

Oxford Street transformation

Have
your
say



The Mayor's transport strategy and the future of central London

On June 21 2017 Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, published a draft of the Mayor's Transport Strategy. The document sets out the Mayor's policies and proposals to reshape transport in London over the next 25 years. TfL's public consultation ended on 2 October 2017 and TfL are now reviewing the responses and considering potential changes to the strategy. The final Mayor's Transport Strategy will be published in early 2018. The document is available at: <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/about-tfl/how-we-work/planning-for-the-future/the-mayors-transport-strategy>

The Mayor's Transport Strategy is an ambitious strategy that puts people's health and quality of life at the very heart of planning the city's transport. The key conclusion is that for London to grow and thrive, it is essential that London's residents, workers and visitors do more walking and cycling and use public transport more to improve their health and the environment, to make streets work more efficiently and keep London moving.

London has grown rapidly leading to increased demand on the transport system: an average of 26.7 million trips per day were made in London in 2015, 18 per cent more than in 2000. London's population is expected to reach 10.5m by 2041, accompanied by 6.8 million jobs with most concentrated in central London. A growing population brings with it a growing demand to travel and means there will be 5 million more trips per day.

The Mayor's aim for 2041 is for 80% of all trips in London to be made on foot, by cycle or using public transport. As central London already sees 90% of trips made using these methods of transport, the Mayor aims to achieve an ambitious 95% mode share here. As such, central London is expected to become almost car-free by 2041, with only one in twenty trips made by car.

Vision for central London to be cleaner...

The Mayor's aims are for all taxis and private hire vehicles to be zero emission capable by 2033, buses to be zero emission by 2037, for all new road vehicles driven in London to be zero emission by 2040, and for London's entire transport system to be zero emission by 2050.

In central London, the Ultra Low Emissions Zone will cover the same area as the Congestion Charging Zone, with an extra charge applied for vehicles that that don't

meet the required standard (Euro 4 for petrol and Euro 6 for diesel). As a result of implementing the ULEZ in central London in 2019 it is possible we could reduce road transport NOx emissions by 20%, and 42% fewer people in central London would be living in areas exceeding the legal limits for NO2 concentrations.

...And less congested

Between 2000 and 2015 there has been a 20 per cent decrease in traffic volumes in central London. However, in the same period there has been an increase in congestion levels reported and this trend is expected to continue.

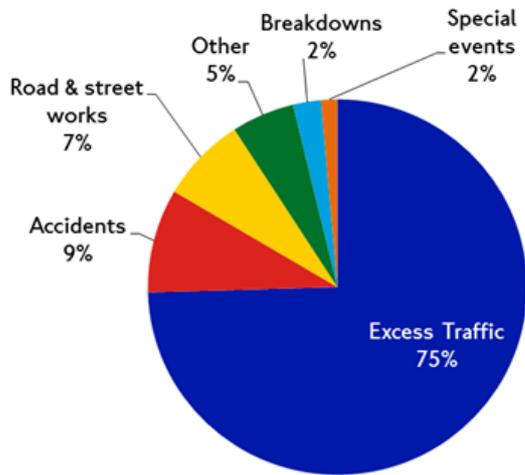
In central London, weekday daytime congestion has now returned to levels not seen since the introduction of the Congestion Charge in 2003 and outside of charging hours traffic speeds and congestion on the road network in the evenings and at weekends are the same or worse than during charging hours. Congestion causes stress and frustration, and limits the amount people can travel because journeys are slow and unpredictable. For businesses, congestion costs money as workers spend time queuing in traffic, it is difficult to make deliveries on time, and an unreliable road network harms the reputation of London.

Around a quarter of the congestion experienced in London is caused by temporary incidents – accidents, roadworks, special events and so on. Road network management strategies, technology and customer information can all be employed to minimise the impact of such incidents on road users. However, analysis has suggested that around three quarters of congestion in London is simply caused by there being more traffic than the network can handle.

Walking, cycling and public transport use has been increasing, and this is partly due to new facilities (green man crossings, cycle and bus lanes) provided by the central London boroughs and TfL, and this is helping to improve health and limit emissions, but more needs to be done.

Ultimately we need to reduce traffic volumes.

Estimated causes of congestion¹



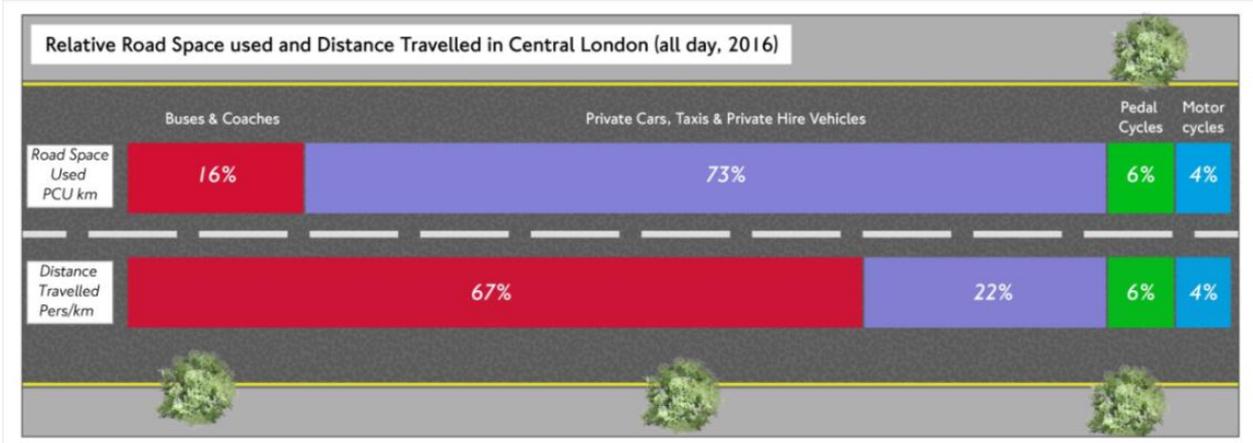
We also want to make central London a more attractive place for people and businesses

The Mayor's Transport Strategy describes how the future of central London must involve a steady reduction in private car use. Walking, cycling and public transport use must continue to increase and deliveries must be consolidated, rescheduled and switched to more efficient and sustainable vehicles. All of these changes will reduce the congestion that inefficient travel causes, freeing up space for essential freight and servicing trips and more reliable bus journeys.

