8 Appendix B: Engagement report

This report presents the insights gathered through a detailed, multi-stage engagement process that has shaped the Place Strategy for Praed Street. Building on initial research and workshops in 2023, a range of local stakeholders and members of the public contributed throughout 2025 via surveys, drop-in sessions and targeted workshops.

Respondents highlighted opportunities and concerns across key streets, public spaces and neighbourhoods, with a strong focus on pedestrian safety, traffic management, accessibility, and public realm enhancements.

The feedback has guided the Place Strategy by creating a picture for how the area used to be, how it currently is and how it could become safer, more vibrant, and welcoming for everyone who lives, works, or visits the area.

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→ 8.2.7 Past, present and future

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→ 8.2.8 Early workshop with stakeholders

8.1 Participatory process & methodology

The Place Strategy has been developed collaboratively through a multi-stage engagement process. Initial insights were gathered in Summer 2023 via Westminster City Council's High Streets Programme, which informed the emerging Westminster High Streets Framework and captured early community ambitions.

Building on this, an early workshop with local groups and residents' associations explored spatial priorities and development aspirations, helping shape the draft vision.

A six-week public engagement followed in Summer 2025 to test and refine the draft before finalisation in Autumn. Activities included:

- → Digital surveys
- → Online and street exhibitions
- → Drop-in sessions

This layered approach combined early discussions with broad outreach, ensuring the strategy has been created with those who live, work and spend time locally in the area, with feedback directly shaping future design and delivery.

Engagement process

WCC High Streets Programme engagement

A public engagement exercise undertaken in Summer 2023 by Westminster City Council to inform the emerging Westminster High Streets Framework and development of a strategic delivery plan.

Early stakeholder engagement

A workshop on 5th February 2025 with representatives of key stakeholders (TfL, Imperial, Network Rail, Sellar, Paddington Square, St-Mary's hospital, Paddington Now) to discuss spatial priorities and gather some early insights on the emerging place vision.

Public engagement

A series of public engagement activities in Summer 2025 (August 4th to September 17th) inviting the community to review and refine the Place Strategy.

Surveys

A digital survey (212 responses) hosted on Commonplace to capture feedback on the design objectives for Praed Street, as well as the proposed improvements and activations.

On-street exhibition

An on-street exhibition hosted at Paddington Square, where passers-by could engage with the proposals and learn more about the emerging Place Strategy.

Drop-in session

A drop-in session (11th September) held alongside the on-street exhibition, where Westminster City Council officers answered key questions and gathered feedback on design objectives and proposed improvements.

Review and analysis

Final Place Strategy based on feedback

Public engagement objectives

Public engagement ensures the Place Strategy is shaped by the people who know these streets best! By asking for feedback from residents, businesses and visitors, the aim is to capture the local character, needs and ambitions for the area, creating a shared vision for streets and spaces that feel welcoming, vibrant and distinctly theirs.

How will the input be used?

Every idea, concern and suggestion shared through surveys, workshops and conversations have fed directly into the Place Strategy. Inputs have helped to refine the vision, set priorities and guide choices, ensuring that the Place Strategy is rooted in local voices and created with local communities.

8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

8.2.1 Demographics

Throughout August-September 2025, 212 people shared their views on the Praed Street Place Strategy, building on ideas from the 2023 engagement.

Most live nearby, but many also visit, work, or commute along the street, which brought a diverse perspective to the responses. Ages range from young adults to over 75, with strong representation from 25–34, 35–44, and 60–64. This mix of residents, workers and regular visitors sets the stage for a nuanced understanding of the street's challenges and opportunities, reflecting daily routines and lived experiences.

Feedback on design objectives and proposed improvements was analysed to reflect the local communities' priorities. Respondents included residents, workers, and regular visitors of all ages, offering diverse perspectives that help shape a nuanced understanding of the street's challenges and opportunities.

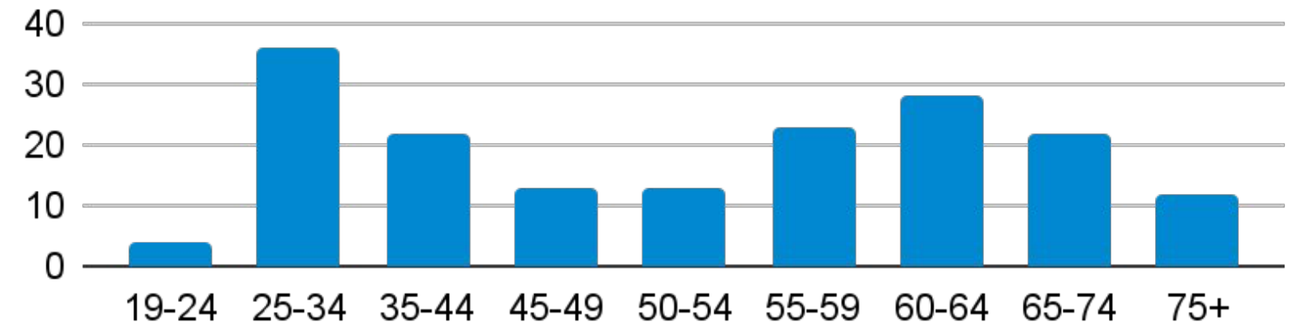
How old are the respondents?

Who is the largest age group who responded?

25–34
years old

represent 17% of the respondents

212 Responses
Source: Commonplace



Source: **Commonplace**
Total number of processed responses: **212**

Among 212 respondents, the two largest age groups are 25–34 (16.9%) and 60–64 (13.1%). Together they make up 30% of all respondents.

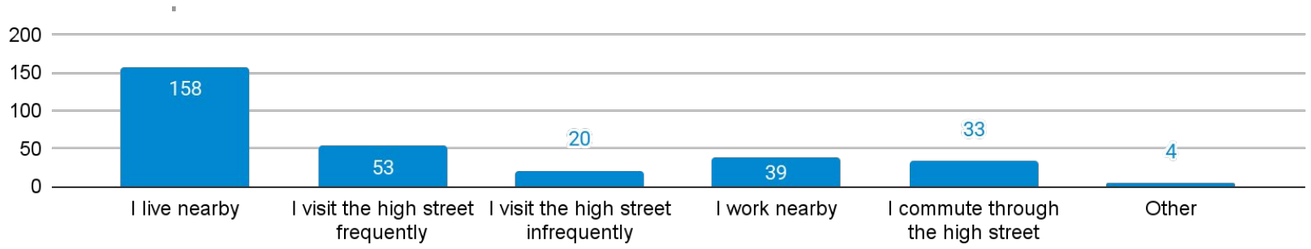
What relationship do the respondents have to the street?

