7 Appendix A: Area appraisal

7 Area appraisal

This appendix provides a data-driven and photographic overview of Praed Street and its surroundings forming a foundation for the Place Strategy. The following data points are used to map and help understand some of the aspects of the area:

- → **Transport, movement and collisions:** Main bus, tube, and cycle connections.
- → **Heritage and character:** Listed buildings, conservation areas, and historic and architectural features.
- → **Activation**: Types of activity and uses on the streets (retail, residential, commercial, leisure, etc).
- → **Developments planned and known:** Current and proposed projects shaping the area.
- → **Crime clusters (2023)** – Areas with recorded incidents for safety insights.



↑ **Praed Street**

7.1 Movement and public realm

Strengths

Praed Street is exceptionally well connected, with Paddington Station operating 24 hours, drawing in some of the highest footfall in London.

Recent public realm upgrades, including footway widening outside the Hilton Hotel and the new cycle lane, have improved comfort and accessibility.

Paddington is London's second-busiest commuter hub (after Liverpool Street), with excellent transport connectivity, strong bus links, and over 60 million annual users. The station has step-free access to all National Rail platforms



↑ **Paddington Station** transport links





↑ **New public realm at Paddington Squar**e has created a more welcoming entrance to Paddington station and new public space to sit



↑ **Public realm improvements at the Hilton Hotel,** improved pedestrian accessibility



↑ **New Crossrail exit** to Paddington Station



↑ **Paddington Square and Praed Street** intersection



↑ **Quiet and green Norfolk Square** in proximity



↑ **Proximity to Paddington Basin,** Little Venice and Hyde Park

7.1 Movement and public realm

Challenges

Although Praed Street is well connected, narrow footways and poor wayfinding make the street feel congested and hard to navigate, particularly for visitors. Pedestrians, many with suitcases, weave and wind around lamppost columns, bins, bus stops and old telephone boxes, struggling to walk side by side with a companion.

High incidence of pedestrian collisions are recorded at each junction due to heavy traffic and high pedestrian footfall on narrow pavements. Persistent traffic and vehicle congestion continue to pose risks to air quality and pedestrian safety.

Cycle infrastructure remains underdeveloped, with limited cycle. A new dedicated cycle route has been added to the stretch outside of the Hilton hotel (GWR), but continuous illegal taxi parking here cases safety issues.

Two-way cycling on Spring St has been recorded despite being a one-way street. A couple of trees can be found on Praed Street but limited greenery results in a grey high street environment.



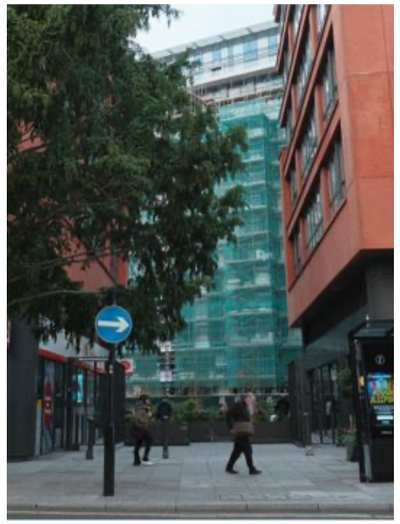
↑ **London Street:** Underwhelming arrival experience from Paddington Station



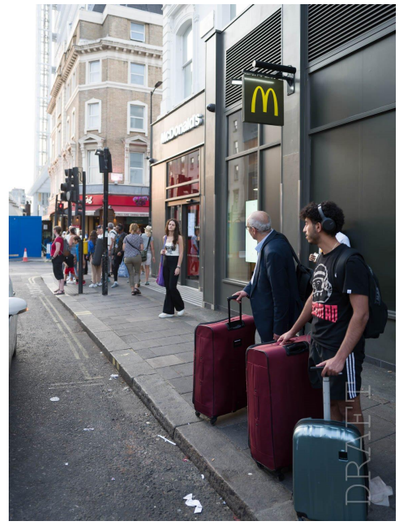
↑ **Narrow and congested** footway and carriageway



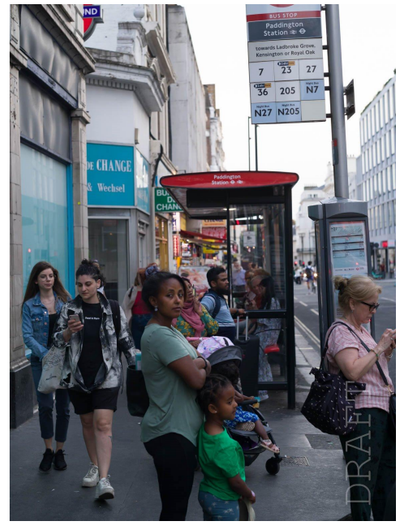
↑ **Taxi behaviour.** Taxis parking illegally on the cycle lane, increasing congestion on Praed Street and idling.



↑ **Poor wayfinding and signposting** to local destinations, looking towards the Basin



↑ **Narrow footways and pinch-points** around bus and tourist bus stops causing congestion





