

Holborn Vision Supplementary Planning Document

Engagement Summary Report
December 2024



Contents

01 Introduction	4
Why did we consult on the Holborn Vision?	6
02 Consultation and Engagement	8
2019 Consultation and Engagement	10
2024 Consultation	11
How did we approach the consultation and engagement?	12
How did we consult?	13
03 What did you tell us?	16
Summary	18
What were the key recommendations?	19
What were the key insights?	20
What did you tell us about the objectives?	22
What did you tell us about the character areas?	24
What did you tell us about the delivery of the Holborn Vision?	29
04 Statutory Consultation	30
Statutory Consultation	32



**An engagement summary report
to support the Holborn Vision
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

Produced by Camden Design and Place

01 Introduction

- Why did we consult on the Holborn Vision?

Why did we consult on the Holborn Vision?

Introduction

Based on the extensive consultation and engagement process, we have shaped the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to reflect what was told to us. This report summarises the consultation and engagement that has taken place.

The first round of consultation took place in May to July 2019. This was followed by a five year pause due the impact of the pandemic and uncertainty about TfL's funding for the Holborn Liveable Neighbourhood programme. Work on the document began again in 2023, and a revised draft Holborn Vision went out to a further round of consultation between February and April 2024.



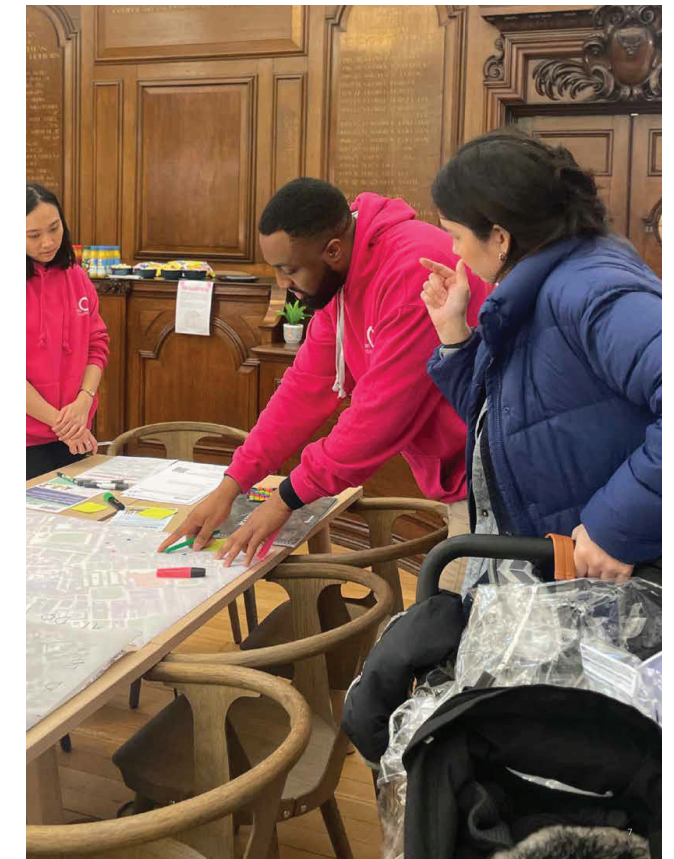
Draft Holborn Vision, 2024

Why did we consult?

The Holborn Vision will form part of the documents that make Camden's Development Plan. The key document is the adopted Camden Local Plan which must be consistent with the National planning framework. The Local Plan sets out the vision for shaping the future of the borough and contains policies for guiding planning decisions and looks at the needs of the area and the people who live, work and visit Camden. Although supplementary planning documents do not have as much weight in decisions on planning matters as the Development Plan documents, they must comply with and support the policies in the adopted Local Plan.

As an SPD the consultation requirements are less extensive than for Development Plan documents. However, given the important role in providing more detail on how planning policies would be applied in Holborn, and the importance of the Holborn Liveable Neighbourhood programme in delivering change, the consultation and engagement on the Holborn Vision met and also significantly exceeded the requirements set out in Camden's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Although consultation on SPDs is a requirement, by finding ways to involve and hear from the diverse communities in Holborn, including residents, businesses, workers and visitors underpins that well designed and comprehensive engagement makes better planning guidance.



Holborn Vision engagement event
Urban Symbiotics

02 Consultation and Engagement

- 2019 consultation and engagement
- 2024 consultation
- How did we approach the consultation and engagement?
- How did we consult?