Who Responded?

74.5%
declared living nearby

Showing most respondents have strong area connections, with many also visiting, working, or commuting through the high street.

212 Responses
Source: Commonplace



Source: **Commonplace**
Total number of processed responses: **212**

Among 212 respondents, most indicated that they live nearby (74.5%). Other frequently selected options were visiting the high street frequently (25.0%), working nearby (18.4%), and commuting through the high street (15.6%). Since respondents could select more than one option, these results highlight that many have multiple types of connections to the area, with proximity and regular presence being the most common.

8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

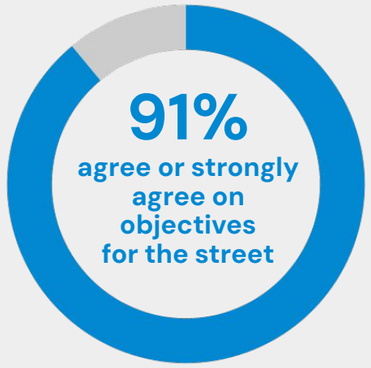
8.2.2 Support level and key themes

Respondents show strong level of agreement for what has been put forward, with 91% agreeing with the objectives and 89% backing the proposed improvements. Analysis of 384 comments highlights traffic management and pedestrian experience as top priorities, reflecting concerns for safety and ease of movement, while public realm quality, cycling, accessibility, and local businesses are also important. Greening, seating, public art, and markets are valued enhancements rather than essentials, suggesting a focus on functionality and everyday usability.

The 384 comments analysed for the themes analysis came from all the survey's open-ended questions..

From 384 Processed comments
Source: Commonplace

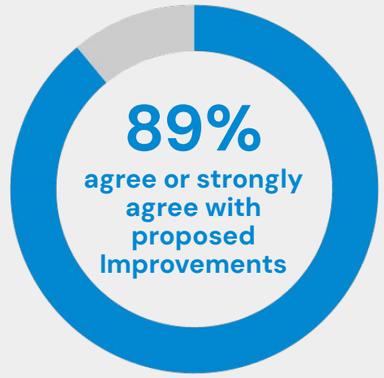
Level of support on objectives



Feedback showed support for a safer, greener, and more pedestrian-friendly streets, while emphasising careful traffic management, improved crossings, and maintaining access for vehicles, residents, and businesses to ensure practical, inclusive improvements.

212 Responses
Source: Commonplace

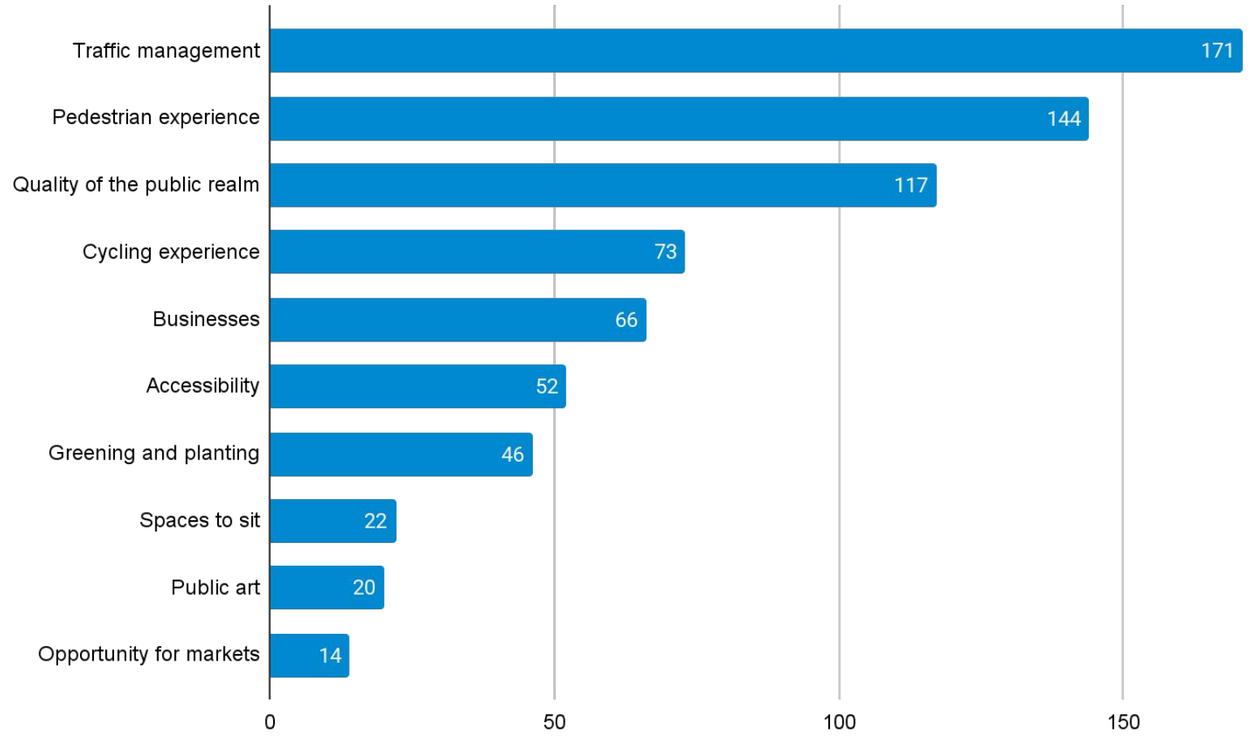
Level of support on proposed improvements



Feedback highlighted enthusiasm for a greener and more welcoming Praed Street. Feedback also emphasises the importance of balancing pedestrian upgrades with smooth traffic flow, clear signage, and thoughtful planning around taxis and deliveries, ensuring changes enhance both safety and convenience for everyone.

212 Responses
Source: Commonplace

What matters most to respondents ?



Source: **Commonplace**
Total number of processed responses: **384**

8.2 Engagement overview Surveys

8.2.3 Key themes

The following pages present a synthesis of the comments filtered through each of the 10 key themes, highlighting the main aspirations and concerns reflected by respondents.

