# Mayor Khan accelerates Oxford Street pedestrianisation with government backing



Plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street, one of London’s busiest and most iconic shopping destinations, are set to move forward rapidly under the direction of Mayor Sadiq Khan. The proposal aims to ban traffic from a stretch approximately 0.7 miles (1.1 km) between Oxford Circus and Marble Arch, with aspirations to extend the pedestrianised area further towards Tottenham Court Road. This move seeks to revitalise the high street, attract increased tourism, create jobs, and secure long-term economic prosperity for the area.

Mayor Khan has emphasised widespread public support for the plan, citing a recent consultation in which around two thirds of participants endorsed the traffic ban. The vision draws inspiration from successful urban transformations like New York’s Times Square and Barcelona’s La Rambla, aiming to establish Oxford Street as a "world-class, accessible pedestrianised avenue" that blends shopping, leisure, and outdoor events. The street currently draws nearly half a million visitors daily but has faced significant challenges in recent years, including the closure of major retail outlets and competition from online shopping.

The proposals hinge on Khan obtaining formal approval from Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government Angela Rayner, who has publicly expressed her support for the initiative. This approval would enable the creation of a new mayoral development corporation, granting Khan greater planning powers to bypass previous obstacles, particularly those posed by Westminster City Council. The council has voiced concern over the plans, particularly regarding potential traffic rerouting, bus diversions, and the impact on local streets in neighbouring areas such as Marylebone and Fitzrovia.

Local opposition mainly revolves around uncertainties linked to traffic management and accessibility issues. Critics question how 16 bus routes currently running through Oxford Street would be accommodated without causing congestion on narrower surrounding streets. There are also considerations about how the changes will affect cyclists, taxi users, families with children, and those with mobility restrictions. Additionally, some stakeholders highlight that Oxford Street’s deeper challenges lie in retail rental costs and the quality of the shopping experience, arguing these issues must be addressed alongside any pedestrianisation efforts.

Despite these concerns, the Mayor remains determined to push forward, underscoring the urgency to halt what he describes as a "managed decline" of the high street. He envisions a regenerated Oxford Street that will attract international visitors and act as a catalyst for new investment and job creation. The initiative also seeks to stimulate London's night-time economy and bolster the city's status as a leading global retail destination amid changing consumer behaviours and economic pressures.

Westminster City Council, which previously opposed pedestrianisation plans in 2018, has expressed that this is not its preferred outcome but acknowledges the importance of collaborative progress. The council's willingness to engage marks a shift from earlier resistance, likely influenced by government backing and the establishment of enhanced mayoral planning powers. The Mayor has also criticised the disproportionate influence of small local groups in blocking developments of national significance and is pushing for more decisions to be made by professional planning officers rather than local committees, aligning with broader government reforms.