2019 Consultation and Engagement

We carried out initial consultation on the draft Holborn Vision and Public Realm Strategy between May and July 2019. The draft SPD looked at Holborn through three area-based transformations. These were:

Holborn Gateway

A new arrival experience for Holborn with transformation of the public realm, including the removal of the gyratory, a new tube entrance and capacity upgrade to Holborn Station and key development opportunities.

Museum Quarter

Building on the process of investment and change already underway with high quality development and public realm, that supports Holborn's role as a key destination. Improving links the British Museum, Covent Garden and the West End.

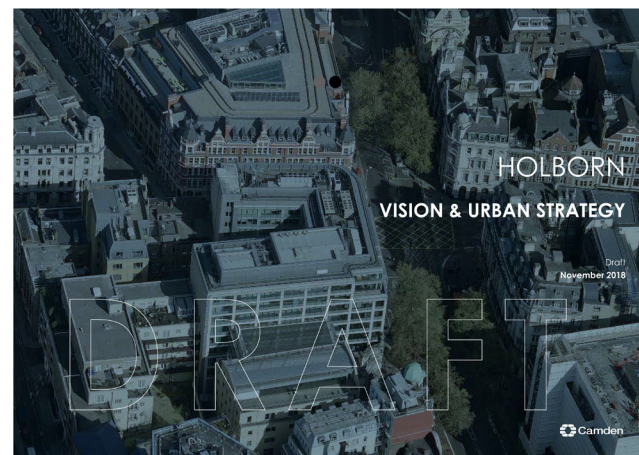
Holborn to the City

High quality contemporary development in a rich historic context that adds to Holborn's diverse offer and connects Holborn to Hatton Garden and the City.

This was supported by four objectives for Holborn:

- A leading centre for living, business and cultural activity
- Celebrating Holborn's diverse identity and distinctiveness
- World class public realm, green space and a transport network that supports active travel
- A sustainable place that delivers for its communities

We had 120 responses to the consultation on the draft vision in 2019. You told us that your priorities for the area were clean air, sustainability, safe routes, housing, greener spaces, social and community uses and improved public realm. You also wanted the vision and objectives to focus more on the existing communities.