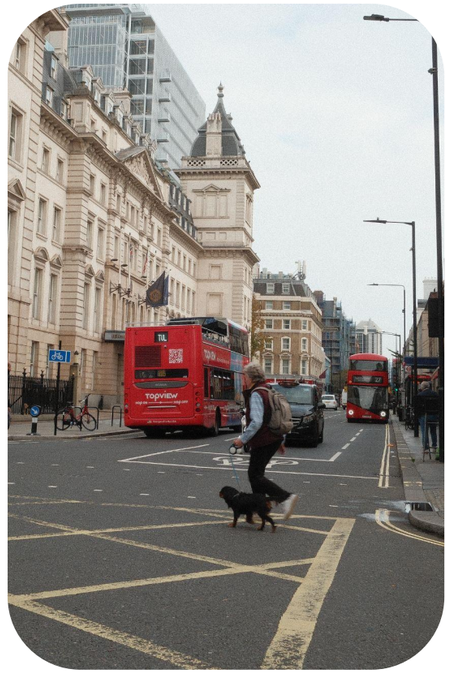
The 384 comments analysed came from all the survey's open-ended questions.

From 384 Processed comments
Source: Commonplace

Traffic management

How movement is organised (including potential road closures) to improve safety, reduce congestion, and ensure smooth flow for everyone in the area.

45% of comments referred to this theme



Aspirations

- Reduce traffic on minor streets used as shortcuts ("rat-runs") to improve safety.
- Introduce better traffic control: Phasing of lights, clearer directions, signage.
- Occasional, controlled closures for events or markets. (Road closure)
- Encourage walking, cycling, and public transport as the primary modes in key areas.
- Ensure emergency and essential vehicle access is maintained..

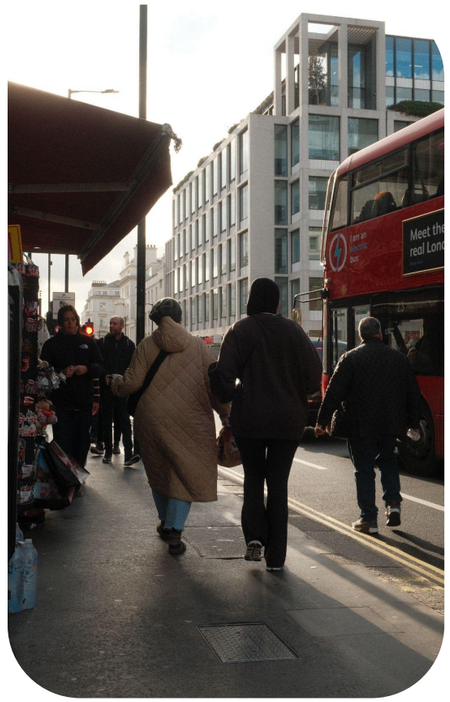
Concerns

- Full or permanent road closures could disadvantage residents and delivery vehicles. (Road closure)
- Overly restrictive traffic measures may push congestion elsewhere. (Road closures)
- Cyclists riding dangerously could create safety risks if traffic rules aren't enforced.
- Don't assume all traffic is problematic; some streets function well without intervention.

Pedestrian experience

How safe, comfortable, and accessible movement feels for all, including people with limited mobility, shaped by streetscape, crossings, lighting, and overall urban environment.

38% of comments referred to this theme



- Widen pavements and clearly define pedestrian zones.
- Prioritise pedestrian safety at crossings and junctions.
- Reduce dominance of cars, making streets feel safe and welcoming.
- Create spaces where people feel comfortable lingering, not just passing through.
- Encourage low-traffic areas to enable children, elderly, and families to move safely.
- Improved lighting
- Cleaner streets

- Narrow, cluttered pavements make walking difficult and unsafe
- Unsafe crossings and poor traffic control put pedestrians at risk
- Dirty, shabby streetscapes create an unwelcoming environment
- Lack of greenery and seating reduces comfort and appeal.
- Taxis, vans, and parked cars block walkways and crossings.
- Poor lighting and antisocial behaviour make the area feel unsafe

8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

8.2.3 Key themes

		Aspirations	Concerns
Quality of the public realm Overall appearance, comfort, and usability of streets, pavements, and open spaces for people spending time outdoors. **31% of comments** referred to this theme		→ Make streets aesthetically pleasing, functional, and inviting. → Combine pedestrianisation with greenery, seating, and visual improvements. → Enhance underutilised areas → Clean and maintain pavements and shopfronts to improve environment.	→ Avoid interventions that add cost without meaningful benefit. → Overdeveloped or cluttered streetscapes can reduce usability. → Neglecting maintenance undermines improvements.
Cycling experience Safety, convenience, and enjoyment for people riding bicycles, including routes, parking, and road design. **20% of comments** referred to this theme		→ Balance cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles. → Safer streets without restricting traffic. → Enforce speed limits and traffic rules for cyclists. → Promote cycling within sustainable transport.	→ Cycle-specific zones may reduce road space and create conflicts. → Cyclists riding irresponsibly can endanger pedestrians. → Don't assume dedicated cycling infrastructure is always needed if space is limited.
Businesses Presence, variety, and vitality of local shops, services and food and drink establishments supporting the community and economy. **17% of comments** referred to this theme		→ Improve visibility and attractiveness to support higher-quality or local businesses. → Better pedestrian flows and green spaces to draw visitors. → Address waste and clutter to make the area more welcoming.	→ Restricting access for deliveries or customers could hurt businesses. → Ignoring litter/waste issues makes spaces unsafe and unappealing.

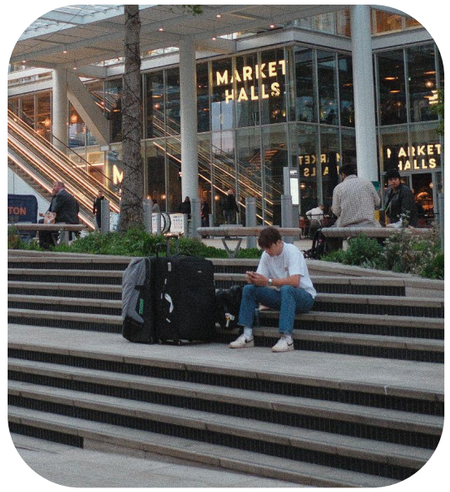
From 384 processed comments
Source: Commonplace