↑ **Waste management issues**



↑ **Waste and lack of greening**



↑ **Street clutter**



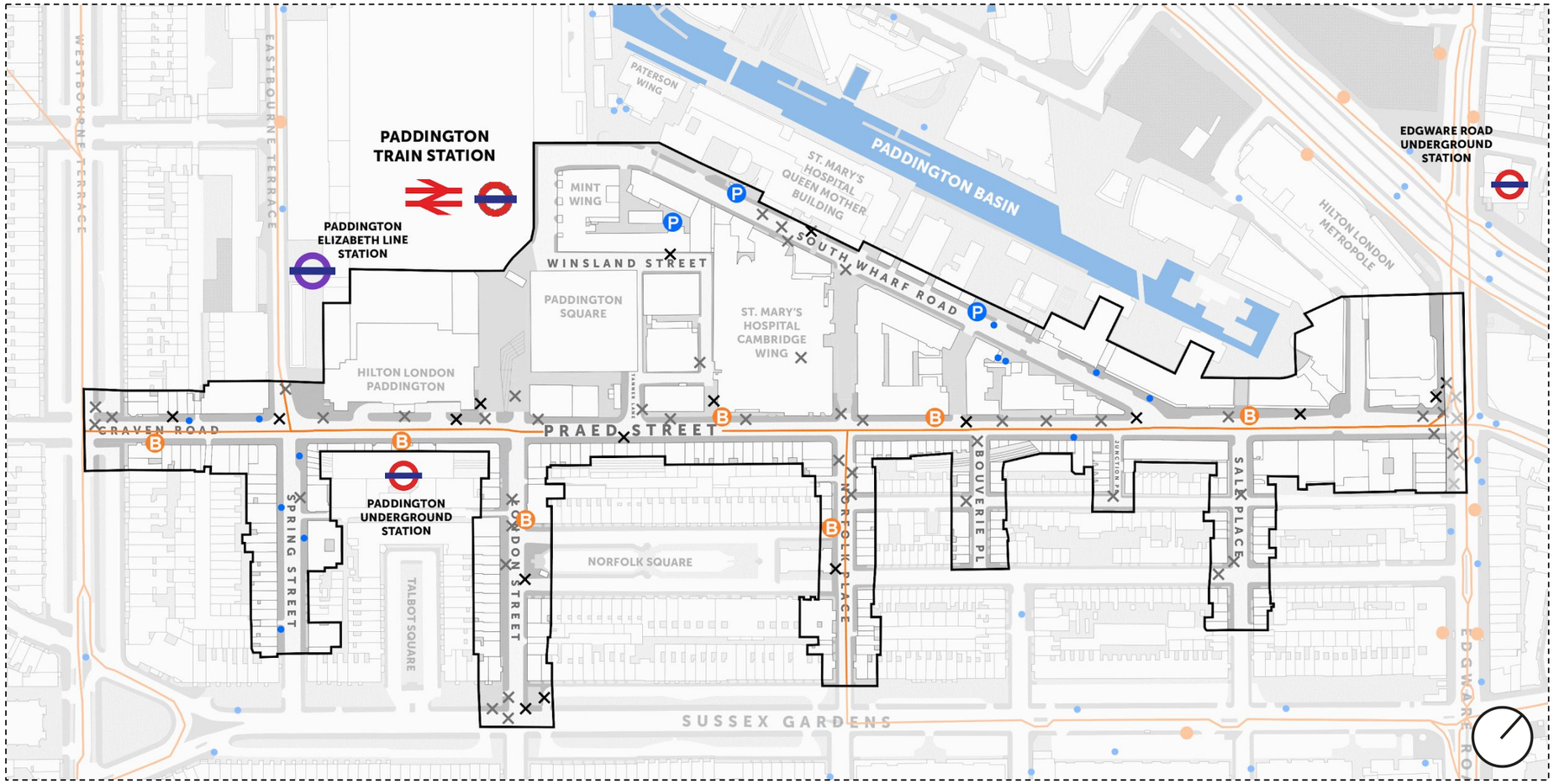
↑ **Lack of cycle infrastructure**

7.2 Transport

The map shows key transport links alongside recorded collisions for 2023. The area experiences significant pedestrian movement around St Mary's Hospital and Paddington Station, intersects multiple major bus routes, and serves as a key east–west cycling corridor. Collision hotspots are showing to be concentrated near the station and the hospital where many of those modes of transport intersect.

Praed Street has the high PTAL rating – 6b on account of accommodating one of London's key transport hubs in Zone 1. This includes a mainland and underground station (Great Western Rail, Heathrow Express, Crossrail Elizabeth Line, Circle Line, District Line, Bakerloo Line, Hammersmith and City Line).

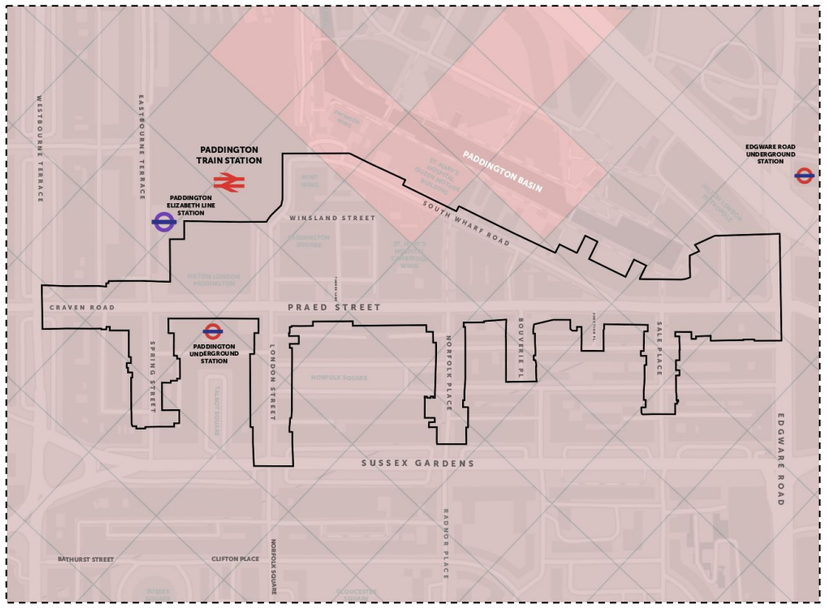
It is also serviced by 8 bus routes (7, 16, 23, 27, 36, N7, N27, N205) and a tourist bus stop currently located on London Street.



↑ Transport mapping Praed Street

Key

- Car parking
- Cycle parking
- Reported *slight* collision Nov. 2020 to Nov. 2025 *Data: TfL Road Safety data report*
- Reported *serious* collision Nov. 2020 to Nov. 2025 *Data: TfL Road Safety data report*
- Bus routes
- Bus stops
- Underground station
- Crossrail
- National rail



↑ PTAL rating for Praed Street

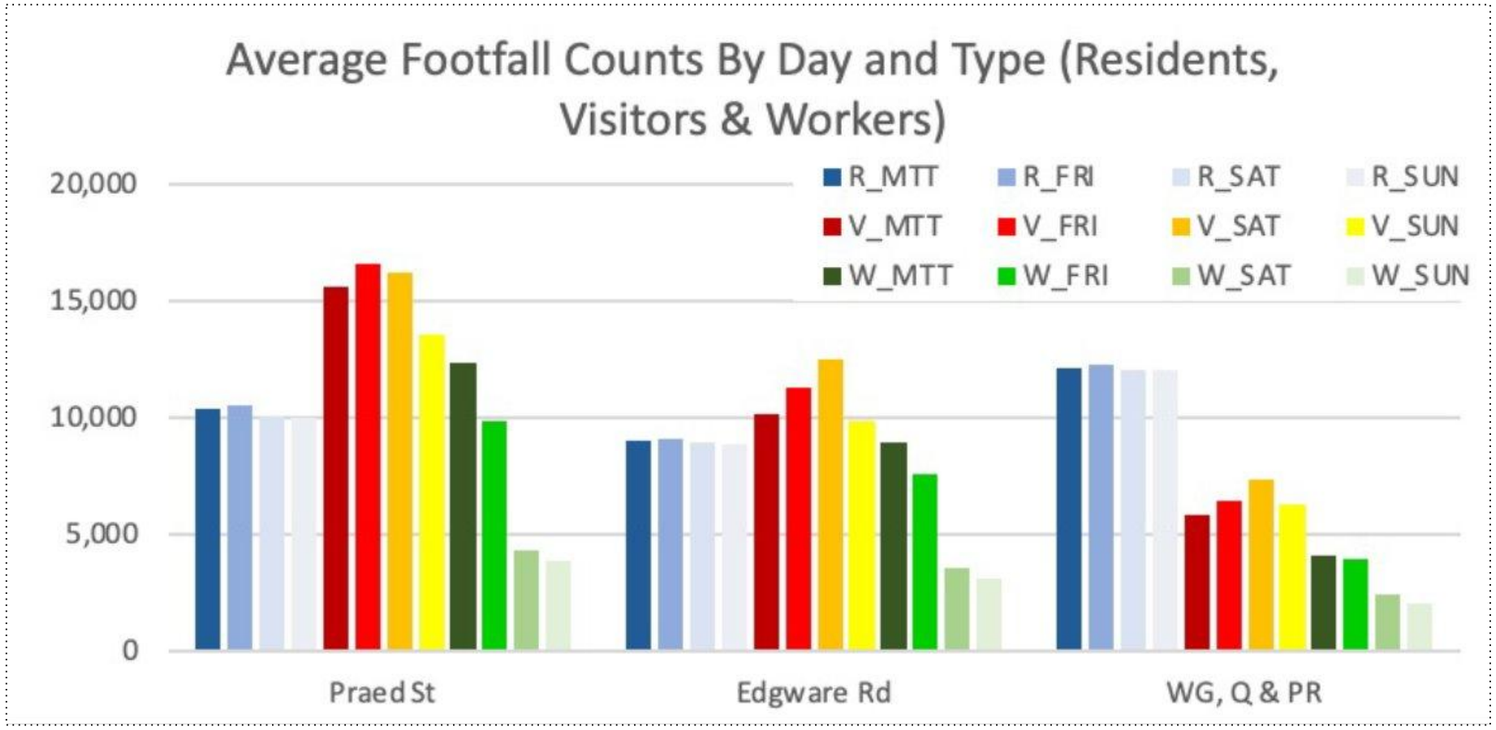
PTAL 2023 RESULT

- 0 (Worst)
- 1a
- 1b
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6a
- 6b (Best)