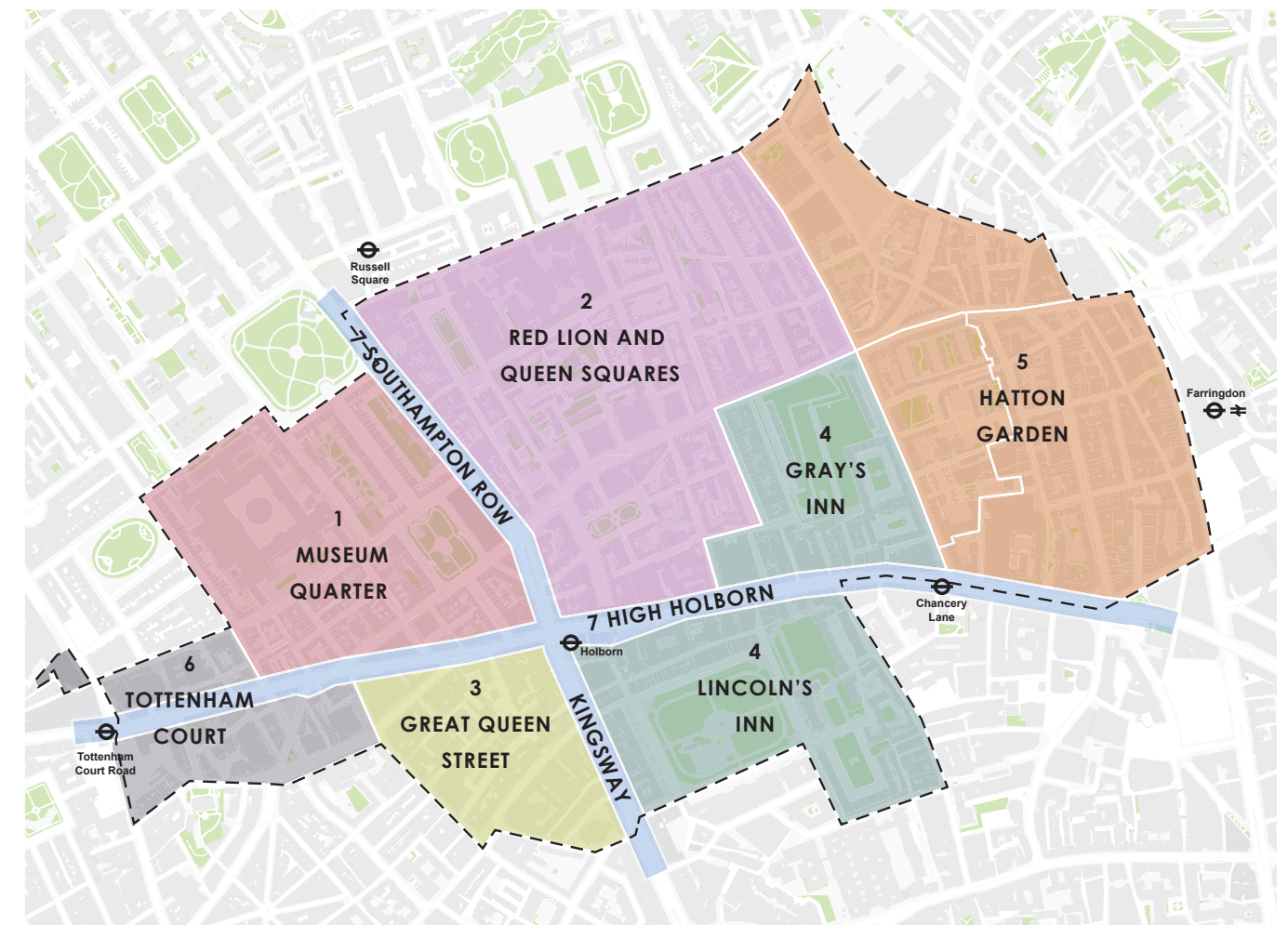


Draft Holborn Vision & Urban Strategy, 2019

2024 Consultation

Based on what you told us and taking into account changes that have taken place since 2019, we revised the draft vision. The key change has been to take a character area approach to celebrate the heritage and diversity of Holborn and guide development to respond to local character and ensure high quality buildings and spaces. We also revised the objectives to include further support for residential communities, mixed use neighbourhoods and climate resilience and applied them to each character area to make it clearer what we want to see in the future.

We wanted to reach as many people as possible to share our new approach and in collaboration with Camden's Holborn Liveable Neighbourhood Project (HLN) we commissioned Urban Symbiotics to support a public consultation.



Holborn's Character Areas
Draft Holborn Vision, 2024

How did we approach the consultation and engagement?

The engagement on the Holborn Vision was underpinned by a comprehensive and inclusive engagement programme designed to encourage participation across the entire community. It emphasised explicitly achieving diverse involvement, where strategies were outlined to ensure that the engagement process was representative, inclusive, and accessible to all. The aims and objectives for the consultation were:

1

Ensure inclusive & representative participation

The initial study and previous engagement review highlighted the need for a greater diversity of community members participating in the engagement programme.

2

Delivery of a programme where the entire project area had the opportunity to contribute within a 6 week window

A programme that maximised awareness of the projects and sought participation from all, throughout the entirety of the project area within the time frame given between engagement launch approval and pre-election period.

3

Establish a foundation, reputation and tools that can be used for future consultation

Capture data, details and build tools that can be utilised by following engagement programmes. Ensure activities and touch-points build trust and positive associations to facilitate greater participation, community champions and opportunities for community volunteering.

4

Create a programme that provides data and insight that can inform and support the requirements of consultation and validation of the Holborn Vision, ensuring this report contains the necessary criteria to support the status of Holborn Vision as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The SPD needs to undergo public consultation, align with the Local Plan, provide clear and specific guidance, be based on robust evidence, include monitoring mechanisms, and comply with relevant planning regulations.

How did we consult?

Urban Symbiotics (US) carried out a detailed demographic study and a review of past engagements highlighting areas for targeted focus, such as the significant Bangladeshi and Chinese communities, younger residents, and Muslim populations. These insights guided tailored engagement activities, including vibrant community street pop-up conversation stalls, leveraging existing events for “piggybacking” opportunities, and hosting focused groups and activities designed to appeal to under-represented demographics. US also worked closely with Holborn Community Association and Central District Alliance (CDA) who assisted in developing and supporting the engagement. This informed the programme of consultation events which ran from 20th February to 1st April 2024.

By using the consultation materials as tools for open and fluid discussion, this allowed participants to share their experiences of living, working or visiting Holborn. The advantage of this approach meant that people could share relevant and valuable insights without having to read the whole document.

