary schemes (on the condition of 50% funding being received where appropriate).
- 6.3 The programme has ringfenced £16.30m of the £127.592m budget for the complimentary schemes.

Estimated Costs

- 6.4 Initial estimated costs for the complementary schemes total £16.3m and are outlined in the table below. These costs are high-level estimates for the full cost of the schemes based on concept designs and ongoing discussions

regarding scope. As the schemes progress through the design stages costs will be refined and presented in future CMR's for Cabinet Member spend approval.

Table 1: Complementary Scheme Initial High Level Estimated Costs

Costs	Grosvenor Square (£m's)	James Street (£m's)	Davies Street (£m's)	Total (£m's)
Estimated costs	10.00	5.00	1.30	16.30

Funding Approach

- 6.5 External funding discussions have progressed with land and property owners in the immediate area of the proposed schemes and the funding approach for each scheme is summarised below:

Grosvenor Square

- 6.6 Discussions are underway with The Grosvenor Estate to fund 50% of the Grosvenor Square scheme. The remaining WCC contribution will be funded through the programme capital budget. The intention is that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be entered into with funders as a demonstration of commitment to delivering the project. Design stages 1 and 2 will only be developed based on 50/50 funding for each of these stages. At the end of Stage 2 a s278 will be entered into and will supersede the MOU for the remaining stages 3-6.

James Street

- 6.7 Positive conversations have taken place with property owners in the James Street area regarding scheme scope. This is being facilitated by the local Business Improvement District – the New West End Company (NWEC). A 50% contribution from local businesses is expected to progress this project. The remaining WCC contribution will be funded through the programme capital budget. As with Grosvenor Square, a MOU will be entered into for the project and 50/50 funding will need to be secured to progress stages 1 and 2. On the conclusion of Stage 2, a s278 will be entered into and will supersede the MOU for the remaining design stages 3-6.

Davies Street

- 6.8 To date, external funding has not been identified for the Davies Street scheme. The scheme will be funded via a s106 contribution which must be spent by December 2028. The scope and design will be engineered to this value. A further enhancement to design will only be considered if additional external funding is secured, at which point WCC will make a 50/50 contribution funded through the capital budget.

Revenue Implications

- 6.9 The Council currently manage and maintain Davies Street, Grosvenor Square and James Street within the existing city-wide Highways and Cleansing contract. The expectation is there will be no requirement for an uplift in maintenance costs to be borne by the Council as a result of the delivery of the complementary schemes. Furthermore, as new materials are to be introduced, the short to medium maintenance and repair costs will be reduced.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The City Council is the highway authority for Oxford Street and the side roads and junctions with it that form part of the revised programme together with Oxford Circus. The Highways Act 1980 provides the Council with the statutory powers to carry out works to improve highways and pedestrian facilities. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended provides permitted development rights that allow highway authorities to carry out necessary work to maintain or improve roads and pedestrian facilities and undertake necessary or incidental work outside but adjoining road boundaries without the need for planning permission.

8. Carbon Impact

- 8.1 Westminster City Council declared a Climate Emergency and has committed to becoming a carbon neutral council by 2030 and a carbon neutral city by 2040 and adapting its built environment to be more resilient to climate change. One of the key ways it will deliver this is through the creation of more sustainable streets through the mitigation of carbon impact through design and construction. This includes considering the impact of material selection and sourcing, greening, drainage and providing the conditions to encourage active modes of transport.
- 8.2 Efforts to reduce the carbon impact of all OSP, including complementary, schemes will be considered throughout design including the lifetime carbon footprint of materials. This will also consider where materials are sourced and their transportation, material specification and recycling or reusing existing materials.
- 8.3 MCJV is committed to reducing the carbon impact of their construction activity and propose to use electric tools and vehicles during construction where practicable. Commitments have been made to divert 98% of waste from landfill and reuse 95% of materials.
- 8.4 Greening is proposed as part of the complementary schemes, which will not only allow for the improvement of the streetscape and add to the visual amenity of the streetscape but will be designed to provide shade and respite

from heat, helping build resilience to rising temperatures. Enhancement of greening will contribute to the Wild West End network with stepping stones for fauna between green spaces. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) will be installed as appropriate.

- 8.5 Sustainable travel will be supported through a strategy focussed on enhancing cycle parking including e-scooter and dock less bays that can be used by e-bikes and e-scooters where feasible.