7.3 Footfall and spend

Didobi, BT Mobility data identifies that Praed Street has the highest daytime footfall of the Paddington – Bayswater high streets, due to the high number of visitors travelling through the area.

Although having the highest footfall, spend is substantially lower than Edgware Road.



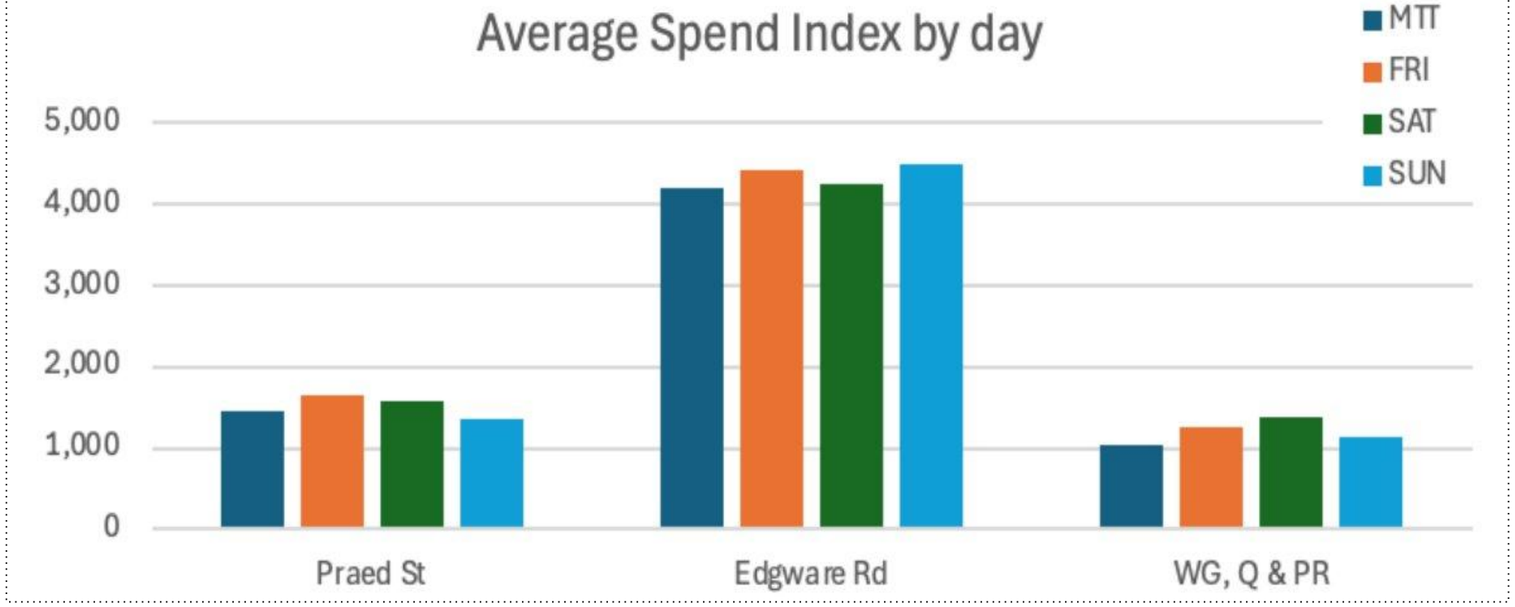
Key

V Visitors

R Residents

W Workers

↑ **Average footfall counts by day and type across Paddington: Bayswater high streets.** Source: Didobi, BT Mobility data



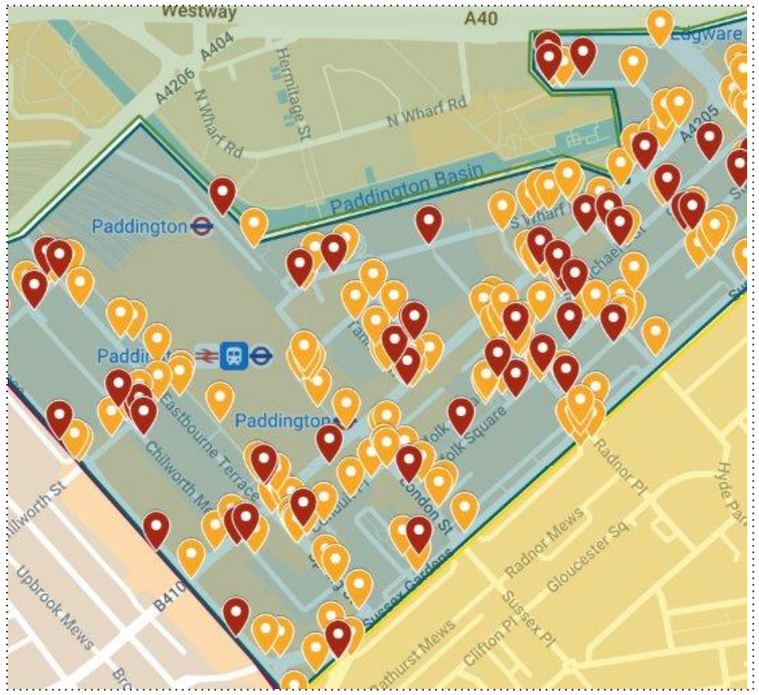
↑ **Spend data for Paddington – Bayswater high streets.** Source: Didobi, Mastercard data

7.3 Accessibility

The access audit was conducted in January 2024 by AccessAble to assess all physical and non-physical barriers to access using specific measurable criteria, at a specific moment in time.

This survey was used to observe the ‘user friendliness’ of Praed Street from the point of view of disabled residents or visitors. It also took into account the needs of people with visual and hearing impairments, hidden impairments such as epilepsy, and learning difficulties as well as those with mobility impairments.

Together with traffic studies and pedestrian comfort levels assessment, it formed the basis to the public realm improvement proposals.



Key

Areas that are a high risk to safety or may make the area impassable.
Example: Unmarked steps, road junctions or vehicle driveways with no dropped kerbs to cross them, severely obstructed pavements.

Issues likely to create a significant obstacle to disabled people.
Example: Dropped kerbs that are steep, uneven or lack tactile paving, badly cracked or uneven paving, obstacles with poor contrast.

↑ **Map showing highlighted areas of concerns** on Praed Street and surroundings



↑ **Praed Street:** Stepped access to shops restricts some people from accessing the services they need and are a significant trip hazard.



↑ **Praed Street, Junction with Sale Place:** There is no suitable crossing point across Praed Street by the junction.