We used further methods of engagement including:

- Two adverts in the Camden New Journal
- Email to 435 stakeholders
- An exhibition in Holborn Library for the duration of the consultation period with drop-in sessions and piece in the libraries newsletter
- A Commonplace website and update on the Council’s website



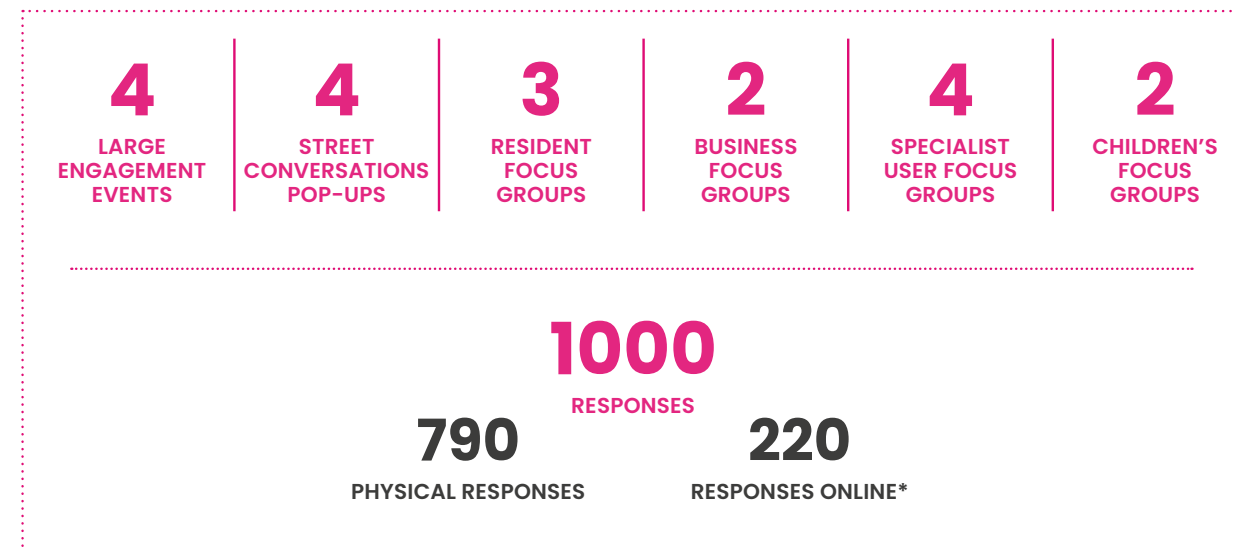
Holborn Vision and Holborn Liveable Neighbourhood pop-up event
Urban Symbiotics

How did we do it?

Using a wide range of engagement methods, the key objective of the consultation was inclusive and representative participation that allowed the population of the entire project area, visitors, and employees to contribute within the six week timeframe.



How many people did we consult?



Who were they?

Physical Engagement Reach				
DEMOGRAPHIC REACH				
EVENT	PARTICIPANT TYPE	AGE	ETHNICITY	ATTENDANCE NUMBERS*
STREET POP-UPS 	Local residents, businesses, students, visitors, tourists, TfL staff, pedestrians, cyclists, drivers	Majority: 40s-60s 20s-30s 15s-20s	Majority: White, East Asian, South Asian, Black	520 attendees
EXHIBITION DAYS 	Local residents, stakeholder, pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, taxi drivers	Majority: 30s-40s 50s-60+ Under 10s	Majority: White, East Asian, South Asian, Black	18 attendees
BUSINESS FOCUS GROUPS 	Businesses, land owners		Majority: white, South Asian	7 attendees
SPECIALIST USER FOCUS GROUP 	Professional stakeholders, cyclists, women, disabled (RNIB)		Black, East Asian	25 attendees (total)
CHILDREN'S FOCUS GROUPS 	Local residents	8-13	South Asian / Bengali	10 attendees

03 What did you tell us?

- Summary
- What were the key recommendations?
- What were the key insights?
- What did you tell us about the character areas?
- What did you tell us about the delivery of the Holborn Vision?

Summary

Given the comprehensive nature of the engagement the consultation responses have provided a breadth and depth of views that reflect the experiences of living, working and visiting Holborn. All of the comments were collated and analysed in relation to the objectives and character areas, providing useful insights in how we could strengthen the SPD.

The findings of the consultation showed us clearly that we should consider the following:

- Strengthen the Vision document as one that is community-focused throughout.
- Prioritise Vision objectives based on feedback, potentially leading with HV2 (Mixed Use Neighbourhoods) and using HV3 (Residential Communities) as a guiding principle.
- Enhance Holborn's promotion and wayfinding.
- Provide guidance to increase footfall and support post-pandemic office returns.
- Address homelessness through targeted initiatives.
- Improve recreational and play spaces for communities.
- Climate resilience to be considered as sustainability, together with social sustainability, and wellbeing.
- Support creative and bold interventions whilst preserving Holborn's historical significance.

