Executive Summary

Early Engagement Feedback Report - March 2026



Engagement overview

Early engagement took place through a hybrid programme of online and in-person activity, including an engagement website and survey, social media adverts, a dedicated hoarding on Great Marlborough Street advertising the consultation, two public drop-in sessions and pop-up street engagement. This approach ensured that residents, employees and visitors were all able to share their views in a way that suited them.

Overall sentiment

There is clear support for investment in Carnaby Street's public realm, with many respondents describing parts of the area as in need of a refresh. At the same time, there is a strong feeling about protecting Carnaby's identity.

Shaftesbury Capital would like to thank everyone who participated in the consultation and shared their views on the future of Carnaby Street.



High-level insights

Across all engagement channels, feedback consistently highlighted:

01 Strong support for greening and planting, provided it is well-designed, uncluttered and well-maintained.

02 A desire for warmer, more consistent lighting that improves safety while respecting pedestrian experience.

03 Clear appetite for improved paving quality, wider and clearer walking routes (that will not be compromised by any improvements), and more places to sit.

04 Wayfinding was generally viewed as manageable, while others noted that clearer signposting could help encourage exploration of side streets and surrounding areas.

05 Lots of comments about the dominance of chain retail, with an evident desire to support independent shops and celebrate historical creative identity.

06 Repeated calls for better public toilet provision and improved waste management.

These themes are consistent across residents, employees and visitors, and provide a clear evidence base to guide the next stage of work.

Key Consultation Metrics

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Early engagement reached a wide range of residents, employees, businesses and visitors through both digital and in-person channels, ensuring a broad mix of perspectives were captured.

35
attendees across two public drop-in sessions

36
online survey responses received during the engagement period

10+
Stakeholders engaged

41,500
Social Media Interactions

03 online articles, broadly positive in tone



38
on-street conversations captured through pop-up engagement

Total Visitors:

1579
landing page visitors from social media ads

Community Feedback

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Public Art & Culture

A strong theme across consultation responses was the importance of protecting Carnaby Street's distinctive identity and cultural significance. Respondents valued existing public art and supported authentic, understated interventions that celebrate creativity, heritage and Soho's independent spirit. There was also interest in better interpreting Carnaby Street's history and cultural role, alongside maintaining a strong, retail-led character that supports a diverse and distinctive mix of shops, rather than a shift towards a more generic offer.



Wayfinding & Signage

While Carnaby Street is generally easy to navigate, feedback suggested a clearer, well-integrated wayfinding could help people better understand how the area connects to surrounding streets and the wider West End. Respondents also highlighted the role signage could play in supporting safer movement with respect to dispersal in the evening and at night, particularly by helping people locate public transport and onward travel options.

Public Realm, Paving & Seating

Feedback demonstrated broad support for sensitive public realm enhancements that would improve pedestrian comfort and the overall experience of Carnaby Street, provided these changes respect its historic character and the qualities of surrounding streets. Maintaining pedestrian capacity along this high-footfall route was a recurring priority, with respondents emphasising that any new features should be carefully designed and located to avoid congestion. There was clear support for seating where it complements surrounding uses and does not impede movement.

Greening

There is strong support for additional greening (including vertical greening) across Carnaby Street, provided it is high-quality and carefully positioned. Respondents emphasised that greening should enhance the streetscape without introducing clutter or obstructing pedestrian flow, and should be designed so as not to be misused in a busy central London environment.

Lighting

Many respondents highlighted lighting as an opportunity to improve comfort, safety and the overall atmosphere of the area, particularly during the evening.

There was interest in more consistent, coordinated lighting that enhances character while remaining sensitive to nearby residential uses.