↑ **Praed Street, Junction with Junction Place:** Lack of tactile paving across the width of the level kerb.



↑ **Praed Street:** Seating without any barriers can cause obstructions to pedestrian routes.



↑ **Praed Street, crossing to South Wharf Road:** Inappropriate slopes / dropped kerb gradient.



↑**London Street:** No suitable crossing to Norfolk Square**.**



↑ **London Street:** Kerbs are not flush and not aligned with direction of travel.

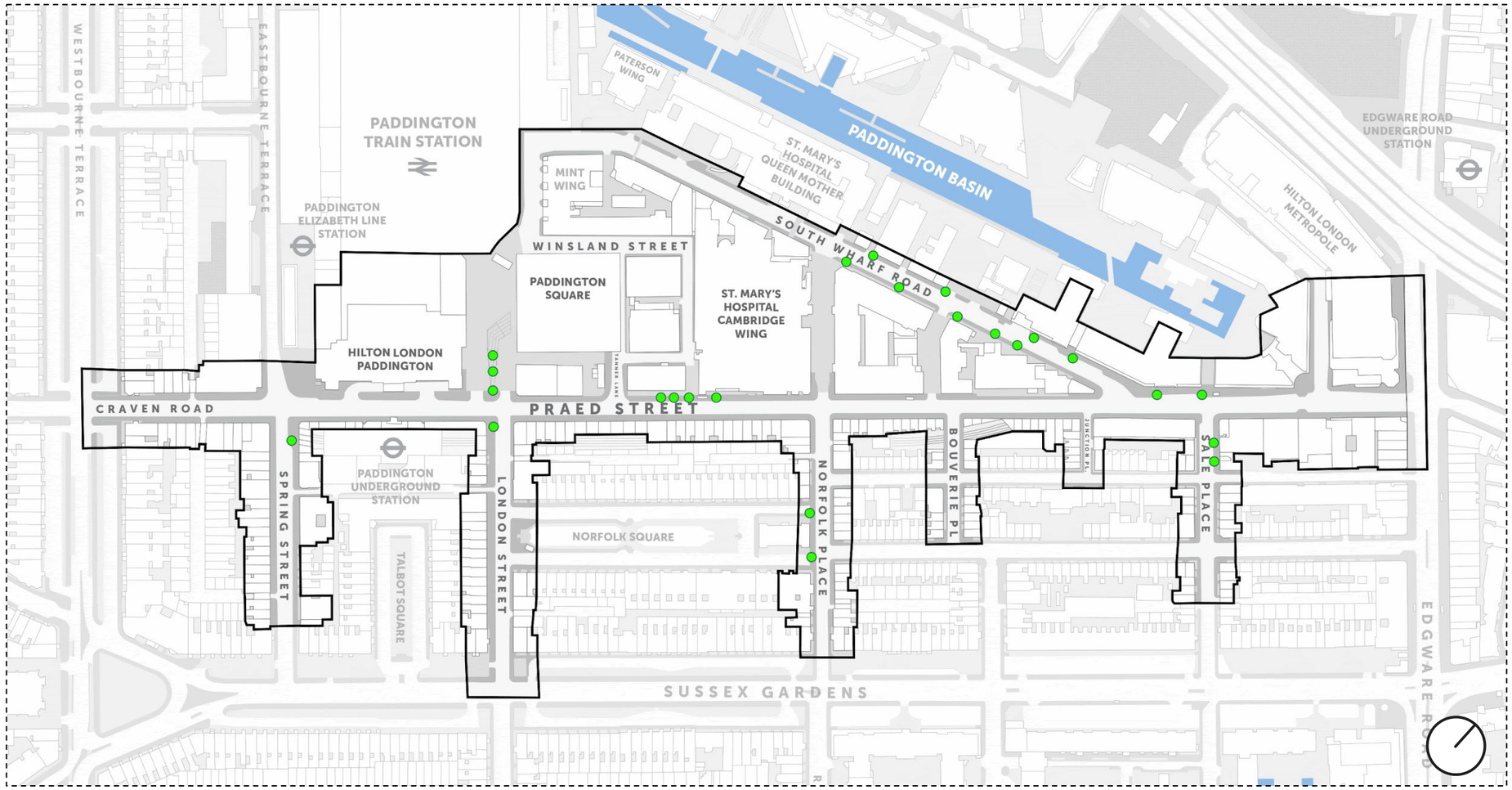


↑ **London Street:** Seating without any barriers can cause obstructions to pedestrian routes.

7.4 Existing trees

The map shows the locations and distribution of existing trees on and immediately surrounding Praed Street. Trees are predominantly concentrated around Paddington Square and South Wharf Road, corresponding with key pedestrian thoroughfares serving Paddington Station and St Mary's Hospital. This provides visual softening within an otherwise dense urban context; however, tree cover thins out along the remainder of the streetscape.

The mapped trees include both street trees maintained by the Council and trees located within adjacent land ownerships.



↑ **Existing trees** in the place strategy focus area

Key

- Existing tree location
- Place strategy focus area

7.5 Heritage and character

Praed Street emerged in the late 19th century alongside the development of Paddington Station, the Great Western Railway, and the Metropolitan Railway, the first underground line in the world. This period spurred rapid residential construction, creating new neighbourhoods west of Edgware Road. Paddington and Praed Street soon became a hub of global railway innovation.

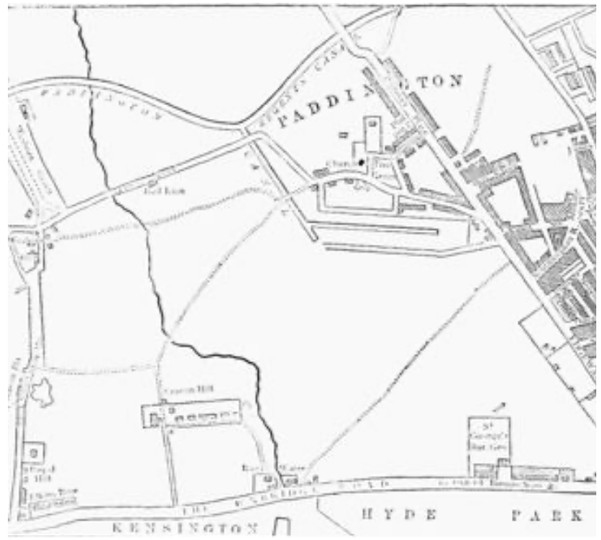
The street is also characterised by St Mary's Hospital campus, built in 1845 on the northern side of the high street. In particular, the Clarence Memorial Wing holds global medical significance as the site where Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin and as the birthplace of the future monarchs and several royal family members.

Michael Bond's Paddington Bear is a national treasure and adored globally. The bear was named after the author's favourite station, in 1956 when Michael noticed a lonely teddy bear in a Paddington store.

In 1965 Paddington become part of the City of Westminster.