What were the key recommendations?

The key recommendations from the consultation are:

- **Character Area approach:** Utilise and strengthen the character areas as a key way of engaging people with the Holborn Vision.
- **Accessibility:** Tailor the Vision and language to be more accessible to a non-professional audience.
- **Strengthen community focus:** Strengthen the community focus and benefit that underpins the Vision objectives.
- **Feedback extensive recent engagement:** Clarify and display the engagement to date as material evidence of community involvement.
- **Amplify and strengthen community voice and their priorities:** Clearly amplify priorities and show a 'you said' - 'we did' explainer as part of the Vision update.



Holborn Vision focus group
Urban Symbiotics



Holborn Vision engagement workshop
Urban Symbiotics

What were the key insights?

The key findings from the consultation have provided a valuable insight into what is important in Holborn and how the Vision should reflect these views. Often comments were made about issues that had already been addressed in the Vision, but these comments have helped us strengthen and revise the text further. This has been significant in understanding the things that are important to those that took part.

Positive Feedback

General approval

Many of the responses showed an appreciation of the proposed objectives, with an understanding that they will improve Holborn's appeal, aesthetic and functionality. Comments consisted of enthusiasm for HV4's objective (Public Realm) of increased greenery, improved public spaces, and enhanced wayfinding and signage.

Destination appeal

There is strong support for promoting Holborn's unique character and history and the making of Holborn as a notable destination.

Negative Feedback

A need to be community focused

Many feel that future plans (mostly due to their experience) are overly business focused and appear to neglect the local community's needs.

Unique character

Multiple concerns were raised about the perceived potential loss of the area's character and historical significance due to perceived commercial development threat.

Safety issues

Issues such as anti-social behaviour and crime were highlighted, with worries that new developments may exasperate this if steps are not taken to address these socio-economic concerns.

Neutral Feedback

Clarity and detail

Some respondents express a need for more clarity on how the Vision and objectives will benefit the community, particularly regarding affordable services and market offer.

History and identity

There are calls for historical and cultural elements to be promoted to maintain the area's identity in new development and public realm design.

Feedback Expressing Concern

Night-Time Economy

Concern over the perceived shift towards a night-time economy, was raised by some as central to reducing the liveability of the area for residents.

Vision Scepticism

Calls for more clarity and evidence that the Vision will benefit the wider community, highlighting a sense of fear by some participants.

Feedback Expressing Suggestions

Affordable Shops

Calls for an increased number of affordable shops to cater to residents and students.

Community Facilities and Open Spaces

Calls for more community facilities, including playgrounds, and recreational spaces for young people and families.

Cultural Activities

Encouraging more cultural activities and events to enhance the area's vibrancy and appeal to all.



Engagement event
Urban Symbiotics



Engagement workshop
Urban Symbiotics



Holborn Vision children's focus group
Urban Symbiotics

What did you tell us about the objectives?

Although the objectives are not in order of priority, it was clear that some objectives were seen as more important and received more comments than others. **HV2 - Mixed Use Neighbourhoods'** objective was the most frequently mentioned, followed by **HV6 - Heritage**.

HV5 - Climate Resilience was the least mentioned among the objectives. It should be noted, however, that whilst direct comments on climate were reduced, there was an extremely high number of mentions of the need for 'greener' public spaces, which was captured under **HV4 - Public Realm**.

 <p>HV1 - A GENUINELY MIXED-USE NEIGHBOURHOOD THAT BRINGS TOGETHER WORKERS, RESIDENTS AND VISITORS</p>	 <p>HV2 - A PLACE WHERE THE EXISTING RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES ARE STRENGTHENED AND ENHANCED SO THAT RESIDENTS CAN STAY AND THRIVE</p>
 <p>HV3 - A PLACE WHERE THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER AREAS OF HOLBORN ARE CELEBRATED AND ENRICHED</p>	 <p>HV4 - A PLACE CONNECTED BY EXCELLENT PUBLIC REALM WHERE EVERYONE FEELS SAFE AND ENCOURAGES WALKING, CYCLING AND RELAXING</p>
 <p>HV5 - A PLACE OF INNOVATION THAT CONTINUES TO FOSTER A DIVERSITY OF BUSINESS AND COMMERCE WHERE BUSINESSES OF ALL SIZES WANT TO LOCATE, STAY AND GROW</p>	 <p>HV6 - A CLIMATE RESILIENT PLACE THAT IS ABLE TO ADAPT AND THRIVE, AND READY TO FACE THE FUTURE</p>

Holborn Vision Objectives
Draft Holborn Vision, 2024

Below is the summary of findings for the objectives and character areas.

