

# LONDON ASSEMBLY

Keith Prince AM, Chairman of the Transport Committee

London Assembly  
City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
London SE1 2AA

**28 November 2017**

Sadiq Khan  
Mayor of London  
City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
London SE1 2AA

Dear Mayor,

## **Transformation of Oxford Street consultation**

I am writing on behalf of the Transport Committee in response to TfL's consultation on the transformation of Oxford Street.

We are pleased that you have now come forward with more detailed proposals for this scheme. First of all, however, I must express disappointment at the length of the consultation period. If implemented these proposals would represent one of the most significant changes to London's public realm for a generation, with wide-ranging implications for traffic movements, residents and visitors, and businesses across the West End. It is clearly insufficient to consult for just six weeks.

We appreciate you may now want to act quickly after a long delay bringing these proposals forward, but this cannot come at the expense of consulting people properly and getting the proposals right. We urge you to extend the consultation period into the new year in order to give as many stakeholders as possible the opportunity to participate.

## **Pedestrianising Oxford Street West**

Regarding the details of the proposals, we are not expressing a single committee opinion on the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street West. As you will be aware there is a range of views on this matter both among Members and the wider transport sector. We appreciate the highly complex nature of the scheme and welcome the work that has gone in to preparing these proposals by TfL, Westminster Council and other partners.

Should pedestrianisation be taken forward, we would support the plans you have made to maintain and improve north-south crossings, which will be particularly important for enabling deliveries to local business and access for disabled people.

### **Healthy Streets check**

In our response to your draft Transport Strategy, we welcomed your new focus on delivering Healthy Streets for London. Implementing this approach will help deliver improved public spaces across London and promote sustainable and active travel. We understand that a Healthy Streets check has been performed on these proposals. However, this assessment has not been published alongside the consultation. We urge you to release the results of the Healthy Streets check immediately and allow this to be considered during an extended consultation period.

### **Buses**

We have welcomed the recent reduction of the number of buses using Oxford Street, and support further proposals to achieve this. As we argued in our recent report, *London's Bus Network*, this must happen as part of a more wide-ranging reform of the bus network in order to provide more capacity in outer London.<sup>1</sup> Your draft Transport Strategy supports this objective, and we were pleased to see further discussion in TfL's response to our report. It is important that more detailed proposals are brought forward to deliver this.

### **Cycling routes**

You will be aware that there is a relatively high rate of road traffic collisions involving cycling along Oxford Street. Despite this, it is still used by many cyclists. There was already a need, therefore, to provide safe east-west cycle routes in central London. With your proposal to pedestrianise Oxford Street West, this need has become more pressing.

Your consultation states that plans for alternative cycle routes will be developed. This is welcome, but we believe this should already have been done as part of the current consultation. It is not possible for Londoners to share informed views on the plans to remove cyclists from Oxford Street unless they know what alternative is being proposed.

### **Marble Arch**

It is currently difficult for pedestrians to get between Oxford Street and Hyde Park, not least because of a lack of safe crossings. This is a lost opportunity for improving the visitor experience. We note that you plan to make further changes to the Marble Arch area in the 2020s, which we hope will deliver a safer, more welcoming environment. We urge you and TfL to work with the Royal Parks, New West End Company and Westminster Council to achieve this.

I hope you find these views useful as you work with partners to develop plans for Oxford Street.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith', with a horizontal line underneath it.

**Keith Prince AM**  
**Chairman, Transport Committee**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/londons-bus-network>