↑ **1708:** Earliest known map of the Marylebone estate



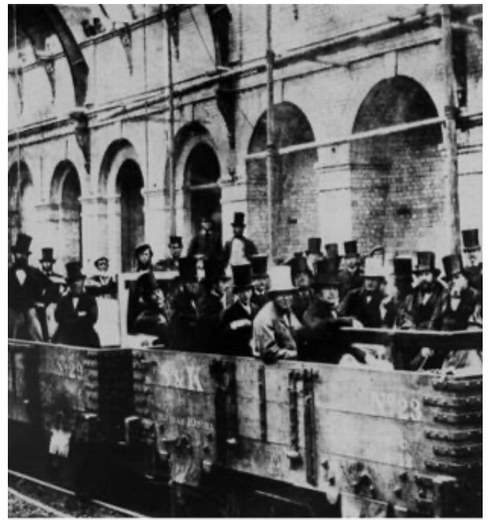
↑ **1815:** At this time, Paddington was mostly open fields, with increased trade brought on by proximity to the canals



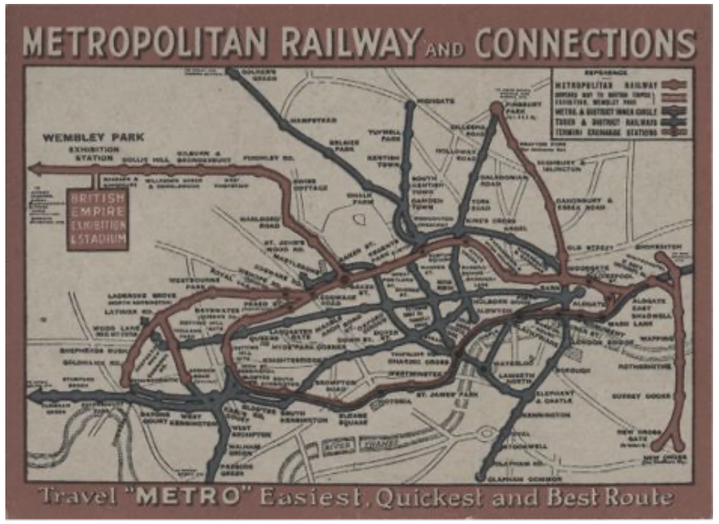
↑ **1870:** Significant growth due to the new Great Western Railway and London Underground.



↑ **1838:** Original Paddington Station opened (London Transport Museum)



↑ **1863:** World's first underground line (Metropolitan) opens between Paddington - Farringdon (Alamy).





↑ **Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin** whilst working at St Mary's Hospital in 1921 (The Science Museum)



↑ **Michael Bond's Paddington Bear** (The Guardian)



↑ **Birth of Prince William** at St Mary's Hospital (The Independent)



↑ **Birth of Prince George** at the Lindo Wing of St Mary's Hospital (BBC News)

7.5 Heritage and character

The majority of Praed Street sits in the Bayswater conservation area.

The area's character is anchored by important heritage buildings including Brunel's iconic Paddington Station, Great Western Rail hotel and parts of St. Mary's Hospital.

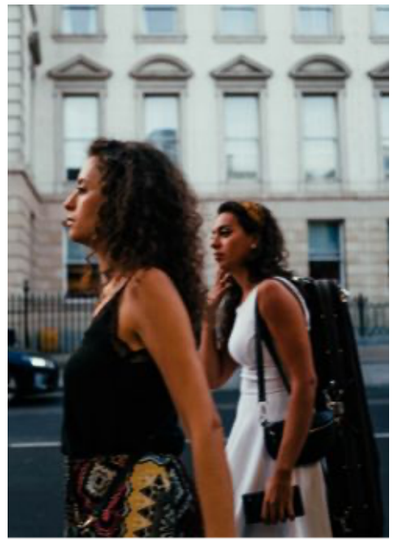
The high street frontage comprises of three – four storey Victorian terraces wide small ground floor retail units on the south side, and a mix match of hospital and station mid-storey architecture from different periods on the northern side.



↑ **Grade I listed** Paddington Station



↑ **Grade II listed** The Clarence Memorial Wing, St Mary's Hospital



↑ **The Hilton Hotel** (GWR)



↑ **Three-storey Victorian terraces**



↑ **Three – four storey Victorian terrace and post war**



↑ **New Crossrail entrance** to Paddington Station, opened 2022



↑ **New Paddington Square development** opened 2024



↑ **St Mary's Hospital**

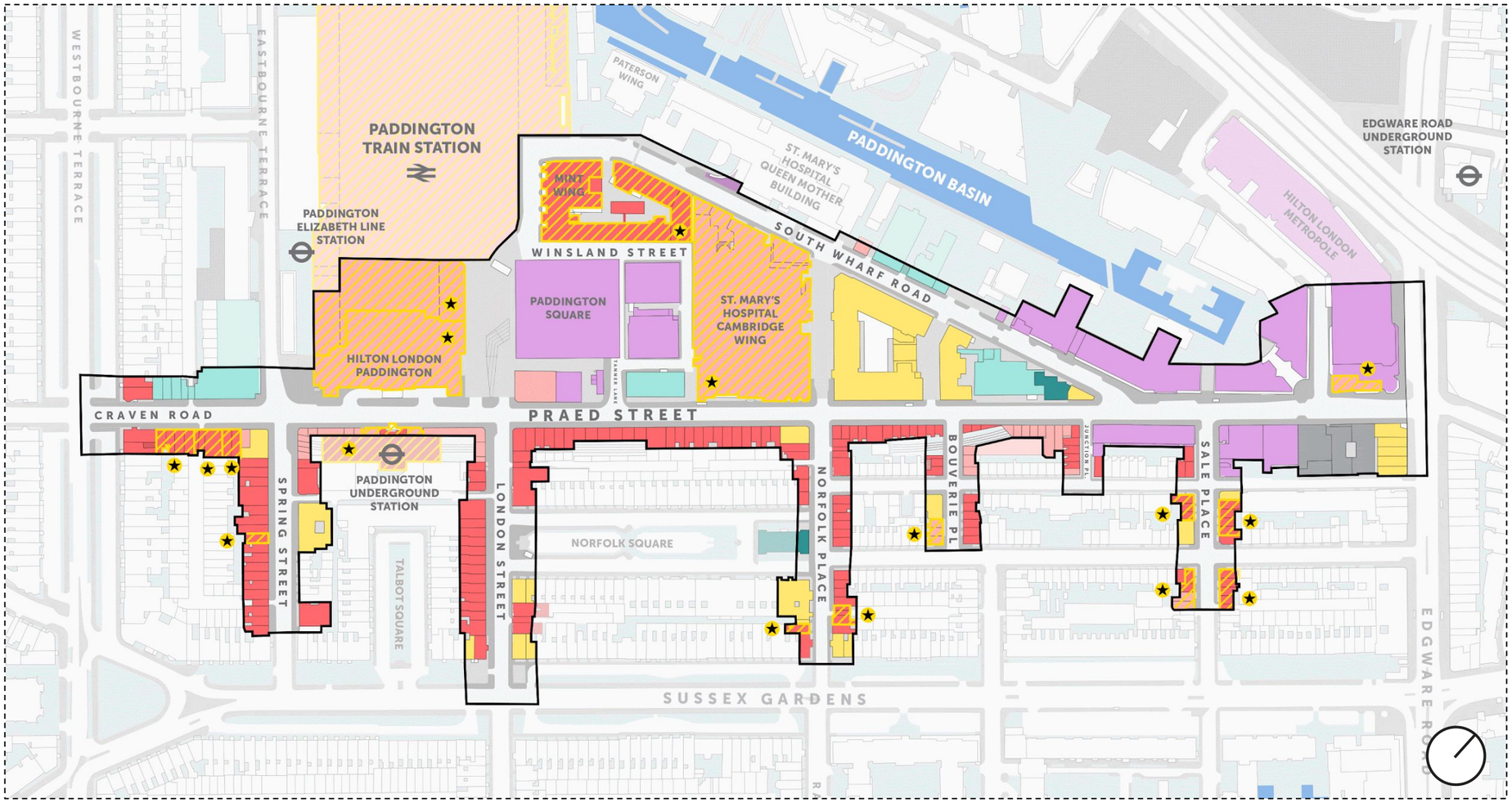
7.5 Heritage and character

The foundation of Praed Street is three storey Victorian terrace architecture. Over time, development around the eastern end near the Basin and St Mary's Hospital has introduced a diverse mix of architectural styles. At its heart stands Isambard Brunel's iconic grade I-listed Paddington Station, built in 1854, set back as a prominent local landmark.