HV1 - A Place of Innovation that Continues to Foster Business and Commerce

Insights include a request for business growth to be balanced with community welfare, specialist businesses, and support for areas to be protected, such as Hatton Garden. Further insights include the need to prioritise access, connectivity and enhanced footfall to support business activity by some.

HV2 - Creating Vibrant Mixed-Use Neighbourhoods

The engagement responses to HV2 reflect a community whose priority is on supporting guidance that facilitates vibrant, inclusive, and safe mixed-use neighbourhoods that balance commercial needs with community wellbeing.

HV3 - Residential Communities

The engagement responses to HV3 welcomes a holistic approach to developing a Vision that prioritises housing, addresses homelessness, strengthens social infrastructure, and ensures the availability of affordable shops and services.

HV4 - Improving Public Spaces

The engagement responses to HV4 highlight a positive response to enhance public spaces through increased greenery, better seating, pedestrian-friendly areas, being able to find your way around easier, and improved public transport options. Concerns here focussed on ensuring that guidance supports spaces that can be well maintained and that impact on traffic is mitigated.

HV5 - Creating a Climate-Resilient Holborn

The engagement responses to HV5 were positive towards a climate-resilient Holborn, mostly focusing on greening and wellbeing. Managing traffic was seen to be key to improving local air quality. Other issues raised include a need for more guidance for households and businesses on greener waste management options.

HV6 - Celebrating Holborn's Distinctive Character

The engagement responses to HV6 highlight the community's priority in calls to strengthen the guidance on preserving, enhancing and celebrating Holborn's distinctive character through thoughtful development and historic preservation. Additional calls included an ask to support creative design, improved wayfinding, and the creation of public spaces that reflect local identity.

What did you tell us about the character areas?

Museum Quarter

HV1 - Concerns About Office Development

Participants questioned the necessity and appropriateness of additional office spaces in the Museum Quarter. Some highlighted disturbances caused by construction and criticism of developments like Selkirk House that is perceived by some as not respecting the area's historical character. (NB Selkirk house is the Tottenham Court Road character area.)

HV2 - Need for Diverse and Quality Mixed Uses

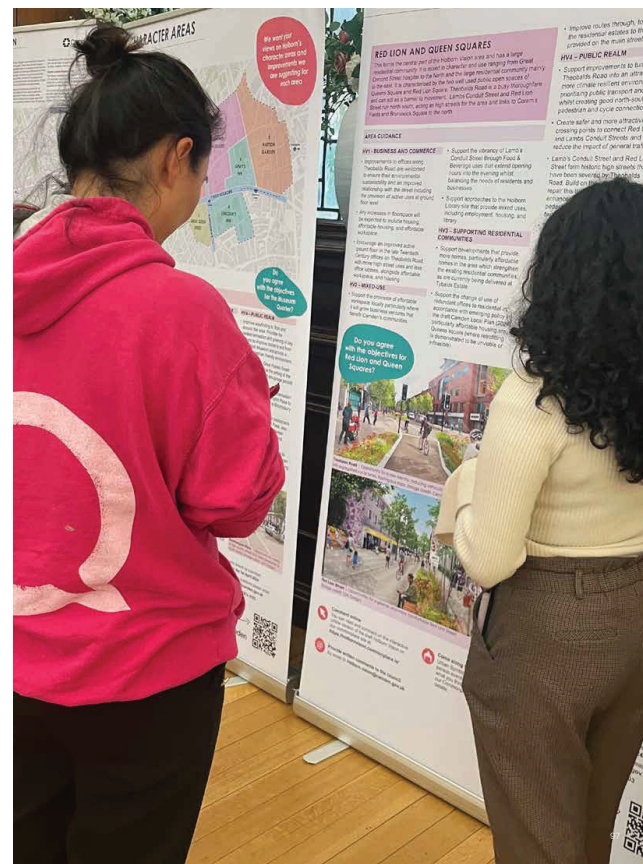
Participants emphasised the need to go beyond focusing solely on the British Museum, advocating for diverse uses to enhance the area as a destination. They expressed that the current mix of uses appears to lack the diversity needed to for a compelling environment in their opinions.

HV3 - Residential and Cultural Balance

Participants highlighted that the Museum Quarter is also their residential area, expressing concerns about the evening economy due to noise disturbance. Some also remarked that current retail offerings do not align with the area's cultural significance.

