

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

## REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD3377

### Title: Oxford Street Transformation Programme expenditure

#### Executive Summary:

The Oxford Street Transformation Programme aims to realise the full potential of London's globally-renowned retail and leisure destination with the aim of generating significant increases in economic activity.

The Mayor is currently consulting on the principle of pedestrianisation for Oxford Street. If following, and having taken into account the responses to, the consultation a decision is made to move forward with these proposals, detailed plans for the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street would need to be developed and consulted on. Traffic and highways surveys, assessments, and modelling would be needed to inform any detailed pedestrianisation proposals. The 2025-26 GLA Group budget contains the transfer of £3.3 million to TfL to enable it to carry out this work, with support from external suppliers as it considers appropriate. (Note this preparatory work would not include design of the public realm scheme.)

In addition, subject to the outcome of the consultation, the GLA proposes to organise a public event as an early showcase of how Oxford Street could become a premier destination with global visibility – attractive for Londoners, businesses and visitors alike – if pedestrianisation was implemented. This activation would take place in Summer 2025. This Mayoral Decision proposes expenditure of up to £0.75 million to procure a production partner that would design and produce the event. External funding associated with the event would also be sought to offset these costs.

#### Decision:

That the Mayor approves the expenditure of up to £0.75 million towards public space activation events from the Oxford Street Transformation Programme budget, and delegates authority to the Executive Director of Good Growth to seek and receive external funding to offset this budget without the need for a further decision form, subject to the outcome of the current consultation on the principle of pedestrianisation of Oxford Street.

#### Mayor of London

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

6/5/25

## **PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR**

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1. The London Plan 2021 identifies Oxford Street, which welcomes approximately 120 million visitors a year, as part of one of two international centres within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ). As well as an internationally recognised destination, it is a major element of the West End, London and the national economy, contributing an estimated £25 billion to London's GVA in 2022.
- 1.2. Like other high streets, Oxford Street has suffered in recent years due to a combination of the pandemic, the growth of online shopping and other factors. Compared to other similar locations, however, Oxford Street is under-performing. It was already in a slow decline before the pandemic and has subsequently recovered more slowly across several metrics than both direct local comparators (Bond Street and Regent Street) and the wider West End and CAZ. For example, November 2024 data indicates that footfall on Oxford Street is 43 per cent below 2006 levels, compared to just two per cent and 17 per cent respectively for Bond Street and Regent Street. This suggests that visitor, investor and business expectations on the quality of the environment, amenities and retail and leisure offer are not being met.
- 1.3. The relevant local authorities, Westminster City Council (WCC) and the London Borough of Camden, have made progress delivering improvements to the local area, such as reducing the number of candy shops and bringing a more diverse range of retail to the street. There have also been significant efforts to coordinate action across landowners, businesses, and local councils to improve the street. Together with New West End Company (NWEC), the Business Improvement District for the area, Westminster Council have delivered positive results. However, given the surrounding areas such as Regent Street and Bond Street are recovering at a faster rate than Oxford Street, it is clear a new approach would help to drive transformation. In February 2025, the Mayor of London launched a public consultation to gather views on his proposal to establish a new Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) to lead and coordinate the improvement of Oxford Street and secure the regeneration of the area. The consultation also seeks the public's views on the principle of pedestrianisation of Oxford Street, as a way of contributing to and maximising the benefits of the MDC.
- 1.4. If a decision is made to proceed with proposals to pedestrianise Oxford Street following the public consultation, detailed plans would need to be developed. These proposals would be subject to further public consultation, which could take place in Autumn/Winter 2025.
- 1.5. The delivery of any future pedestrianisation would require significant preparatory work by TfL. The GLA therefore has provided additional funding of £3.3 million to TfL through the GLA Group budget for 2025-26. TfL has indicated this funding would be used to establish a multi-functional team, able to co-ordinate various workstreams that would inform the development of any detailed plans for the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street.
- 1.6. Specialist support from consultancies and private sector suppliers will also need to be procured to provide additional expertise on technical matters. The list of outputs expected to be delivered by TfL or its technical consultants is described in the table at paragraph 2.4.
- 1.7. In addition, subject to the outcome of the current consultation, the GLA proposes to organise a public event as an early showcase of how Oxford Street could become a premier destination with global visibility – attractive for Londoners, businesses and visitors alike – if pedestrianisation were to be implemented. This activation would take place in Summer 2025.
- 1.8. If the GLA consider it is necessary, it would procure a production partner to design and produce the event in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code.

1.9. This Mayoral Decision seeks approval for expenditure of up to £0.75 million from the Oxford Street Transformation Programme budget toward the design and production of the event and, and delegates authority to the Executive Director of Good Growth to seek and receive external funding in the form of commercial sponsorship to offset this expenditure without the need for a further decision form, subject to the outcome of the current consultation on the principle of pedestrianisation of Oxford Street.

## 2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1. The Mayor's vision for Oxford Street is to maximise its economic and social potential as a globally renowned retail and leisure destination and to deliver the greatest possible benefits for businesses in the area, for London, and for the wider UK economy.