The Great Western Rail Hotel—now the Hilton Hotel and Grade II-listed—was positioned on Praed Street to serve station travellers. Other notable listed buildings include The Mint Wing, originally horse stables built in 1878, and the Clarence Memorial Wing, a Renaissance-style structure completed in 1892.

St Mary's Hospital campus has created a largely inactive northern frontage. Modern hospital buildings such as the Churchill wing and the Victoria and Albert building create an incomplete, temporary feel.

Modern, post-war and post-modern additions at the eastern end, change the character of the street. The most recent development- Paddington Square, completed in 2024 and designed by Renzo Piano adds an 18-storey glass cube to the high street.



↑ **Heritage assessment Praed Street**

Key

- Historic (Pre-1919)
- Mixed age (partly historic)
  Construction of mixed age with historic elements
- Interwar (1919 - 1944)
- Postwar (1945 - 1959)
- Sixties / Seventies (1960 - 1979)
- Modern (1980 - today)
- Mixed age (other)
  Construction of mixed age with elements from other periods
- Listed buildings



↑ **Paddington Station**

7.6 Activation

New recent developments have brought a significant number of contemporary public artworks to Praed Street.

Gillie and Marc's Wild Table of Love was originally added to the junction at Eastbourne Terrace as a temporary installation but has become a long-term feature on the high street due to its success in engaging tourist of all ages to stop and play. Maarten Baas's Real Time Clock creates a playful amenity on Eastbourne Terrace.

Rona Smith's sculpture Abeona on the JC Decaux building is one of the few artworks on the eastern end of the high street, celebrating Paddington's iconic railway.

Paddington Square development introduced four new artworks – Urgo Rondinone's sculpture Yellow Orange Hermit; Pae White's floating sculpture Somethinging and two wall murals at Tanner Lane – Catherine Yass's NHS Swimmers and the Showroom Gallery's annual rotating billboard.

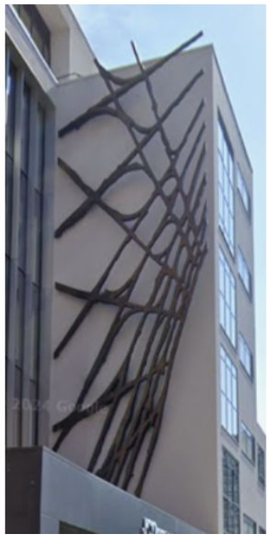
Praed Street and its surrounds have a series of blank walls, proving opportunity for future commissions. Inactive frontages of hospital buildings have a negative impact on the high street.



↑ **Wild Table of Love by Gillie and Marc.**



↑ **Real Time Clock by Maarten Baas.**



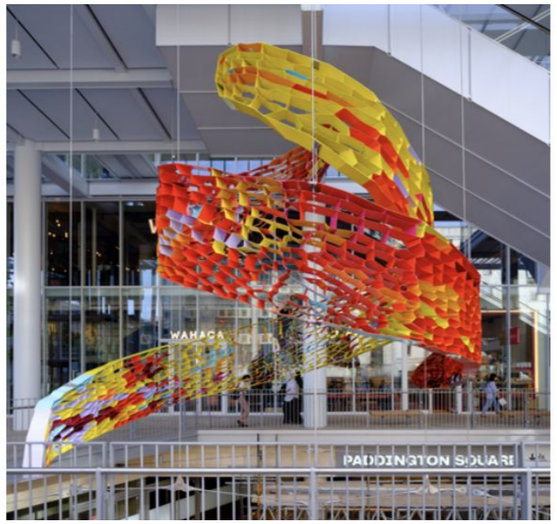
↑ **Abeona by Rona Smith.**



↑ **Why do we care about art? by Kathrin Bohm x The Showroom Gallery.**



↑ **Yellow Orange Hermit by Ugo Rondinone. Credit: Nick Turpin.**



↑ **Somethinging by Pae White.** Credit: Nick Turpin.



↑ **Inactive frontages on the northern side of Praed Street.**



↑ **NHS Swimmers by Catherine Yass.** Credit: Oliver Dixon and Paddington Square.



↑ **Long Distance Press: Hand Over Hand by The Showroom Gallery x Paddington Square Partnership**. Credit: Dan Weill.



↑ **Many blank walls across Praed Street and side streets.**

7.6 Activation

Praed Street, Spring Street, London Street and Craven Road comprise of a mix of small retail, hotels, pharmacies, hot food takeaways, cafes, small restaurants, pubs and services. St Mary's Hospital campus is a key centre for health and wellbeing. There are limited late-night services, food and drink options for hospital users, despite Paddington Station operating 24 hours. Despite heavy footfall, retail offer is predominantly low quality, struggling to attract quality retailers, with small, tourist-focused units and fragmented ownership. The retail is predominately made up of souvenir shops, money exchanges and conveniences. This has resulted in retail leasing challenges in attracting larger brands, despite over 60 million people passing through the area annually.

As one of London's primary arrival gateways, Paddington and Praed Street has a high proportion of hotels. Predominance of tourist-geared shops continues to weaken Praed Street's status as a shopping destination. The Frontline Club offers one of the few cultural spaces on Praed Street. Market Halls at Paddington Square has created a new day and evening destination for Praed Street with 7 kitchens and 500 covers.

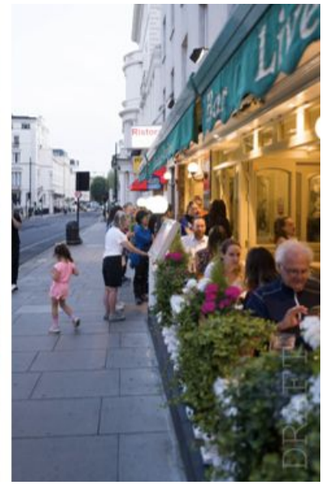


↑ Large numbers of souvenir shops.





↑ Vacancy on Praed Street.



↑ Restaurants with tidy alfresco.





↑Large numbers of Bureau de Change.



↑ Fast food takeaways on Praed Street.



↑ Demand for alfresco.



↑ Pride of Paddington public house and hotel.