8.2 Engagement overview

Surveys

8.2.3 Key themes

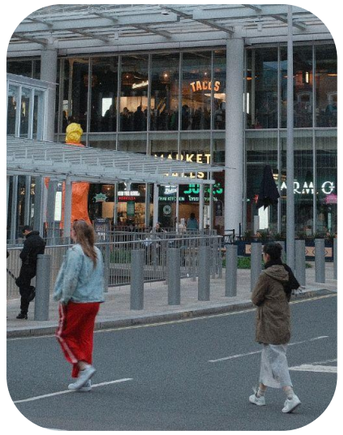
From 384 processed comments
Source: Commonplace

		Aspirations	Concerns
Accessibility Easy, safe, and inclusive access across streets, buildings, and public spaces for everyone. **13% of comments** referred to this theme		→ Ensure safe access for elderly, disabled, and families especially considering the proximity to the hospital → Maintain routes for essential vehicles while improving pedestrian flows. → Make crossings intuitive and safe for all users.	→ Blocking access to residents, deliveries, or services. → Over-prioritising one mode of transport at the expense of others.
Greening and planting Use of plants, trees, and landscaping to enhance environment, wellbeing, and biodiversity in public spaces. **12% of comments** referred to this theme		→ Increase greenery to reduce pollution, noise, and visual monotony. → Use planting to create a more attractive, calmer environment. → Integrate greening with seating and pedestrian areas.	→ Don't block pedestrian or essential vehicle access. → Avoid over-greening without complementary infrastructure or benefits.
Spaces to sit Availability and comfort of seating that encourages rest, socialising, and lingering in public areas. **6% of comments** referred to this theme		→ Add benches, informal seating, and social spaces to encourage lingering. → Combine seating with greenery and safe pedestrian zones. → Encourage mixed-use public areas that are welcoming for all	→ Adding seating spaces might encourage anti-social behaviour

8.2 Engagement overview

Surveys

8.2.3 Key themes

		Aspirations	Concerns
Public art Visual or interactive works that enrich streets, inspire people, and reflect local culture or identity. **5% of comments** referred to this theme		→ Use underutilised areas for art that complements improvements → Enhance local identity and aesthetic interest. → Could be integrated with seating, greenery, or market spaces.	→ Art installations should not obstruct movement or reduce safety. → Avoid overly dominant pieces that clash with functional public use.
Opportunity for markets Potential to host temporary stalls, events, or pop-ups that bring activity, trade, and community engagement. **4% of comments** referred to this theme		→ Allow occasional market closures to encourage footfall and local commerce. → Combine with pedestrianisation and street improvements. → Support flexible, temporary activation of public spaces.	→ Routine or permanent market closures could disrupt locals. → Markets should not obstruct safe pedestrian or vehicle movement.

From 384 processed comments
Source: Commonplace

8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

8.2.4 Example comments

These selected comments capture from the surveys some of the aspirations and concerns of people engaging with Praed Street and London Street.

Themes	Number of occurences
Traffic management	171
Pedestrian experience	144
Quality of the public realm	117
Cycling experience	73
Businesses	66
Accessibility	52
Greening and planting	46
Spaces to sit	22
Public art	20
Opportunity for markets	14
Other	73
Total number of processed responses	**384**

From 384 processed comments
Source: Commonplace

Traffic management
1st recurring theme (173 comments)

"Further improvements: Put in a bus gate to only allow buses and cyclists to use Praed Street. This will make the area a lot better for pedestrians and bus users and safer for cyclists."



Pedestrian experience
2nd recurring theme (147 comments)

"These impressive proposals could transform the area for residents, workers and visitors, and do a huge amount to promote walking to and from the Paddington Station. I particularly like the proposal for a green route and new square on London Street, which will encourage people to walk from the station to Hyde Park and the West End. It will also be a great place to sit, relax and enjoy the local cafes."

Quality of the public realm
3rd recurring theme (118 comments)

"Often this is the very first thing that tourists to the UK see and it looks very jumbled and incohesive. There is no integration of transport, public realm and buildings."

Cycling experience
4th recurring theme (76 comments)

"I'd like to see continuous cycling facilities along the road so that people on bikes feel comfortable and safe and are not let down by any missing links."



Businesses
5th recurring theme (66 comments)

"Strongly support efforts to drag up the quality of the retail offering in Praed Street. Currently suffering from too many 'tourist rubbish' shops and low-quality takeaways."



Accessibility
6th recurring theme (52 comments)

"Lack of access via taxis and other wheelchair accessible vehicles will severely impact my elderly parents (my father can only walk for very short periods with a stick) who travel regularly to Bristol. London city centre looks like it is only being designed for the young and healthy. Elderly and disabled are no longer welcome."

Greening and planting
7th recurring theme (46 comments)

"You need to include much greater greening of Praed Street with trees, flower boxes and local engagement from businesses. You should also focus on good street lighting for the area - it is currently quite a threatening area when dark, with problems from drug users and such like."

Spaces to sit
8th recurring theme (22 comments)

"Some seating would be very welcome, while ensuring the spaces do not become too cluttered."



Public art
9th recurring theme (20 comments)

"Public art is invariably pretty awful currently but it would be lovely if it was contextual and blended with the historical inheritance rather than challenging it."



Opportunities for markets
9th recurring theme (14 comments)

"I would love to see pop up markets or farmers markets in this area!"