9. Equalities Implications

- 9.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is being carried out for all projects to be delivered through the OSP. The draft, initial assessment indicates the proposed public realm improvements will have an overall positive impact on multiple protected characteristics. The EqIA will continue to be enhanced and developed as the projects progress.

10. Engagement and Consultation

- 10.1 The OSP seeks to create inclusive and authentic opportunities for engagement and consultation with all interested stakeholders and is committed to open and transparent communication. This is at the core of the programme engagement and consultation strategy which outlines the following key principles:
- a) Inform – Informing people of what is happening, when and why.
 - b) Involve – Enabling everyone to have their say and building relationships.
 - c) Empower – Inspiring people to play an active role in influencing outcomes.
- 10.2 The OSP consultation strategy provides the framework for the development of an engagement plan for all projects. As part of this, the OSP team delivered an extensive public consultation campaign for over six weeks in Summer 2023 to consult on the proposals for Oxford Street, Oxford Circus, Marylebone Fitzrovia enabling schemes, Oxford Street West enabling schemes and Eastcastle Street junction improvements.
- 10.3 The public consultation and engagement activities used various techniques and tools including a dedicated webpage, newsletters, questionnaires, meetings, postcard drops and public consultation sessions. The feedback from consultation and engagement will be used, where applicable, to amend and influence the designs as they progress.

10.4 Full results of the consultation will be compiled, analysed and published in Autumn 2023. However, in advance of this reporting being finalised, the following results summary can be presented:

- a) 1612 questionnaire responses were received
- b) 27 direct emails of written feedback
- c) 180+ attendees of in person meetings
- d) 500+ people engaged at three local markets
- e) 12,800 postcards delivered to local residents
- f) 20,755 views of the OSP website

10.5 Participants were asked a number of questions relating to different projects within the OSP. To the question relating to the overall programme, *'Overall, to what extent do you support or oppose the whole programme proposal?'*, most responses, totalling 64%, were in favour. The results are summarised in Figure 1 below.

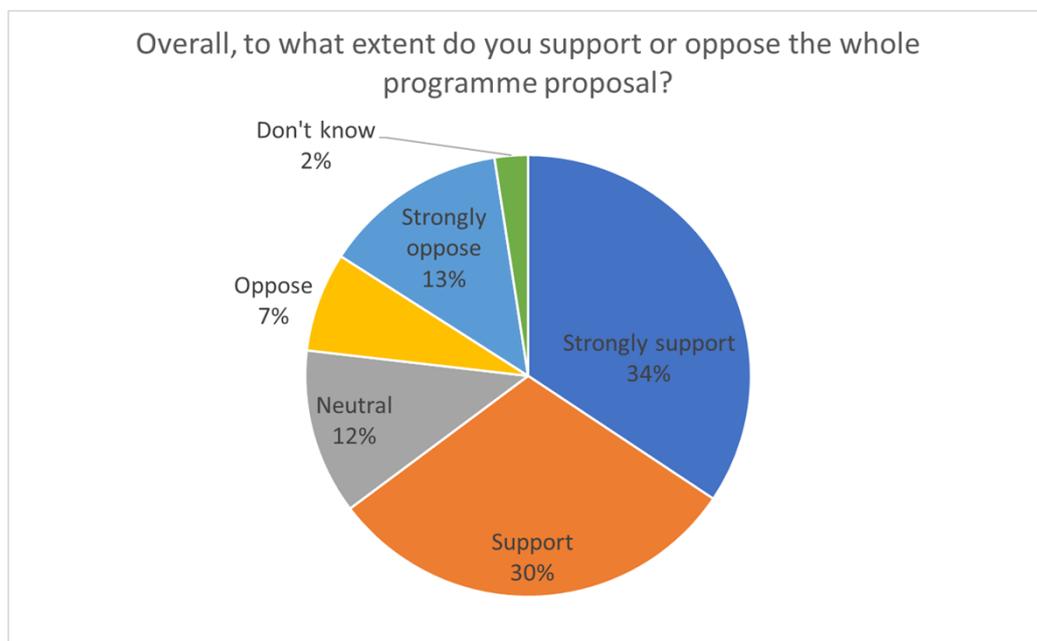


Figure 1 – Summary of Response to the OSP

10.6 The Oxford Street scheme overlaps with Davies Street and James Street at their respective junctions. As a result, the Oxford Street consultation included the closure of these streets. The feedback on these spaces are outlined below.