2.2. Achieving this vision would depend upon the successful regeneration of the area, including:

- the development of an attractive and inclusive neighbourhood that welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds
- the provision of a high-quality, sustainable, and climate-resilient public realm
- the curation of the retail and leisure offer, including activation of the street as a visitor destination.

2.3. The proposed establishment of an MDC would be a key step in delivering this. Any pedestrianisation of the street could then contribute to and maximise the benefits of an MDC.

2.4. Detailed assessments will be needed to develop any future proposals for pedestrianisation and support any second consultation – including topics like highways design, traffic modelling, and economic case making. The expected outputs of this work will be surveys, assessment and modelling as described in the table below, some of which will be produced by external suppliers.

<b>Outputs</b>
Pedestrian, traffic, highway and utility surveys and design support
Noise & air quality assessments
Traffic modelling
Independent assessments on accessibility implications of potential project
Specialist security advice on implications of potential project
Independent environmental assessments on implications of project
Robust business case to include economic and transport benefits of project

2.5. The expected objectives and outcomes of the proposed activation event would be to:

- attract global attention, repositioning Oxford Street as a premier global retail, culture, and entertainment destination
- enhance footfall and dwell time by creating an engaging, interactive experience for visitors
- align with the Mayor of London's values, reinforcing themes of inclusivity, sustainability, and cultural diversity
- amplify London's leadership in sport and culture
- showcase short term and long-term commercial opportunities that highlight brand partnerships, sponsorships, and retail collaborations to drive revenue and long-term investment.

2.6. Attainment of these objectives and outcomes will be monitored and measured through event market research; levels and analysis of local, national and international media coverage; and digital traffic and clock-through rates on the GLA website and social channels.

### **3. Equality comments**

3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act) the GLA (including the Mayor) as a public authority must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty when exercising its functions. This is a duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and any conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act. There is also a duty to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This involves having due regard to the need to remove or minimise any disadvantage suffered by those who share a relevant protected characteristic that is connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the different needs of such people; and encouraging them to participate in public life or in any other activity where their participation is disproportionately low.

3.2. The protected characteristics under section 149 of the Equality Act are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Compliance with the duty may involve ensuring people with a protected characteristic are provided with all the opportunities that those without the characteristic would have.

3.3. The Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy sets out how the Mayor works to create a fairer, more equal, integrated city where all people feel welcome and able to fulfil their potential. Equality, diversity and inclusion are subsequently enshrined within the GLA's strategies, programmes and activities.

3.4. Should the proposals to transform Oxford Street be taken forward, a key aim would be to create an attractive and inclusive neighbourhood that welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds. Any such proposals would be subject to an assessment of the equalities implications.

3.5. The consultation materials include Equalities Impact Assessments (EqIAs) of the proposals currently being consulted on and the consultation report will also consider the equalities implications of the proposals.

3.6. One aim of the proposed Oxford Street activation event is to ensure activations appeal to London's diverse communities and align with the city's cultural landscape. This will bring people from different communities together, celebrating London's diversity and helping to foster good relations between communities. This will be achieved through the programming, which will highlight and celebrate London's diversity; and through a broad and targeted approach to marketing channels, encouraging people from different communities to attend.

3.7. Should the event proceed, it will be produced and delivered with an integrated and robust approach to access. The Mayor and the GLA are committed to fulfilling their responsibilities to operate an accessible events programme, and to working with other stakeholders and partners to achieve this. This includes ensuring that the event is accessible to the widest number of people, including people with disabilities, e.g. visually impaired, hearing impaired, people with mobility issues and wheelchair users.

### **4. Other considerations**

#### Key risks and issues

4.1. The key risks and issues are set out in the table below.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	RAG rating
Suppliers do not deliver studies on time, which could impact the timing of any second consultation	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timing expectations set out clearly during procurement and in contract</li> <li>Dedicated project manager at TfL to oversee delivery; and dedicated GLA team to monitor risks</li> </ul>	M
Lack of interested suppliers for studies and activation event	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-market engagement to take place with suppliers</li> <li>Use of existing frameworks wherever possible</li> </ul>	M
Costs of individual studies are higher than expected	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs estimated based on similar studies delivered in past</li> <li>Contingency included</li> </ul>	L
Procurement delays cause studies and event planning to start later than expected	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early engagement with TfL procurement to establish timelines, and dedicated procurement staff time to expedite processes</li> </ul>	L

#### Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

4.2. The London Plan 2021 identifies Oxford Street as part of one of two international centres with the CAZ.

4.3. The work outlined in this Mayoral Decision will contribute towards the following Mayoral policies and priorities:

- London Plan:
  - GG3: creating a healthy city
  - GG5: growing a good economy
  - policy SD4: the CAZ
  - policy SD6: town centres and high streets
  - policy SD10: strategic and local regeneration
  - policy D8: public realm.
- Economic Development Strategy:
  - promote the importance of well-designed, inclusive and high-quality public spaces, buildings and housing
  - work with local authorities, the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector to enable the creation of more socially integrated places
  - help to protect London's role as a global hub for business, ensuring there is sufficient supply of office accommodation and investment in transport and infrastructure
  - help to make more efficient use of London's streets by reducing car dependency and tackling congestion.

