

**City of Westminster
Written Council Question
Standing Order 9(c)**

The following sets out a question from Councillor Selina Short asked, in accordance with Standing Order 9(c) of Councillor Paul Dimoldenberg, Cabinet Member for City Management and Air Quality.

Councillor Selina Short

I am sure the Cabinet Member would agree that what makes our City exceptionally special is the wealth of our landmarks both small and large? Would the cabinet member then not agree that it must be possible to keep the Date Palm Tree on Millbank and keep cyclists safe; given that our own WCC officers came up with a plan with traffic lights, with Cycle filters, on both sides of Millbank and Horseferry Road – which they felt would work, and furthermore there have been such changes to traffic flows since this plan was first suggested pre covid. Could the cabinet member join me in urgently calling on Sadiq Khan to implement the WCC plan, save money, the tree and increase cycle safety.

Councillor Paul Dimoldenberg

In 2018, Westminster City Council proposed an alternative outline proposal for the Millbank junction to TfL which would have allowed us to keep both the palm tree and the roundabout at the junction. However, TfL's optioneering process eliminated all alternative options that included roundabouts and they instead settled on the signalised crossroads option. TfL paused the project during the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequently resumed it in 2022, re-engaging with the council on the previously selected option and funding local traffic mitigation options to prevent traffic displacing into the borough.

The Millbank junction currently has the highest number of cycle collisions in London. Despite TfL not implementing the Council's scheme, we fully support them and their decision to make these much-needed safety improvements to this roundabout. I certainly do agree that both small and large landmarks make our city special, which is why alongside making the junction safer, we have also worked with TfL to find a nearby location to move the palm tree to. I am pleased to say that earlier this month, the beloved palm tree was safely rehomed in the nearby Churchill Gardens estate.