8.2 Engagement overview

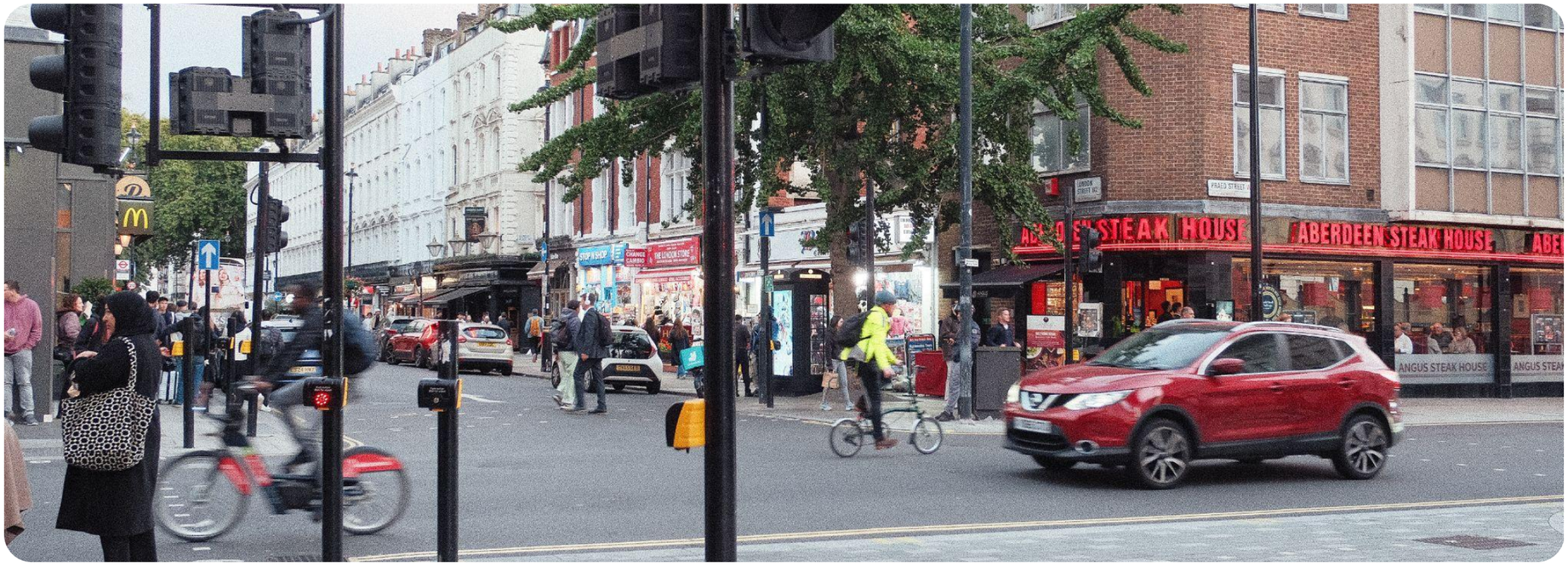
Surveys

8.2.5 Options for London Street

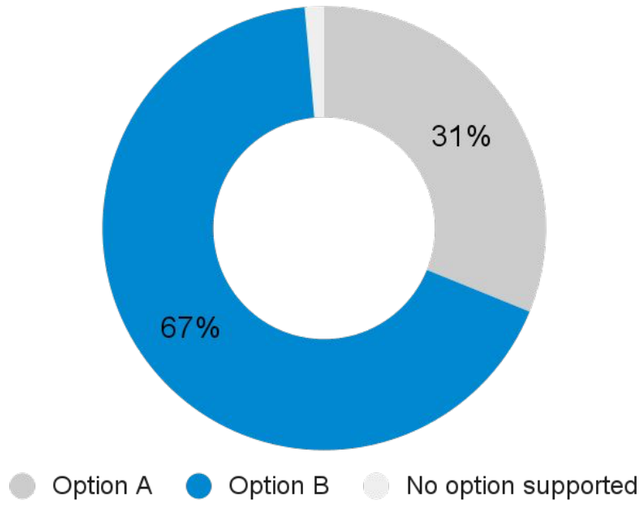
Respondents show a strong preference for Option B on London Street, with 68% backing a pedestrian-friendly, greener, and socially vibrant vision. Supporters highlight safety, improved public spaces, and benefits for local businesses.

Those favouring Option A (the least ambitious vision for London Street) focus on maintaining traffic flow, emergency access, and practical usability.

Among supporters of Options B (the most ambitious vision for London Street), two-thirds embrace a bold, ambitious transformation, while a third remain cautious, reflecting the ongoing tension between visionary placemaking and everyday street functionality.



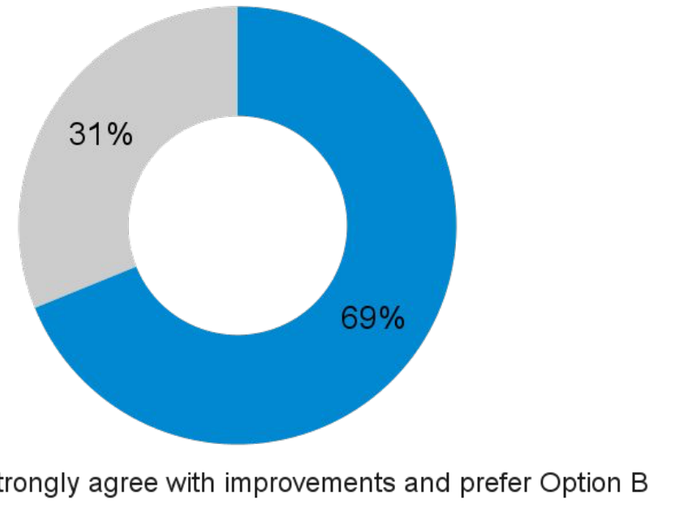
↑ London Street



Source: **Commonplace**
Total number of processed responses: **212**

Which option do respondents prefer for London Street?

68% favour Option B, showing strong support for a greener, pedestrian-friendly London Street. Supporters highlight safety and business benefits, while Option A backers stress traffic flow, access, and congestion concerns.



Source: **Commonplace**
Total number of processed responses: **144**

How do supporters of improvements feel about a more ambitious proposal?

More than two-thirds of supporters favour bold, pedestrian-focused Option B, while one-third prefer cautious Option A, highlighting the tension between ambitious transformation and everyday traffic needs.

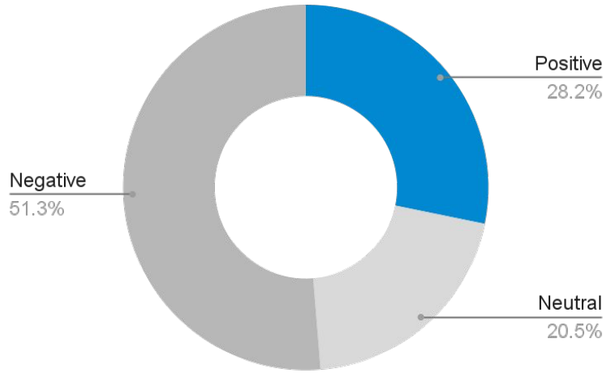
8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

8.2.5 Options for London Street: Summary of comments

The 133 comments analysed came from the open-ended question for London Street.

Support for Option A:
Summary and analysis of comments

Option A supporters show limited positivity, with **49%** negative sentiment and little sense of ambition. Their focus is mainly on traffic management **(51%)**, alongside concerns about public realm **(29%)** and pedestrian experience **(27%).** Secondary mentions highlight Option A as pragmatic but uninspiring.