Limited space means building more roads is not an option, but 'reallocating' road space can be. We need to make more efficient use of the street network, so that people are able to travel around the city by the best option available. In central London this means improved 'urban realm' with more space for pedestrians, cyclists and improved bus services and less offered to cars, taxis and PHVs.

¹ Mayor's Transport Strategy: Supporting Evidence Challenges & Opportunities, June 2017

Relative use of road space and distance travelled by road-based mode, central London, 2016



Buses move people more efficiently than private cars (buses make up 16% of road space 'units' (measured in Passenger Car Unit km), but represent 67% of distance travelled (in person/km) in central London)²

Most of the capital's employment growth will occur in central London so to compete for jobs on the world stage, it must remain very well connected, with a world-class public realm and safe air quality levels.

We want to make central London an attractive, safer and healthier place: "a world-leading cultural and economic centre that is highly accessible by public transport and a great place to be for both people and businesses". Streets make up 80 per cent of London's public space, so focusing on making them Healthy Streets has the potential to dramatically improve the experience of living, working and spending time in the city.

This area sees the most concentrated mix of demands for public space, so it is vital that this area is properly planned in a strategic way that makes it work well for people, and by collaborating with WCC and LBC, this is at the heart of what we want to achieve in the Oxford Street District and surrounding area. This project is about seizing the unprecedented opportunity to radically transform Oxford Street, but not to the detriment of the surrounding area – we want to preserve and enhance the characteristics of the wider area, with a programme of upgrades that sensitively protect and improve people's experience of the city.

² Mayor's Transport Strategy: Supporting Evidence Challenges & Opportunities, June 2017

More information on the Healthy Streets approach can be found in the 'Healthy Streets for London' published earlier this year. <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/healthy-streets-for-london.pdf>

What this means for the road network in central London

The continued growth and success of London and the Mayor's vision for a healthier city means that, irrespective of whether we transform Oxford Street West or not, the make up of traffic in central London in the coming years will change.

To cater for the predicted growth in population and demand for travel, central London is undergoing the largest ever programme of both public and private sector investment in the road network, such as the neighbouring transformational projects of the Baker Street two-way and Tottenham Court Road two-way schemes. There are also several smaller schemes planned in the immediate area, including Hanover Square, Brook Street / Davies Street, New Bond Street and Vigo Street. These bring benefits for walking, cycling, bus use and road safety.

The coordination of these changes presents a significant challenge in itself, with a significant amount of works scheduled to occur within the same timeframe as we hope to deliver the Oxford Street District transformation. To reduce any impacts to traffic in the area, TfL is working closely with WCC and LBC to ensure these works are coordinated and carried out with as minimum disruption as possible.

Within the Mayor's Transport Strategy, the Mayor also wants to see a reduction in freight traffic in the central London morning peak by 10 per cent on current levels by 2026, and to reduce total London traffic by 10-15 per cent by 2041.

The arrival of the Elizabeth line

The first phase of the Elizabeth line is due to open in 2018 and will result in an extra 27% more entry and exit movements across the day by 2021 at the four Oxford Street Underground stations. Whilst the Elizabeth line stations of Bond Street and Tottenham Court Road will see an increase of 56% and 63% respectively, Oxford Circus demand will only increase by 2% during the same time period (estimated from 2015 modelling forecasts). These extra people will be arriving into an already very busy area, which is what has provided the impetus for such a radical transformation of the street.

The Elizabeth line will provide a huge amount of extra capacity to the rail and Underground network, reducing crowding across central London services. The upgrade of the Victoria line has been a great success. Further upgrades to London's Underground network planned by the Mayor will also continue to improve the

capacity, frequency and reliability of TfL's Tube services and support the demand generated by a growing population and economy, further reduce crowding and encouraging people to travel by public transport. The package of improvements included in the Mayor's Transport Strategy will mean that total capacity on rail services will increase by around 90% between 2015 and 2041, with more than 80 million additional seat kilometres across London.

There has also been a fall in demand for buses in central London as passengers transfer to the new and upgraded rail network and to cycling and walking. Too many buses where they are not needed means too much cost, greater congestion and increased pollution. The Mayor's Transport Strategy takes a strategic view of how the bus network operates and aims to redistribute resources from central London to outer London, where the potential for mode shift to buses is greatest, and to areas of housing growth where demand is forecast to rise the most.

TfL has made a number of changes to the West End bus network over the past few months and we want to continue to make sure that bus services across central London are faster, more reliable, accessible, comfortable and convenient, while being integrated with, and complementing, the rail and Tube networks.

The Oxford Street West proposals, and the district improvements proposed, complement the wider vision for central London, and continue to encourage more use of healthy and efficient modes of travel. The associated freight management plan could be a central part of delivering rationalisation and reduction in freight demand on central London streets. The careful provision of loading and taxi facilities, the selective rationalisation of bus services, and the provision of new space for pedestrians, and new spaces to enjoy, all support this wider vision.