- Environment Strategy:
  - objective 4.1: support and empower London and its communities, particularly the most disadvantaged and those in priority locations, to reduce their exposure to poor air quality
  - policy 5.1.2: protect, conserve, and enhance the landscape and cultural value of London's green infrastructure
  - policy 8.2.3: increase the amount of sustainable drainage, prioritising greener systems across London in new developments, and retrofit of existing building stock
  - policy 8.4.5: reduce the impact of heat on streets.
- Culture Strategy for London
- 24-hour London vision
- Healthy Streets agenda.

#### Conflicts of interest

- 4.4. No GLA officer involved in the drafting or clearance of this Mayoral Decision is aware of any conflicts of interest with the proposed programme.
- 4.5. If any conflicts of interest arise during procurement process, officers will be required to declare that interest under the Contracts and Funding Code; and will be excluded from the procurement (or any other related) process or activity. This process will also be in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standards for Staff and accompanying guidance on registering and declaring interests.

#### **5. Financial comments**

- 5.1. The Mayor's GLA Group Budget 2025-26 made provision to transfer funding of up to £3.3 million from the GLA Business Rate Reserve to TfL under section 102 of the GLA Act to cover the estimated costs set out below, which it is anticipated TfL will incur in 2025-26 to support the Oxford Street Transformation Programme. As this funding has already been confirmed as part of the GLA Group budget this does not constitute an additional sum.

<b>TfL estimated costs 2025-26</b>	
TfL cross-departmental support	£1.2m
Surveys, assessments, and modelling	£1.6m
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>£2.8m</b>
Contingency	£0.5m
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3.3m</b>

- 5.2. The Oxford Street Transformation programme includes work to develop a sustainable funding and financing model for this programme that would seek a variety of external funding sources to offset initial and future expenditure. This will be covered in detail in future.
- 5.3. This decision also proposes to spend up to £0.75 million in 2025-26 on the design and production of an Oxford Street activation event in Summer 2025, to be delivered by a production partner. The event would also seek external funding in the form of commercial sponsorship to partly offset this expenditure. The GLA: Mayor budget for 2025-26 is sufficient to cover this expenditure within the allocated Oxford Street Transformation Programme budget.
- 5.4. Any changes to this proposal will be subject to further approval via the GLA's decision-making process.

5.5. The Oxford Street Transformation team, within the Good Growth directorate, will be responsible for managing this project.

## 6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The transfer of £3.3 million from the GLA to TfL was approved by the Mayor as part of his 2025-26 final GLA Group budget.
- 6.2. The proposed expenditure of £0.75 million by the GLA on a proposed activation event falls within the power in section 30 (1) of the GLA Act which provides for the Mayor, acting on behalf of the GLA to do anything which it is considered will further any one or more of the principal purposes of the GLA set out in section 30 (2) of that Act, namely (a) promoting economic development and wealth creation in Greater London; (b) promoting social development in Greater London; and (c) promoting the improvement of the environment in Greater London. In exercising this power, regard must be had to the matters set out in section 30(4) and the power must be exercised in a way best calculated to facilitate the matters referred to in section 30(5) of the GLA Act and the power is exercisable only after consultation with such bodies or persons as the GLA may consider appropriate in this particular case.
- 6.3. Officers must ensure that any works, supplies or services required are procured in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code (the "Code") and where applicable the Procurement Act 2023 (the "Act"); liaise with Transport for London's procurement and supply chain team, which will determine the detail of the procurement strategy to be adopted in accordance with the Code and the Act; and put in place appropriate contractual documentation and ensure it is executed by the chosen service provider and GLA before the commencement of those services.
- 6.4. To the extent that the proposed activation event would require any permissions, licences or approvals from or other steps to be taken including by Westminster City Council, any such requirements will need to be met.
- 6.5. An appropriate statutory basis would need to be identified once any proposals for the seeking of external funding for the proposed external event have been developed.

## 7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of key studies and activation commercial partner	Spring 2025
Key TfL-led studies in development	Spring 2025-Spring 2026
Activation event in development	Spring 2025
<i>First consultation concludes</i>	May 2025
<i>Decision taken on whether to move forward to detailed pedestrianisation designs</i>	Summer 2025
Activation event	Late Summer 2025

## Appendices and supporting papers:

None.

## Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

## Part 1 - Deferral

### Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? YES

If YES, for what reason: To avoid publication during a live consultation, and to avoid publishing the budget for the activation event to prospective tenderers and therefore not achieving best value for the GLA.

Until what date: Release of consultation report and related Mayoral Decision – expected mid-June

## Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

### Is there a part 2 form – NO

## ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

### Drafting officer:

Mahalia Sterling has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following: ✓

### Sponsoring Director:

Philip Graham has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities. ✓

### Mayoral Adviser:

Richard Watts has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations. ✓

### Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal. ✓

### Mayoral Delivery Board

This decision was agreed by the Mayoral Delivery Board 14 April 2025. ✓

## CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

### Signature:



### Date:

01/05/2025

## CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor

### Signature:



### Date:

25/04/2025