Oxford Street transformation consultation

May 2025

Summary

- Support creation of Mayoral Development Area
- Support creation of Mayoral Development Corporation
- Freight and logistics must be represented on Board and Planning Committee
- Future pedestrianisation plans must not prevent deliveries and servicing by local businesses

About Logistics UK

Logistics UK is one of the country's largest business groups, and the only trade association which represents all of logistics. Our mission is to support, shape and stand up for a safe, sustainable and efficient logistics sector. Our membership of more than 20,000 includes global, national and regional businesses and SMEs spanning road, rail, inland waterways, sea and air as well as the customers of freight services, such as retailers and manufacturers. We deliver services, representation and thought leadership, helping members and policymakers to seize new opportunities for the sector and the economy as a whole, right across the country.

Consultation response

Question 1

Logistics UK supports the designation of a Mayoral Development Area and the establishment of a Mayoral Development Corporation to help regenerate Oxford Street. The proposed area contains a significant number of retail outlets and other business, such as offices, that all require regular deliveries and servicing, and this necessary activity must be protected and ensured in any changes to the transport access rules going forward. If business and offices are not able to receive deliveries into their premises, it will act as a barrier to the Mayor's ambition to develop Oxford Street into a world leading destination for shopping, leisure and outdoor events.

Mayoral Development Area

The Mayoral Development Area should ensure that all the companies and businesses in the area on and surrounding Oxford Street are all considered and consulted should new access rules and traffic restrictions be introduced in the future. Logistics UK agrees that this approach will overcome the issue of fragmented planning decisions, which is a common issue affecting the freight and logistics sector across the entire of the UK, and that one single, unified structure would help deliver the aim of a rejuvenated Oxford Street in a faster, more effective manner.

The boundary of the MDA must be defined to include all of the loading/unloading bays and associated parking for utility and servicing vehicles that the businesses within the zone require for their daily operations. This will ensure there is coherence with the decisions taken on any future vehicle movement restrictions and the delivery and parking needs of the businesses located in the MDA that the Mayor hopes will attract more visitors into the area.

Mayoral Development Corporation

Logistics UK supports the draft objectives of the proposed Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC), set out in the supporting documentation to the consultation, which looks to coordinate and drive the regeneration of the area. Having

one single interlocutor in the form of the MDC, in place of a myriad of different authorities, will give the businesses within the zone a single point of contact which should enable better communication on any proposals for change.

Logistics UK believes that both the MDC Board and Planning Committee need to be comprised of experts with knowledge of how freight and servicing vehicles assist in delivering the wealth and productivity of London's businesses and leisure outlets, to ensure that any future traffic management plans do not negatively impact the operations of the companies that are there to attract more visitors to the area. We call on the Mayor to actively seek out representatives of the logistics sector to be appointed to the Board and the Planning Committee.

Logistics UK welcomes the statement of support for 'engagement, input and partnership working across stakeholders' within the supporting documentation. Representing the logistics and servicing sector, our members have valuable knowledge and insight into daily operations in and around Oxford Street and are prepared to offer details of their experiences in the area.

Question 2

Logistics UK submitted a response to the 2018 consultation on plans for the future of Oxford Street, and we remain committed to the principles outlined in that response and we are therefore happy to see that the comments we made in 2018 on access issues for freight and servicing vehicles, and congestion in the surrounding streets have been referenced in the Section B supporting papers in this consultation.

We welcome the commitment to full consideration of the concerns raised by stakeholders with further engagement and consultation should any detailed permanent pedestrianisation plans are produced.

Logistics UK supports in principle the intention to make improvements to the public realm to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists. However, it is essential that we achieve a sensible balance between the needs of different road users so that we make best use of limited road space to benefit everyone. It is also important that new traffic management plans take account of access requirements at the kerbside for loading/unloading.

Increases to journey times caused by congestion or rerouting will result in more vehicles on the roads within the Oxford Street area (and beyond) as the length of drivers' shifts are strictly controlled in law. So, a reduction in productivity will not only add cost to businesses and increase the price of goods and services, it could also lead to more congestion, emissions and potentially have an adverse impact on road safety, particularly for vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians.

Any proposals for a freight consolidation strategy that limit heavy and frequent vehicle movements must be clear about how the scheme will work and what impacts it will have on existing businesses. Existing businesses should not be expected to make major changes to their operations to accommodate the MDC policy objectives without full, open and regular engagement from the earliest opportunity.

Consolidation can play a role in controlling, and potentially reducing, the number of freight vehicle movements into the Oxford Street District in certain circumstances. However, they should be targeted at vehicles which are not full to capacity rather than breaking up fully consolidated loads, as this could lead to more vehicles on the road, not fewer. Many retail operators, for example, will already have heavily consolidated deliveries as part of their supply chain. For non-retail businesses receiving many deliveries to different locations, consolidated deliveries and joined up procurement can play a part in minimising movements.

The question of funding is also important because adding another link to the supply chain will incur cost, so it is likely that there will need to be some ongoing public funding.

It is also vital to judge vehicles by what they are doing, to ensure they are being used in the most efficient way. A medium-sized truck will carry the equivalent load of ten vans, and the larger trucks can carry as much as 25 vans. Discouraging the use of heavier vehicles and breaking down loads onto smaller vehicles has the potential to increase congestion.

Porterage or using bicycles for deliveries will still require space to replenish loads, which will need to be centrally placed to ensure maximum efficiency and minimise distances travelled.

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