Positivity of comments from those who support Option B

Source: **Commonplace**
Total number of processed responses: **41**

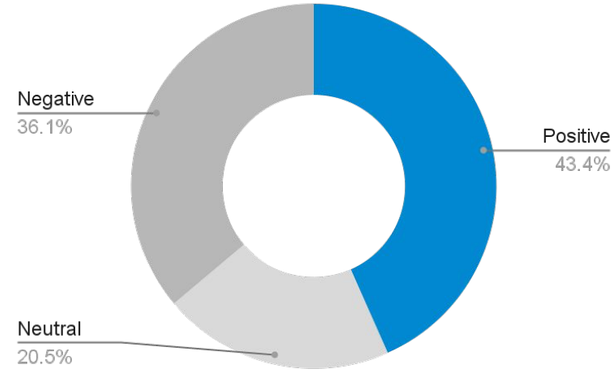


Themes in the comments from those who support Option A

Source: **Commonplace**
Total number of processed responses: **41**

Support for Option B:
Summary and analysis of comments

Option B supporters are broadly positive **(40%),** valuing safe pedestrian spaces, greenery, and social benefits. Key concerns are traffic **(47%)** and pedestrian experience **(46%),** with public realm **(36%)** also important. Comments highlight a desire for holistic, accessible, and community-focused spaces.



Positivity of comments from those who support Option B

Source: **Commonplace**
Total number of processed responses: **41**



8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

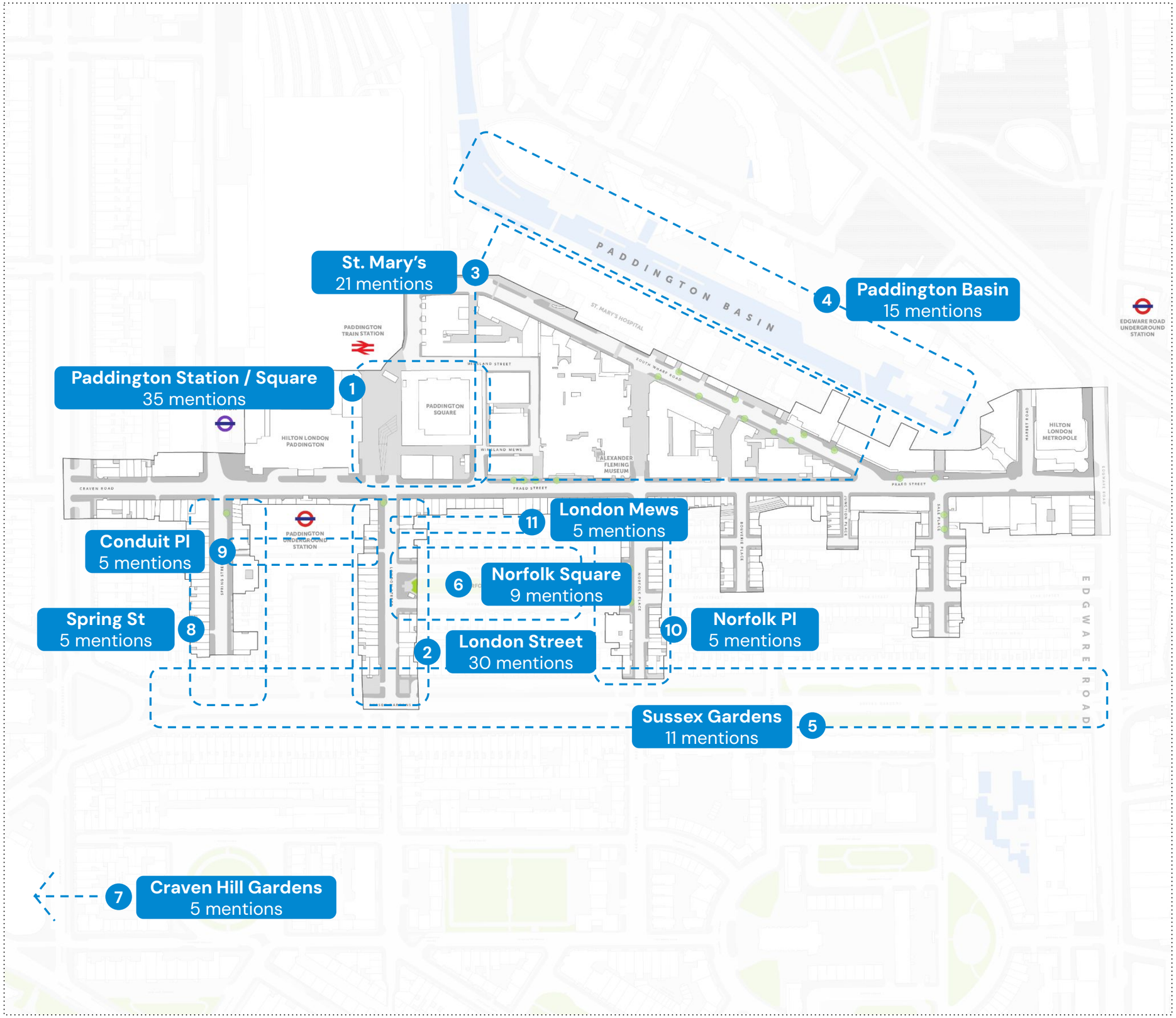
8.2.6 Key locations mentioned in the comments

Around Praed Street, the respondents provided comments on a series of specific streets and locations. From transport gateways and hospital surroundings to neighbourhood squares and quieter residential streets, people spoke of both opportunities and risks associated to these spaces.

They called for safer crossings, greener routes and more welcoming community spaces, while also voicing concerns about congestion, traffic displacement, noise, and antisocial behaviour. Together, these eleven places highlight where improvements are mostly wished or where concerns are mostly voiced in relation to the proposed changes to Praed Street and the surrounding areas.

The 384 comments analysed came from all the survey's open-ended questions.

From 384 processed comments
Source: Commonplace



↑ **Key Locations from comments**

8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

8.2.6 Key locations mentioned in the comments

The 11 most mentioned locations with an interpretative summary of the key points of discussion mentioned in the 384 comments that came from all the survey's open-ended questions.