HV4 - Pedestrianisation and Public Space Enhancements

While most participants supported ideas from the HLN project on a possible pedestrianisation for Great Russell Street, they expressed concerns about the possible impact of diverted traffic, bus stop relocations, and the need to maintain the street's distinctive character. Collaboration with the British Museum was suggested to improve entrance use. Participants requested support for more play spaces and security measures to be put in place. Being able to better find your way around was expressed by some as a need. Bloomsbury Square enhancement was also suggested by some.



Holborn Vision engagement event
Urban Symbiotics

Red Lion and Queen Squares

HV1 - Active Ground Floor Uses and Footfall

Participants emphasised the importance of supporting active ground floor businesses on places such as Theobalds Road, as many noted that footfall in the area has not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Mix of Shops and Eateries

People called for more shops and eateries along Theobalds Road to revitalise the area. Lamb's Conduit Street received positive feedback for its high-quality shops and atmosphere, suggesting it as a model for local mixed-use development and street design.

HV3 - Existing Communities and Community Assets

The strong sense of community felt around Red Lion and Queen Squares was brought up, fostered by resident groups and community activities. There was support for converting office spaces into affordable housing for key workers and creative individuals, with a call for specific site identification. Enhancing community assets and activities was seen as vital, with mentions of Conway Hall's potential for community facilities and praise for Lamb's Conduit's 'friendly' atmosphere. Tybalds Estate received comments on a need to improve its public spaces, maintenance, and connectivity.

HV4 - Pedestrianisation and Public Amenities

There were mixed feelings about early ideas from the HLN project on possible pedestrianisation around Great Ormond Street Hospital, with support tempered by concerns about the potential impact on parking and vehicle access. There was strong opposition to changes that could alter the historic layout of Red Lion Square, though suggestions included adding amenities like play areas and public toilets. Improvements to greening and child play areas were desired. Recent improvements on Red Lion Street were generally well received, despite concerns about floating bus stops, rough sleeping, and delivery access.



Holborn Vision children's focus group
Urban Symbiotics

Great Queen Street

HV3 - Commitment to Enhancing Residential Communities

Participants felt that the language used in development plans, such as “acknowledge” and “support,” did not convey a strong commitment to improving residential communities. Concerns were raised about non-beneficial developments, particularly regarding Space House, which was perceived as not addressing the needs of local residents, including issues such as inadequate provisions for rough sleeping.

HV4 - Safety and Functional Considerations

Participants highlighted that retaining some traffic could enhance safety and encourage natural surveillance in any possible new pedestrian focussed area, making the areas feel more secure. Some stressed the necessity of maintaining service access to ensure the area’s functionality. Positive feedback was received for the pavement improvements on Drury Lane, which were widely appreciated for their effectiveness.



Holborn Vision pop-up event
Urban Symbiotics

Lincoln’s Inn and Gray’s Inn

HV2/HV3 - Enhancing Community Engagement and Accessibility

A need for greater flexibility and engagement to make Lincoln’s Inn and Gray’s Inn feel more vibrant and connected to its surrounding context was highlighted. The area is perceived as under-utilised, particularly on weekends, with some residents feeling disconnected from local amenities. Improved wayfinding and support for better promotion of local shops, pubs, and food stands were suggested to boost the area’s appeal. There were also concerns about safety and isolation, with calls for measures to foster a stronger sense of community and an increase of the area’s integration with its surroundings.

HV4 - Enhancing Green Spaces and Community Facilities

Participants praised Lincoln’s Inn for its green space, valued by the public and the London School of Economics’ (LSE) community. However, there is a request for improved facilities and activities, such as a dog park and sports areas. Enhancing wayfinding and lighting, particularly from Leather Lane to Gray’s Inn Road and around the Charles Dickens Museum, was suggested to improve accessibility. Additionally, there is a strong demand for more green spaces and play areas, especially for children, to address the current limitations of existing playgrounds in the area.

HV5 - Climate Resilience

Support was expressed for the idea of parking removal by some. Others suggested reducing motor vehicle movement to reduce air pollution by signposting parking opportunities.

Hatton Garden

HV1 - Promoting the Jewellery Quarter

There is strong support for initiatives aimed at promoting the Jewellery Quarter to younger generations. Participants praised the vibrant community and small local businesses within the area, expressing frustration that their contributions do not appear to have been fully supported by Council initiatives.