Davies Street

10.7 A total of 1,386 responses were received in relation to this element of the consultation. The proposal has generated significant support, with 63% strongly supporting or supporting the proposal. 12% remained neutral while 20% opposed or strongly opposed the idea.

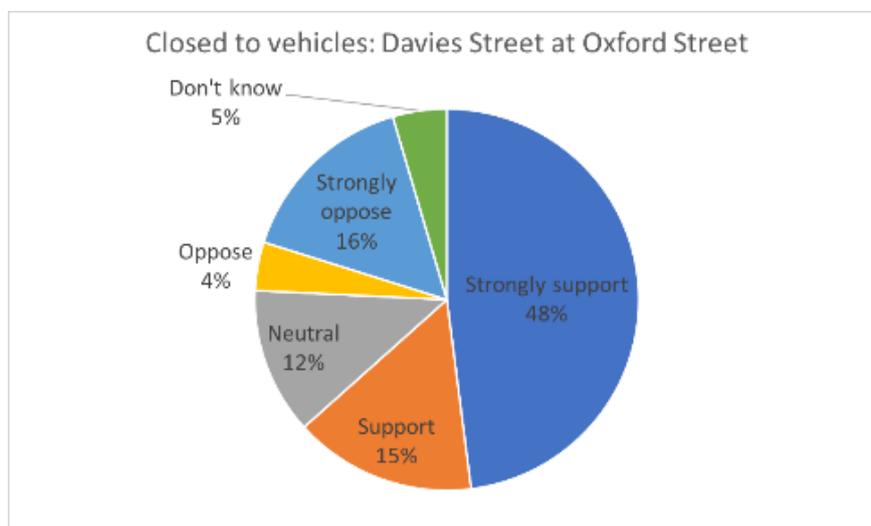


Figure 2: Consultation Responses – Focus on the Davies Street Junction

James Street

10.8 The James Street proposal received a total of 1,389 responses. This proposal generated significant support. The majority, at 64% strongly supported or supported the proposal. 12% remained neutral while 20% opposed or strongly opposed the idea.

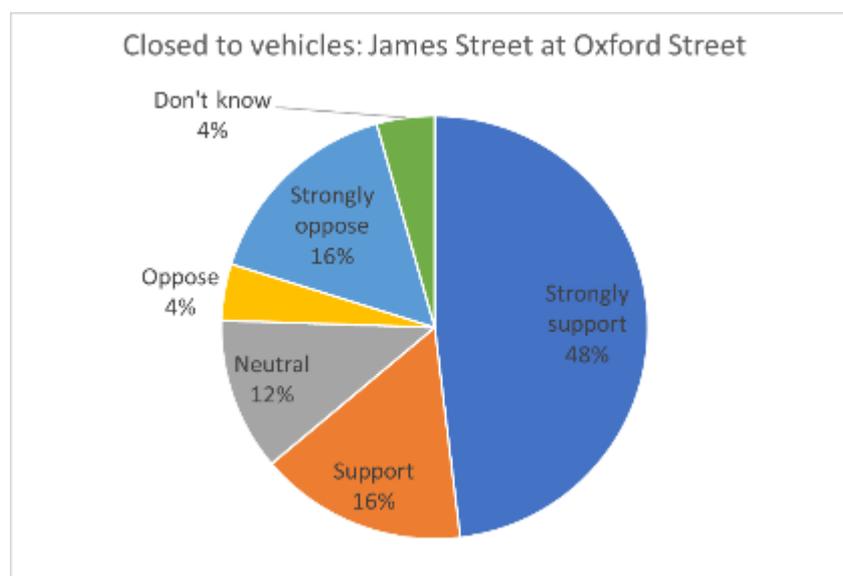


Figure 3: Consultation Responses – Focus on the James Street Junction

Grosvenor Square

- 10.9 As there is no immediate interface between Oxford Street and Grosvenor Square and no element of this scheme has been subject to consultation to date.
- 10.10 Public consultation will be held for each complementary scheme at the end of Stage 2 (initial) design. As the schemes progress, community engagement sessions will take place, key stakeholders will be engaged, updates will be included on the programme website and the programme email will be available to receive comments.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact:

Bernie Flaherty, Deputy Chief Executive, Westminster City Council

bflaherty@westminster.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Geographical extent of the revised Oxford Street Programme and Complementary Schemes

APPENDIX A: Geographical Extent of the Oxford Street Programme including Complementary Schemes