	**1. Paddington Station / Square** 35 mentions	This major gateway is a busy hub. While people appreciate its potential for community spaces and improved circulation, there are worries about taxis, crowding, and the area feeling unsafe at night.
	**2. London Street** 30 mentions	A key connecting route, described as having great potential for pedestrianisation and greening. However, there are significant concerns about displacing traffic on residential streets and increasing noise from new businesses.
	**3. St. Mary's Hospital** 21 mentions	The hospital's surroundings are a central concern. People wish for better accessibility and a more welcoming environment, but are worried that traffic management changes may hinder access for emergency vehicles.
	**4. Paddington Basin** 15 mentions	People wish for this public space to be better integrated with the surrounding streets, but worry that its presence is not well-known to locals.
	**5. Sussex Gardens** 11 mentions	Some believe this wider street could help alleviate traffic from Praed Street. However, residents are highly concerned that it will become a congested overflow route.
	**6. Norfolk Square** 9 mentions	The square is valued for its green space, but there is a wish for it to be a more active community hub and a concern about anti-social behaviour.
	**7. Craven Hill Gardens** 5 mentions	Respondents wish for this street to be safer and more attractive, but are concerned about the fast-moving traffic and dangerous crossings.
	**8. Spring Street** 5 mentions	While respondents want to see this area improve, there is a strong concern that it will become a congested overflow route for displaced traffic from London Street.
	**9. Conduit Place** 5 mentions	This street is a source of concern. respondents worry about the smell from pubs and the general antisocial behaviour in the area.
	**10. Norfolk Place** 5 mentions	A key junction with dangerous crossings. The main wish is for new traffic lights and crossings proposed to be installed to improve safety and visibility for pedestrians.
	**11. London Mews** 5 mentions	Respondents want to retain vehicle access to this mews for businesses. There is a strong concern about the area being used for anti-social behaviour.

From 384 processed comments
Source: Commonplace

8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

8.2.6 Key locations mentioned in the comments

The following pages highlight 11 of the most mentioned locations from the 384 comments received from the survey's open-ended questions. This includes selected quotes and a summary of the key points mentioned in the feedback.

From 384 processed comments
Source: Commonplace



1. Paddington Station/Square
35 Mentions

This major gateway is a busy hub. While people appreciate its potential for community spaces and improved circulation, there are worries about taxis, crowding, and the area feeling unsafe at night.

"It would be great to improve the sense of welcome outside Paddington."

"The station and the areas around need improving as currently the station feels unwelcoming and dangerous at night time. We should aim to create the feel of the Victoria Station."

"The pavements between Paddington Station and Edgware Road are narrow in places and can become crowded."

"More action / consideration is needed to control the taxis using the pedestrian entrance to Paddington Station opposite London Street."



2. London Street
30 mentions

A key connecting route, described as having great potential for pedestrianisation and greening. However, there are significant concerns about displacing traffic on residential streets and increasing noise from new businesses.

"Highly support London St greening route and the opportunity for markets."

"I particularly like the proposal for a green route and new square on London Street, which will encourage people to walk from the station to Hyde Park"

"I do not like the idea of London Street being closed at the Parade Street end."

"[...] additional pedestrian space in London St will be used for yet more cafes and bars and become much noisier or have events."



3. St. Mary's Hospital
21 mentions

The hospital's surroundings are a central concern. People wish for better accessibility and a more welcoming environment, but are worried that traffic management changes may hinder access for emergency vehicles.

"It's important that the Praed Street improvements are accompanied by a carefully coordinated scheme to improve the setting and appearance of St Mary's."

"It is a Hospital Street so should be healthy and welcoming for patients, visitors and staff."

"We should not be narrowing roads due to the presence of St Mary's Hospital which is a major trauma centre and therefore needs good uncluttered road access."

"The bus stops outside the hospital do not have anywhere near enough seating or space for wheelchairs."

8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

8.2.6 Key locations mentioned in the comments



4. Paddington Basin
15 Mentions

People wish for this public space to be better integrated with the surrounding streets, but worry that its presence is not well-known to locals.

"The Paddington basin space is excellent. Love the open and green steps and outdoor meeting spots."

"I agree with each of the identified objectives for Praed Street, and feel strongly that the links between the Basin and Praed Street should be strengthened and enhanced."

"If I hadn't lived in the area, I wouldn't even know the Paddington basin existed. The design objectives are very much needed in the area."

"I am concerned about cycle routes from Paddington Basin through to Hyde Park, which I take frequently."



5. Sussex Gardens
11 mentions

Some believe this wider street could help alleviate traffic from Praed Street. However, residents are highly concerned that it will become a congested overflow route.

"I believe Sussex Gardens, being much wider, could take some of the traffic from Praed Street."

"[...]Sussex Gardens could be used for traffic in the other direction."

"I would strongly oppose increasing traffic in Sussex Gardens which is predominantly a residential street."

"Closing off the Praed Street end of London Street is not a good idea as it will displace traffic onto Sussex Gardens and the surrounding streets."



6. Norfolk Square
9 mentions

The square is valued for its green space, but there is a wish for it to be a more active community hub and a concern about anti-social behaviour.

"I would like to see the intersection pedestrianised all the way to Norfolk Square Garden so that we can bring more people to this green space and use it to its full potential."

"Please improve local garden squares which are potentially lovely spaces but currently not well kept prone to theft drug taking and rough sleeping eg Norfolk square Talbot square Sussex Gardens."

"The Option B will detract from Norfolk Sq & risks turning it back into an undesirable & antisocial behaviour sight."

From 384 processed comments
Source: Commonplace

8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

8.2.6 Key locations mentioned in the comments



7. Craven Hill Gardens
5 Mentions

Respondents wish for this street to be safer and more attractive, but are concerned about the fast-moving traffic and dangerous crossings.

"I live on craven hill gardens (it turns into praed street) and I am very supportive of this street becoming more attractive and safe!"

"I agree and for me the priority is safety for pedestrians - proper sidewalks and zebra crossings all along the street... The intersection of Leinster terrace, Leinster gardens and craven hill gardens is a dangerous crossing."

"The intersection of Leinster terrace, Leinster gardens and craven hill gardens is a dangerous crossing. Cars, mopeds and e-bikes drive very fast here and there's nothing to stop them..."



8. Spring Street
5 mentions

While respondents want to see this area improve, there is a strong concern that it will become a congested overflow route for displaced traffic from London Street.

"Improving Praed at and London st is great, however Spring St should not receive extra traffic flow as a result. It has really improved over the last 3 years and this should continue."

"I don't think moving the coach bus stop to spring street will work."

"Option B would push more traffic along Sussex Gardens and Spring st - into residential areas rather than mixed use zones."



9. Conduit Place
5 mentions

This street is a source of concern. respondents worry about the smell from pubs and the general antisocial behaviour in the area.

"I think first and foremost the priority should be cleanliness. Streets often reek of fluids and there's trash on the sidewalks. Conduit Place - a street that houses 2 major pubs has a horrid smell that reaches outside the street."

