# London’s Oxford Street to become a pedestrian-only zone in bold transformation



London’s iconic Oxford Street is poised for a transformative change as Mayor Sadiq Khan pushes ahead with ambitious plans to pedestrianise the major thoroughfare. This initiative, recently trialled with a day-long car-free event, aims to create a vibrant, vehicle-free zone along a 0.7-mile stretch between Oxford Circus and Marble Arch, with possibilities for extensions towards Tottenham Court Road. The move is part of a broader vision to unlock Oxford Street’s potential as a world-class, accessible destination for shopping, leisure, and outdoor activities, rejuvenating an area that draws about half a million visitors daily.

The rationale for pedestrianisation is multifaceted. Oxford Street endures notorious congestion, with heavy pedestrian traffic mingling with slow-moving buses and a notable incidence of accidents. City Hall data highlights 125 serious injury collisions and four fatalities between 2016 and 2024, underscoring safety concerns. Supporters argue that removing vehicles could reduce short car journeys and congestion overall, improving conditions for pedestrians and wheelchair users alike. Tanya Braun, Director of External Affairs for Living Streets, emphasises that the transformation is vital to make the street a more pleasant and safer space, drawing comparisons to successful pedestrian zones in Brussels and Seoul. The Mayor envisions a new chapter for Oxford Street featuring al fresco dining and outdoor events, seeking to enhance the visitor experience while bolstering the local economy, which still generates around £25 billion annually despite recent pandemic setbacks and the rise of online shopping.

Public sentiment, as reflected in a recent Transport for London (TfL) consultation, leans heavily in favour of the changes. Almost seven in ten respondents supported interventions to regenerate Oxford Street, with two-thirds specifically endorsing pedestrianisation. Major retailers such as Selfridges, John Lewis, and Ikea have also welcomed the proposals. Following the formal transfer of highway responsibilities to TfL in September 2025, detailed traffic and highway plans will be developed for the pedestrianisation of the section from Orchard Street through Oxford Circus up to Great Portland Street. A Mayoral Development Corporation is also planned to drive the regeneration effort, underscoring the strategic importance of the project for London’s future.

However, opposition voices caution against potential unintended consequences. Critics like Conservative Councillor Tim Barnes warn that redirecting traffic from Oxford Street could exacerbate congestion on neighbouring side streets, leading to increased pollution and disruption for local residents and businesses. He points out the essential functions that traffic serves, including deliveries and emergency services, which will still need access in some form. Notably, recent data shows a significant decline in pollution on Oxford Street itself, with nitrogen dioxide levels dropping from 87 ug/m3 in 2016—well above the legal limit—to 29 ug/m3 in recent years, comfortably within targets. This has led some to question whether the urgency of pedestrianisation is justified purely on air quality grounds.

There are also concerns about how the changes will impact disabled Londoners and others who rely heavily on bus services for access. The consultation so far has focused on principles rather than detailed logistics for rerouting 16 bus routes and planning for taxis, pick-up, and drop-off points. Laura, Senior Policy and Stakeholder Engagement Manager for Inclusion London, emphasises the necessity of involving disabled communities in the planning process to ensure the scheme is genuinely inclusive and does not inadvertently create barriers.

Mayor Khan has expressed determination to implement these changes as swiftly as possible, highlighting the ambition to establish a cleaner, greener, and safer Oxford Street. Yet, Transport for London’s budget documents suggest that consultations on transport rerouting and detailed proposals might extend into 2026 or beyond, with phased plans to follow. Cyclists, in particular, may face restrictions under the new layout.