HV2 - Balancing Needs at Leather Lane Market

There is a need to better balance how Leather Lane can support workers and residents equally. Participants suggested expanding the variety of goods offered and addressing the limited operating hours, as well as improving cleanliness after lunch hours. These changes were suggested to enhance the market’s appeal and minimise its impact on local residents.

HV3 - Enhancing Local Recognition and Affordability

Participants called for a greater focus on affordable goods and increased local recognition for areas like Little Italy. Support for local businesses was emphasised as a way to enhance the area’s appeal and contribute to its unique character.

HV4 - Improving Brookes Market and Safety

Feedback on Brookes Market was mixed, with some participants requesting more seating while others raised concerns about anti-social behaviour. Enhancing surveillance and security, along with better wayfinding for cycling routes, were suggested improvements. Additionally, there was a call for the Hatton Garden Business Improvement District (BID) to enhance the area’s gateway.

Concerns about issues of crime and safety in relation to the market were highlighted, along with suggestions to improve the public realm, enhance safety, and foster better collaboration with neighbouring councils to realise Hatton Garden’s potential as a vibrant and inclusive area.

HV6 - Enhancing Community Spaces and Safety in Hatton Garden

There is a strong desire to preserve Hatton Garden’s historical and community identity while addressing modern needs.

HV3 - Community facilities

Participants expressed a need for more private spaces for Muslim communities, noting that existing facilities are too small.

Tottenham Court Road

HV2 - Visitor Experience and Safety

People had mixed opinions on their current visitor experience at Tottenham Court Road. While the modern feel and large screen exhibitions were appreciated by some, others disliked the character and approach.

Recommendations for this area included improving shop offerings and providing more affordable food options. Additionally, commuting experiences varied, with some favouring the quieter streets near the station, while others found the area congested. The restriction of some areas of the street during some times to vehicles including taxis was a significant concern, for some disabled users or those advocating for them. There were widespread calls for enhanced CCTV and security measures to address the high rates of crime and safety issues.

HV4 - Inclusive Public Realm Development

Participants expressed concern that the area south of Tottenham Court Road might be 'overlooked' and disregarded in the current Vision. There were strong suggestions to incorporate this area into the development plan to ensure a thorough and inclusive improvement of the public realm.

High Holborn, Southampton Row and Kingsway

HV1 - Activating Ground Floor Spaces and Bus Stop Locations

It was suggested to activate empty ground-floor office lobbies on New Oxford Street to enhance the area's vibrancy. Concerns were raised about the possible negative impact of bus stop location removal or movement on local businesses, with changes on Southampton Row and at Princess Circus cited as having detrimental effects on footfall and business vitality.

HV2 - Support for Street Stalls Outside Holborn Station

Some participants strongly supported retaining street stalls outside Holborn underground station, with particular emphasis on preserving the popular flower stall.

HV4 - Public Realm, Traffic, Safety, and Street Cleanliness

Support was voiced for public realm changes that improved road safety for cyclists and pedestrians. However, there were concerns about potential impacts on New Oxford Street bus users and mixed reactions to the early ideas from the HLN project around pedestrianisation of a part of New Oxford Street. While there were positive comments on pedestrianisation, significant improvements were requested for the arrival point at Holborn Station to enhance its identity and safety. Additionally, participants stressed the need for better street cleanliness, including more bins, public toilets, and regular maintenance, to avoid a negative first impression.

What did you tell us about the delivery of the Holborn Vision?

Feedback on delivery was more limited than the rest of the Vision but the findings were as follows:

- **Collaboration with Landowners:** Strengthen partnerships to align landowners towards collective sustainable practices and Vision goals.
- **Continued Improved Interdepartmental Collaboration:** Enhance and continue to publicly communicate co-ordination and combined engagement exercises across departments.
- **Community Involvement in Policy Framework Development, Ownership, and Consultation:** Involve the community in shaping policies through consultations and participatory decision-making, increasing relevance and ownership.
- **Beyond Delivery: Maintenance Plans:** Focus on the long-term sustainability of projects by planning for and allocating resources to ongoing maintenance.



Holborn Vision engagement workshop
Urban Symbiotics

04 Statutory Consultation

- Statutory consultees
- Adjoining boroughs

Statutory Consultation

Statutory consultees

We consulted all the required organisations and received consultation responses for the following organisations:

- Natural England
- Historic England
- Transport for London (TfL)
- Gerald Eve
- Camden Cycling Campaign
- Central District Alliance and Hatton Garden BIDs
- Covent Garden Community Association
- St Alban's Church

Adjoining boroughs

Meetings were also held with all adjoining boroughs:

- Westminster City Council
- Islington Council
- The City of London