"The side streets in between Eastbourne and Westbourne Terrace [...] and Conduit Mews [...] are Conservation Area residential roads [...] These will require protection from increased traffic, cycles and footfall."

From 384 processed comments
Source: Commonplace

8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

8.2.6 Key locations mentioned in the comments



10. Norfolk Place
5 Mentions

A key junction with dangerous crossings. The main wish is for new traffic lights and crossings proposed to be installed to improve safety and visibility for pedestrians.

"I would like to see more action on public safety addressing by infrastructure deficiencies, particularly re-routing busses away from the west section of Praed, such as southbound via Eastbourne Terrace into Spring Street, (removing the left turn into Praed Street), and northbound up Norfolk Place with a right turn into the east end of Praed St. from that point."

"missing crossings in particular norfolk place praed street junction, super dangerous because you can never see incoming traffic due to parked vans and so on - and it's a big bus route!"



11. London Mews
5 mentions

Respondents want to retain vehicle access to this mews for businesses. There is a strong concern about the area being used for anti-social behaviour.

"Keep london mews access for vehicles. We have a workshop there and use it daily. Restricting vehicular access to the mews would be detrimental to our business."

"London Mews is currently a junkie hang out and not a safe place to be, it would be good to clean it up."

"The proposal is for this road to be one way northbound with an east turn only at Praed Street. This would avoid the HGV U turns if access is restricted between London Mews and Praed Street."

From 384 processed comments
Source: Commonplace

8.2 Engagement overview
Surveys

8.2.7 Past, present and future

The following page provides key quotes and a summary of the way the past, present and future of the area was described in the survey comments.

From 384 processed comments
Source: Commonplace

The Past

How was it in the past?

The past of Praed Street tend be described as a place in limbo, a "run-down, decaying main thoroughfare" that felt disconnected from its neighbours. Residents recall a "grotty" and "unloved" street that had long needed attention, a place that had "lagged behind local development." Yet, it wasn't without its charm; it was the entry point for travellers to London and the home of St. Mary's Hospital, giving it a unique, if "shabby," character. It was a street full of potential, a bit like a forgotten King's Cross before its regeneration, just waiting for its moment to shine.

"I trained at St Mary's Hospital and still visit the area. It has always been quite run down, but recent improvements at Paddington Basin and the station give an opportunity to enhance Praed Street as well and improve facilities for local residents and hospital visitors"

"Praed St has always felt a bit unloved and disconnected from the surrounding area."

"Praed Street has long needed attention."

"[...]there is a seediness and shabbiness and general air of how King's Cross was before its regeneration."

The Present

How are things now?

The comments tend to portray the present of Praed Street as chaotic and conflicting. It's often described as a "mess," "cluttered," and "unwelcoming," with "shoddy" retail and a palpable air of tension. For pedestrians, it's a difficult journey. Dodging aggressive cyclists, stepping around rubbish bags, and navigating through crowds of tourists with suitcases. The street is a mess of noise from "rat-running" vehicles, and a lack of proper crossings makes it feel dangerous. It's a place to hurry through, not to linger in, a constant source of frustration for both residents and visitors.

"Praed Street is a mess. . . At the moment it's too cluttered, and there is no good connection into Paddington Basin"

"The retail outlets are pretty shoddy, with a few exceptions, and the feel of the street is of a run-down, decaying main thoroughfare. Not a good look at all!"

"At the moment both Praed street and side streets give a congested feeling, whether walking or cycling through towards Edgware Road or Hyde Park."

"This area is currently not a great welcome into London for travellers arriving at Paddington station. Improving the public realm is needed here."

The Future

How could it be?

The future of Praed Street is portrayed in the comments as a bold, ambitious dream of transformation. The goal tends to be to see the street become a "people-friendly" environment and a pedestrian paradise, with "less motor traffic" and "more greening." The vision includes creating a new public square and a "green route" to connect the street to Hyde Park, making it a "welcoming gateway to London." The dream is for the area to be "transformed," with a focus on creating a "lovely walking route" and a place that is a destination in itself, not just somewhere to hurry through.

"It needs to become more of a place to hang out, rather than a place to get out of as quickly as possible."

"It would be great to improve the sense of welcome outside Paddington and improve the circulation area for arrivals and signposting. Signposting to Lancaster Gate station and Hyde Park would be particularly useful."

"Perhaps there is an opportunity to celebrate Paddington Bear within the plan?"

"These impressive proposals could transform the area for residents, workers and visitors, and do a huge amount to promote walking to and from the Paddington Station."

8.2 Engagement overview Workshops

8.2.8 Early workshop with stakeholders

On 5 February 2025, the Council hosted an in-person workshop to inform the emerging Place Strategy. The session brought together key stakeholders to discuss priorities and shape a shared vision for Praed Street. The workshop focused on:

- → **Defining** a vision that reflects Praed Street's evolving identity and character
- → **Addressing** stakeholder concerns and local needs
- → **Gathering** input on movement and connectivity
- → **Exploring** ideas for public space activation and high-street programming
- → **Foster** partnerships to support long-term delivery

Insights from the session directly informed the Place Strategy, guiding public space proposals and activation opportunities. Ongoing engagement will remain central as the strategy moves into delivery.



↑ Stakeholder Workshop for Praed Street

Participants

- Transport for London
- Paddington Square
- Imperial
- Network Rail
- Sellar
- St Mary's Hospital
- Paddington Now

Key Learnings

- → **Paddington Arrival:** Strong support for improving the Praed Street arrival experience and resolving loading and congestion challenges around Paddington Station.
- → **Albert Ward:** Opportunity for a meanwhile public-realm intervention ahead of redevelopment.
- → **Movement Priorities:** Emphasis on better conditions for pedestrians, active travel and public transport.
- → **Blue-Light Routes:** Essential to preserve emergency service access and clearances.
- → **Retail Mix:** Desire to diversify retail and address in positioning Praed Street as a retail destination.

Additional Considerations

- → **Market Halls:** Opening of Market Halls will likely influence the local food, drink, and night-time economy — new projects should complement not compete.
- → **Albert Ward:** Any meanwhile use should be self-funded and, ideally, income-generating.
- → **Planting and Greening:** There's an existing maintenance budget for trees but not planting, therefore a long-term budget for planting and upkeep is needed.
- → **Active Travel:** Paddington Square provides 520 bike spaces, but usage is low due to excellent public transport links. Future projects should focus on improving the safety and appeal of cycling routes.