This vision of a traffic-free Oxford Street reflects a growing trend in major global cities to prioritise pedestrian-friendly urban environments, inspired by success stories such as Times Square in New York and La Rambla in Barcelona. While the road ahead involves complex logistical challenges and balancing diverse stakeholder interests, the plan signals London’s commitment to modernising one of its most iconic streets, seeking to remain competitive on the world stage while improving quality of life and sustainability.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/car-free-oxford-street-pedestrian-32532102), [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/londons-oxford-street-go-traffic-free-shopping-area-makeover-says-mayor-2025-06-16/), [[3]](https://www.london.gov.uk/overwhelming-support-for-mayors-oxford-street-plans), [[4]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianised-sadiq-khan-traffic-free-consultation-decision-mayor-north-korea-kim-b1233250.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/car-free-oxford-street-pedestrian-32532102), [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/londons-oxford-street-go-traffic-free-shopping-area-makeover-says-mayor-2025-06-16/), [[3]](https://www.london.gov.uk/overwhelming-support-for-mayors-oxford-street-plans)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/car-free-oxford-street-pedestrian-32532102), [[3]](https://www.london.gov.uk/overwhelming-support-for-mayors-oxford-street-plans), [[4]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianised-sadiq-khan-traffic-free-consultation-decision-mayor-north-korea-kim-b1233250.html), [[5]](https://www.london.gov.uk/media-centre/mayors-press-release/oxford-street-to-go-traffic-free-to-showcase-transformative-benefits-of-proposals-to-pedestrianise-the-iconic-street)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/car-free-oxford-street-pedestrian-32532102)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/car-free-oxford-street-pedestrian-32532102), [[3]](https://www.london.gov.uk/overwhelming-support-for-mayors-oxford-street-plans)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/car-free-oxford-street-pedestrian-32532102), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-bus-routes-tfl-sadiq-khan-b1201682.html)
* Paragraph 7 – [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/londons-oxford-street-go-traffic-free-shopping-area-makeover-says-mayor-2025-06-16/), [[3]](https://www.london.gov.uk/overwhelming-support-for-mayors-oxford-street-plans), [[4]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianised-sadiq-khan-traffic-free-consultation-decision-mayor-north-korea-kim-b1233250.html), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-bus-routes-tfl-sadiq-khan-b1201682.html)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/car-free-oxford-street-pedestrian-32532102> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/londons-oxford-street-go-traffic-free-shopping-area-makeover-says-mayor-2025-06-16/> - In June 2025, London Mayor Sadiq Khan announced plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street, aiming to revitalise the area and create a new public space to drive growth. The proposal received majority support from Londoners and businesses during a public consultation. Inspired by successful transformations like Times Square in New York and La Rambla in Barcelona, the initiative seeks to rejuvenate the mile-long stretch into a world-class, accessible hub for shopping, leisure, and outdoor events. Despite challenges, the plan is expected to attract tourists, investment, and generate employment. Implementation requires collaboration with the government to pass necessary legislation and identify alternative routes for buses currently using the street. The changes are to be introduced as swiftly as possible.
3. <https://www.london.gov.uk/overwhelming-support-for-mayors-oxford-street-plans> - Following an extensive public consultation, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, announced plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street, receiving overwhelming support from Londoners and businesses. The consultation showed that almost seven in ten respondents backed the proposed interventions to regenerate Oxford Street, with two-thirds specifically supporting the idea of pedestrianisation. Major businesses, including Selfridges, John Lewis, and Ikea, welcomed the plans, which aim to boost retail and drive growth for London and the wider UK economy. Detailed traffic and highway proposals for pedestrianising the section between Orchard Street and Oxford Circus up to Great Portland Street will be published later this year. The Mayor also plans to establish a Mayoral Development Corporation dedicated to regenerating the area and making Oxford Street a world-leading urban space for shopping, leisure, and outdoor events.
4. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianised-sadiq-khan-traffic-free-consultation-decision-mayor-north-korea-kim-b1233250.html> - In June 2025, Mayor Sadiq Khan announced plans to part-pedestrianise Oxford Street after receiving overwhelming support from residents and businesses. The changes will involve more of the road being closed to traffic than initially thought, including the eastern section between Oxford Circus and Great Portland Street, in addition to the western section between Oxford Circus and the western edge of Selfridges. The Oxford Circus junction itself will not be pedestrianised, as buses will continue to run north-south on Regent Street. The decision follows a nine-week consultation, with two-thirds of respondents in favour. Detailed solutions on how to remove or divert 16 bus routes from Oxford Street will be developed, with the changes expected to be introduced as swiftly as possible.
5. <https://www.london.gov.uk/media-centre/mayors-press-release/oxford-street-to-go-traffic-free-to-showcase-transformative-benefits-of-proposals-to-pedestrianise-the-iconic-street> - In June 2025, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, announced plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street, aiming to create a new public space to drive growth. The proposal received overwhelming support from Londoners and businesses during a public consultation. The consultation showed that almost seven in ten respondents backed the proposed interventions to regenerate Oxford Street, with two-thirds specifically supporting the idea of pedestrianisation. Major businesses, including Selfridges, John Lewis, and Ikea, welcomed the plans, which aim to boost retail and drive growth for London and the wider UK economy. Detailed traffic and highway proposals for pedestrianising the section between Orchard Street and Oxford Circus up to Great Portland Street will be published later this year. The Mayor also plans to establish a Mayoral Development Corporation dedicated to regenerating the area and making Oxford Street a world-leading urban space for shopping, leisure, and outdoor events.
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-bus-routes-tfl-sadiq-khan-b1201682.html> - Detailed plans on how Oxford Street will be part-pedestrianised may not emerge for more than a year, according to key documents published by Transport for London. TfL’s draft budget submission for the next financial year indicates that it will 'support the GLA [Greater London Authority] to develop proposals for the regeneration of Oxford Street, with consultation anticipated in early 2026'. Mayor Sadiq Khan first announced his intention to make a renewed attempt to pedestrianise the western end of the street in September, and later told The Standard he hoped to make progress within 12 to 18 months. However, if TfL does not launch a consultation on how it plans to re-route buses from Oxford Street or make other transport-related changes until 'early 2026', it will be summer 2026 at the earliest before the results are analysed and Mr Khan can decide how to proceed. Mr Khan has already said that cyclists will be banned from Oxford Street under the proposed changes. A City Hall spokeswoman said: 'This is a phased project with the first consultations beginning in early 2025 and an examination of alternative bus routes expected to be before the end of the year. There are likely to be subsequent consultations for later phases in 2026 and beyond.'