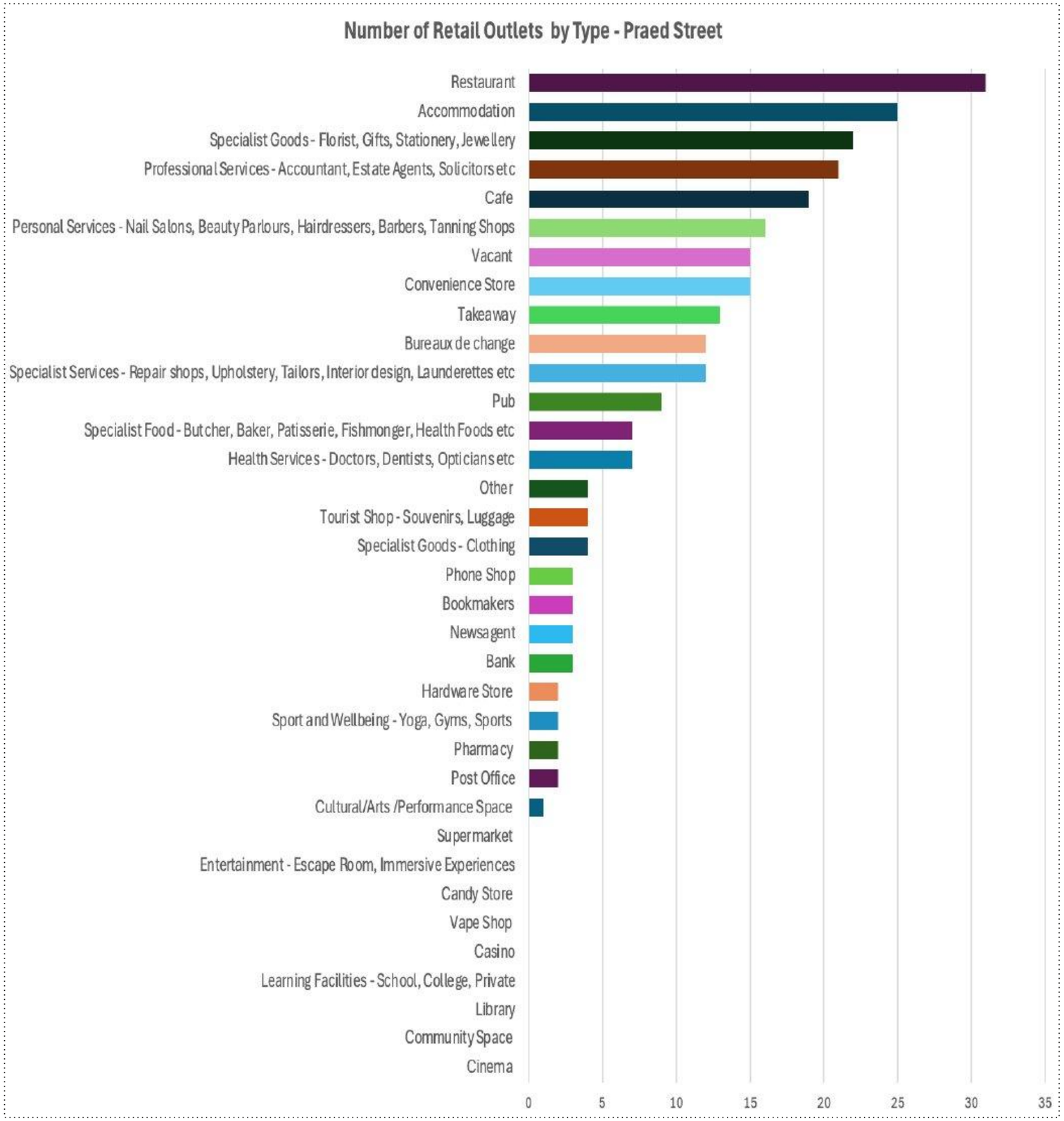
↑ Market Halls at Paddington Square. Source: Tag Venue.



↑ Tesco express, only 24hr provision.

7.6 Activation

The table sets out the current mix of ground floor offer on Praed Street from April 2025.



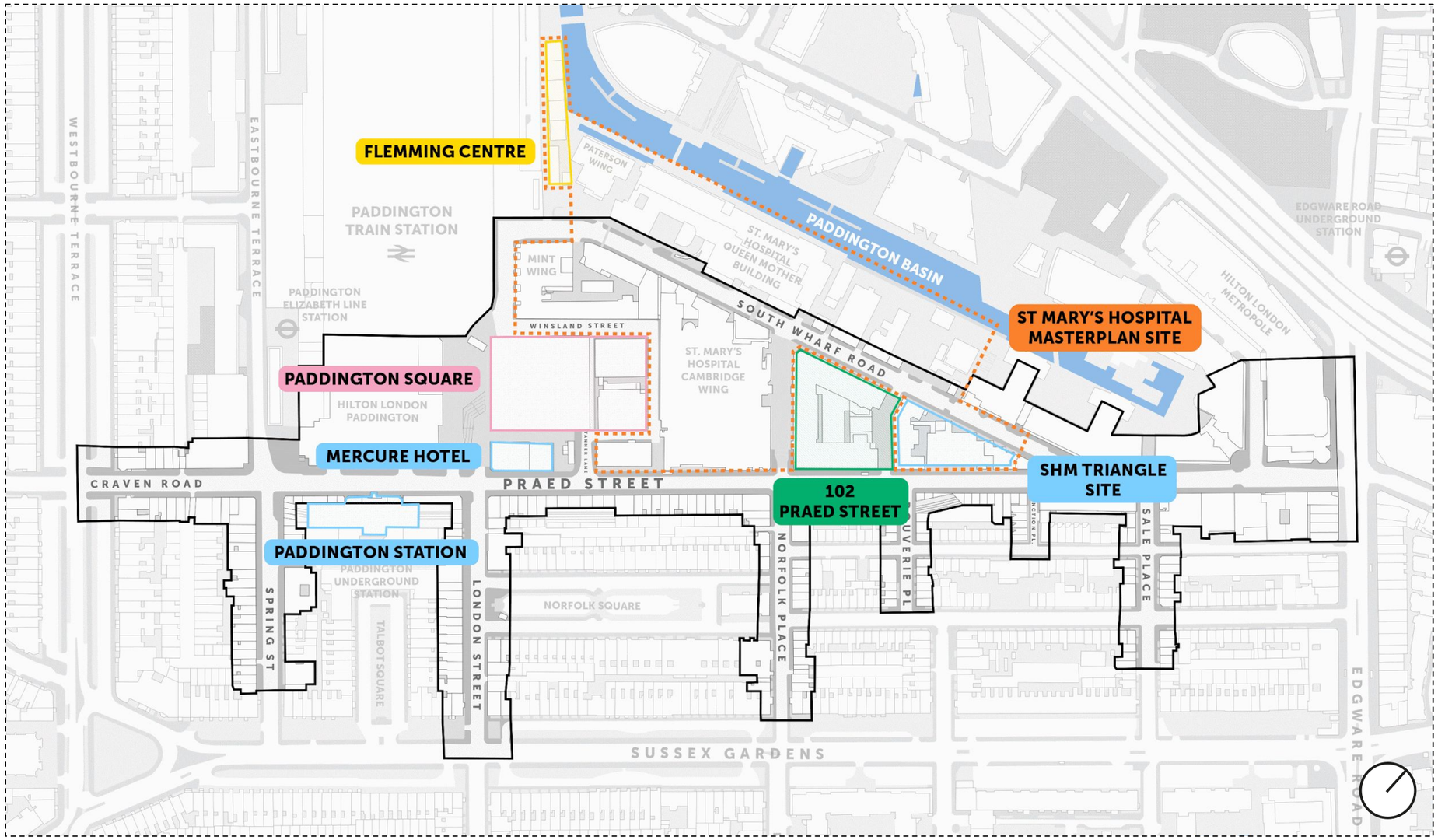
↑ **Praed Street, number of ground floor outlets.** Source: Local Data Company, Field Survey April 2025

7.7 Developments

Key planned developments (as of January 2024).