Detailed proposals and consultations are expected later this year to map out the new traffic arrangements and the design of the pedestrianised areas. The project’s success will depend on balancing revitalisation goals with careful management of transport logistics and community needs. Ultimately, this ambitious plan seeks to secure a sustainable future for Oxford Street as a vibrant and accessible centre of commerce and culture.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban), [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/londons-oxford-street-go-traffic-free-shopping-area-makeover-says-mayor-2025-06-16/), [[6]](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/sep/17/traffic-banned-london-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-westminster-council)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban), [[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.ft.com/content/5313d5ec-d5e2-4e0c-910f-ca1aa55e7091), [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/d4324f4f-3c39-480e-b300-6f7f06977699)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban), [[6]](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/sep/17/traffic-banned-london-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-westminster-council), [[7]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/londons-oxford-street-could-go-traffic-free-under-mayors-plan-2024-09-17/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban), [[6]](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/sep/17/traffic-banned-london-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-westminster-council), [[7]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/londons-oxford-street-could-go-traffic-free-under-mayors-plan-2024-09-17/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban), [[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.ft.com/content/5313d5ec-d5e2-4e0c-910f-ca1aa55e7091), [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/d4324f4f-3c39-480e-b300-6f7f06977699)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban), [[4]](https://www.ft.com/content/307cf024-1f21-4386-b0e4-757ce597f4f0), [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/d4324f4f-3c39-480e-b300-6f7f06977699), [[6]](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/sep/17/traffic-banned-london-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-westminster-council)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban), [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/5313d5ec-d5e2-4e0c-910f-ca1aa55e7091), [[4]](https://www.ft.com/content/307cf024-1f21-4386-b0e4-757ce597f4f0)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://highways-news.com/a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=a-new-lease-of-life-mayor-khan-presses-on-with-oxford-street-traffic-ban> - 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/> - London Mayor Sadiq Khan has announced plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street, aiming to revitalise the area and transform it into a world-class, accessible hub for shopping, leisure, and outdoor events. The proposal has received majority support from Londoners and businesses during a recent 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, which attracts around 500,000 visitors daily but has faced challenges such as the closure of major retail stores. The plan is expected to create a 'beautiful public space,' improve tourism, attract investment, and generate employment. To implement the project, Khan will work with the government to pass the necessary legislation and identify alternative routes for the numerous buses currently using the street. The changes will be introduced as swiftly as possible.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/5313d5ec-d5e2-4e0c-910f-ca1aa55e7091> - London Mayor Sadiq Khan has confirmed the progression of plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street, following strong public and business support. According to a consultation conducted by the Greater London Authority between February and May, 66% of 6,642 respondents endorsed the proposal. Major retailers including Selfridges, John Lewis, and Ikea also support the initiative. The plan will see approximately a mile of the roadway pedestrianised, from Orchard Street to Great Portland Street. To implement the transformation, City Hall will establish a Mayoral Development Corporation within the year, collaborating with businesses, local authorities, and national government. The move aims to revitalise the area, which has faced economic challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of online shopping. Westminster council, which previously blocked similar initiatives in 2018 due to concerns about traffic and accessibility, now intends to work cooperatively to ensure the redevelopment benefits locals and visitors alike.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/307cf024-1f21-4386-b0e4-757ce597f4f0> - London Mayor Sadiq Khan has asserted that local residents should not have the final say regarding the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street, a key shopping area of national significance. Speaking at a property conference in Cannes, Khan reaffirmed his determination to push forward with the plan, even without the support of Westminster Council, which has previously opposed pedestrianisation due to concerns over traffic, public transport, and disabled access. Khan now has enhanced powers via the Mayoral Development Corporation granted by the UK Labour government, allowing him to advance the project. He criticised the influence of small groups of local residents and councillors in blocking major developments and endorsed recent government proposals to have planning decisions made more often by professional officers rather than local committees. Khan also emphasised the need to revitalise Oxford Street to compete with e-commerce and malls, warning that without intervention, the area risks decline into low-quality retail. A public consultation on pedestrianisation was launched last month, with ongoing negotiations involving Westminster Council.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/d4324f4f-3c39-480e-b300-6f7f06977699> - London's famous Oxford Street is set to become pedestrianised under proposals announced by Mayor Sadiq Khan to revitalise the area and transform it into 'the leading retail destination in the world.' The central street requires significant regeneration due to competition from online shopping, the closure of major department stores, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite opposition over traffic disruption and disabled access, the plan has gained momentum following the election of a Labour government. The renewal aims to generate employment, boost economic activity, and revitalise London's night-time economy. However, Westminster City Council, responsible for the street, has expressed concerns and seeks details on the project's duration and how local issues will be addressed. Despite recent improvements in store vacancy rates, intervention is considered crucial to strengthen Oxford Street's position against global competitors.
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/sep/17/traffic-banned-london-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-westminster-council> - Traffic will be banned from London’s Oxford Street under plans announced by Mayor Sadiq Khan, using new powers from the Labour government to push through long-thwarted pedestrianisation of the capital’s famous shopping strip. Khan said urgent action was needed so that the mile-long street could 'once again become the leading retail destination in the world.' The deputy prime minister, Angela Rayner, is expected to sign off a proposed mayoral development area, giving greater powers to Khan as he revives the plans he first laid out in 2017. The news was met with dismay by Westminster council, which blocked the previous plan amid businesses’ and residents’ concerns over rerouting buses, and whose own £90m 'shovel-ready' regeneration plans for the street may now be superseded.
7. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/londons-oxford-street-could-go-traffic-free-under-mayors-plan-2024-09-17/> - London's Oxford Street may soon become pedestrian-only under a plan proposed by city mayor Sadiq Khan, aiming to attract more shoppers and boost economic activity. The proposal has gained support from Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, who believes it will create new jobs and enhance the night-time economy. Oxford Street draws around half a million visitors daily but has faced challenges, with many flagship stores closing post-COVID pandemic. The area's recovery has been slow as more people turn to online shopping and reduced office returns. Retailers and local councils have shown both support and concern, particularly regarding the rerouting of buses and access implications. The final decision rests pending approval from Rayner, who is also the housing and communities minister. The Labour Party is advocating for faster approval of such projects to stimulate economic growth.