# Oxford Street pedestrianisation gains momentum with public and business backing amid local concerns



The Mayor of London, Sir Sadiq Khan, has reaffirmed his commitment to the bold pedestrianisation of Oxford Street, following a one-day traffic ban that proved significantly beneficial to the local economy. On 21 September, a half-mile stretch of Oxford Street—from Orchard Street to Oxford Circus—was closed to traffic, resulting in footfall that was 45 per cent higher than usual, according to CityAM. Nearly 70 per cent of stores reported sales on par with or exceeding a typical Sunday, with 80 per cent indicating a willingness to participate in similar future events.

Mayor Khan described the traffic-free day as a celebration of London’s vibrancy and proof of strong public appetite for a cleaner, more welcoming West End. He emphasised that putting people at the heart of Oxford Street without the hindrance of traffic allowed the area to flourish and benefited local businesses.

The pedestrianisation plan aims to rejuvenate Oxford Street, a key retail and leisure destination that has struggled with the impacts of online shopping and the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposal, announced in September 2024, intends to transform a 0.7-mile section between Oxford Circus and Marble Arch into a pedestrian-friendly environment, complete with improved urban landscaping such as planters, trees, water features, and ample seating areas. Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner has voiced strong support, highlighting the potential for job creation and the boost to London’s night-time economy that the pedestrianisation could deliver.

However, Westminster City Council has voiced concerns over practical challenges posed by the scheme. These include the impact on residents and street users, and the logistics of redirecting the many bus routes currently using Oxford Street. The proposal’s implementation hinges on the government's approval to establish a Mayoral Development Corporation, which would grant the Mayor enhanced planning powers, potentially overruling local council objections. The government appears supportive, with Rayner underscoring Oxford Street's world-renowned status and the need to sustain its economic vitality.

The plans have garnered substantial backing from the public and major businesses alike, with a June 2025 consultation showing that nearly 70 per cent of respondents support the regeneration efforts, and two-thirds specifically favour pedestrianisation. Prominent retailers such as Selfridges, John Lewis, and Ikea have welcomed the initiative, which is expected to not only revive retail but also stimulate wider economic growth across London and beyond.

Despite majority support, some opposition remains. Critics, including the Soho Society, have raised issues about the potential impact on investor confidence and possible increases in crime—citing precedent cases where pedestrianisation correlated with higher crime rates. Tim Lord, chair of the Soho Society’s executive committee, described the plan as “enormously contentious” for local stakeholders. Nonetheless, the Mayor’s office has affirmed its determination to proceed, framing the initiative as essential to revitalising the area and invigorating the local economy.

Mayor Khan envisions a swift rollout of the pedestrianisation, inspired by successful transformations in cities like New York and Barcelona. He aims to create a world-class, accessible public space that accommodates shopping, leisure, and outdoor events, while improving tourism and attracting investment. The plan intends to ensure Oxford Street remains a vibrant urban hub capable of drawing hundreds of thousands of visitors daily.