Paddington Square is now complete and has transformed the entrance of Paddington Station.

The redevelopment of the St Mary's campus, a long-standing proposal, is also expected to proceed over the coming decade.



↑ **Development pipeline Praed Street**

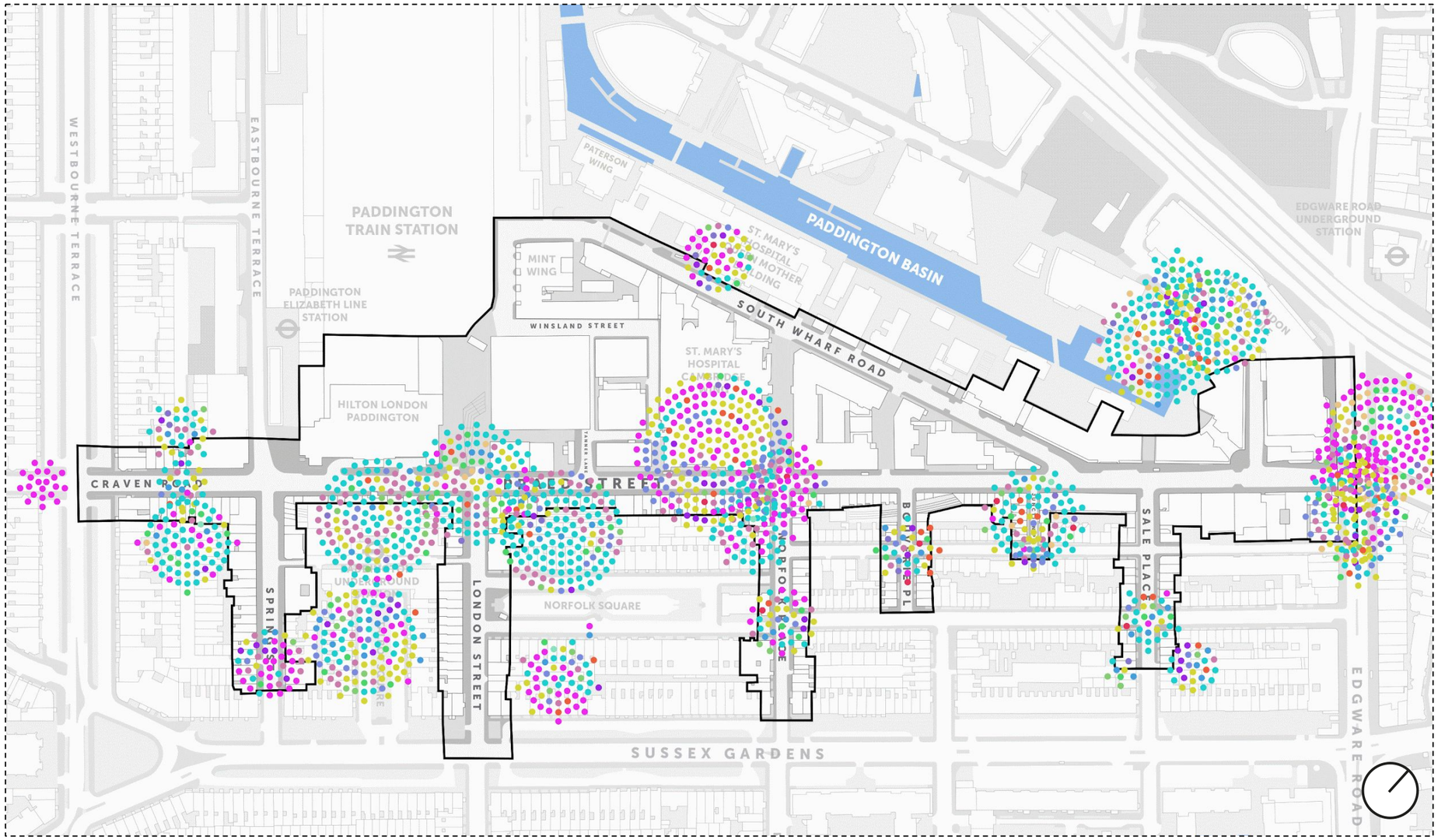
Key

- Engagement on development opportunity
- Granted unbuilt
- In planning
- Recently completed
- Site allocation

7.8 Crime clusters

Crime clusters for 2023 are concentrated near the station and St Mary's Hospital. Theft is the main crime and anti-social behaviour reported around the station, while anti-social behaviour and violence dominate near the hospital.

Data sourced from the Met Police public database for the period January–December 2023.



↑ **Crime cluster data on Praed Street**

Key

- Anti-social behaviour
- Bicycle theft
- Burglary
- Criminal damage and arson
- Drugs
- Other crime
- Other theft
- Possession of weapons
- Public order
- Robbery
- Shoplifting
- Theft from the person
- Vehicle crime
- Violence and sexual offences

7.9 Key locations

London Street

London Street is one of the main arrival point to London as visitors exit Paddington Station. Currently, this encounter is overwhelming and unwelcoming where traffic movement predominates. Yet, the street has a strong potential to become a memorable place offering a welcoming sense of arrival and a more comfortable pedestrian route to the surroundings.



↑ London street

Challenges

1. **Vehicle dominance:** Primarily a route for traffic, creating noise and pollution.
2. **Poor pedestrian comfort**: Clutter, narrow footways and lack of seating
3. **Unwelcoming gateway:** It fails to provide a positive sense of arrival from Paddington Station.
4. **Weak identity:** No clear landmarks or character, creating a weak sense of place (especially for such an important station).
5. **Poor quality frontages**

Opportunities

6. **A new public space** with animated seating and wayfinding.
7. → **More greening** and strengthening the connection to Norfolk Square Gardens: Exploring a range of approaches to integrate new greenery and provide seating and improved amenities.
8. → **Active frontages:** Support shopfront improvements and opportunities for alfresco dining.

7.9 Key locations

Paddington Basin approach

This section of Praed Street is currently a busy corridor, often feeling unwelcoming, inaccessible and confusing for pedestrians. It lacks clear wayfinding, and moments of calm needed for the location to be appreciated for its users.

There is opportunity here to connect Praed Street to both St Mary's Hospital and Paddington Basin.



↑ Paddington Basin approach

Challenges

1. **Confusing navigation:** Wayfinding to the hospital entrances and Paddington Basin is unclear.
2. **Poor pedestrian comfort:** Clutter, narrow footways, lack of seating and greenery.
3. **Safety concerns:** Crossings feel unsafe, conflicting with hospital access needs and pedestrian flow.
4. **Inactive frontages:** Large stretches, especially along the hospital, Imperial, lack activity.

Opportunities

5. **Active the northern frontage:** Through new development and support shopfront improvements.
6. **New artwork opportunity on building façade:** To enliven northern frontage until hospital redevelopment comes forward.
7. **Widened southern footway and flexible kerbside uses:** Through reduction of parking.
8. **Clearer wayfinding** artwork to the basin.
9. **New crossings.**