As the project moves forward, detailed traffic and highway plans are expected to be published, offering clearer insights into how the changes will be managed on the ground. The establishment of the Mayoral Development Corporation will be a critical step in accelerating these urban improvements, ultimately aiming to position Oxford Street as a world-leading destination for both Londoners and visitors alike.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-plan-gets-the-go-ahead/), [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/sep/17/traffic-banned-london-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-westminster-council)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-plan-gets-the-go-ahead/), [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/sep/17/traffic-banned-london-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-westminster-council)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx244r3n50xo), [[6]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx27rn5d02po), [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/sep/17/traffic-banned-london-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-westminster-council)
* Paragraph 4 – [[4]](https://www.london.gov.uk/overwhelming-support-for-mayors-oxford-street-plans)
* Paragraph 5 – [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/transport/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-sadiq-khan-mayoral-development-corporation-crime-westminster-council-b1220312.html)
* Paragraph 6 – [[3]](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/londons-oxford-street-go-traffic-free-shopping-area-makeover-says-mayor-2025-06-16/), [[4]](https://www.london.gov.uk/overwhelming-support-for-mayors-oxford-street-plans)
* Paragraph 7 – [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx244r3n50xo), [[3]](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/londons-oxford-street-go-traffic-free-shopping-area-makeover-says-mayor-2025-06-16/), [[4]](https://www.london.gov.uk/overwhelming-support-for-mayors-oxford-street-plans), [[6]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx27rn5d02po)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://highways-news.com/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-plan-gets-the-go-ahead/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx244r3n50xo> - In September 2024, London Mayor Sadiq Khan announced plans to pedestrianise a 0.7-mile stretch of Oxford Street between Oxford Circus and Marble Arch. This initiative aims to rejuvenate the area, which has faced challenges due to online shopping and the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposal has received support from Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, who believes it will drive growth by creating new jobs and boosting London's night-time economy. The project is expected to cost approximately £150 million, with funding from local businesses, private investors, and new revenue streams. The plan also includes enhancements like planters, trees, water features, and seating. However, Westminster City Council has expressed concerns about the practical challenges of implementing the pedestrianisation and the need to address the concerns of local residents and users of the street. The project depends on gaining permission from the government to establish a new Mayoral Development Corporation, which would provide planning powers and allow the mayor to overrule the council. The government has indicated support for the proposal, with Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner stating that Oxford Street is a world-renowned shopping destination and expressing a desire to ensure it receives the necessary boost.
3. <https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/londons-oxford-street-go-traffic-free-shopping-area-makeover-says-mayor-2025-06-16/> - In June 2025, Mayor Sadiq Khan announced plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street, aiming to 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 public consultation. Inspired by successful transformations like Times Square in New York and La Rambla in Barcelona, the initiative seeks to rejuvenate the area, which attracts around half a million visitors daily but has seen the closure of major retail stores. The pedestrianisation plan is expected to create a 'beautiful public space,' improve tourism, attract investment, and generate employment. To implement the project, Khan plans to work with the government to pass the necessary legislation and identify alternative routes for the numerous buses currently using the street. The changes are to be introduced as swiftly as possible.
4. <https://www.london.gov.uk/overwhelming-support-for-mayors-oxford-street-plans> - In June 2025, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, announced plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street following overwhelming public and business support. A consultation revealed that nearly 70% of respondents backed the proposed interventions to regenerate the area, with two-thirds specifically supporting pedestrianisation. Major businesses, including Selfridges, John Lewis, and Ikea, have 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 are to 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.
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/transport/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-sadiq-khan-mayoral-development-corporation-crime-westminster-council-b1220312.html> - In April 2025, concerns were raised about the potential impact of pedestrianising Oxford Street on investor confidence and crime rates. Tim Lord, chair of the Soho Society’s executive committee, warned that the proposal could create uncertainty for developers and lead to an increase in criminal offences, citing previous instances where pedestrianisation led to a rise in crime. The Soho Society argued that the plan could be 'enormously contentious' for local residents and businesses. Despite these concerns, the Mayor's office has indicated plans to proceed with the pedestrianisation, aiming to revitalise the area and boost the local economy.
6. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx27rn5d02po> - In September 2024, London's Mayor Sadiq Khan announced plans to pedestrianise part of Oxford Street, aiming to revitalise the area and attract more shoppers. The proposal has received support from Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, who believes it will create new jobs and enhance the night-time economy. However, the plan has faced opposition from the Conservative Party, which argues that it will be unpopular and that Khan is 'forcing things through.' The project is expected to cost about £150 million, with funding from local businesses, private investors, and new revenue streams. The plans also include enhancements like planters, trees, water features, and seating. The project depends on gaining permission from the government to establish a new Mayoral Development Corporation, which would provide planning powers and allow the mayor to overrule the council.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/sep/17/traffic-banned-london-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-westminster-council> - In September 2024, Mayor Sadiq Khan announced plans to ban traffic from Oxford Street, aiming to revitalise the area and attract more shoppers. The proposal has received support from Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, who believes it will drive growth by creating new jobs and boosting London's night-time economy. The project is expected to cost approximately £150 million, with funding from local businesses, private investors, and new revenue streams. The plans also include enhancements like planters, trees, water features, and seating. However, Westminster City Council has expressed concerns about the practical challenges of implementing the pedestrianisation and the need to address the concerns of local residents and users of the street. The project depends on gaining permission from the government to establish a new Mayoral Development Corporation, which would provide planning powers and allow the mayor to overrule the council. The government has indicated support for the proposal, with Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner stating that Oxford Street is a world-renowned shopping destination and expressing a desire to ensure it receives the necessary boost.