

HOLBORN VISION AND URBAN STRATEGY

Public Engagement Feedback Summary
Stage 1: Draft Framework Consultation
May-July 2019

Engagement summary

Overview

Camden Council ran a public consultation on the draft Holborn Vision and Urban Strategy between 22 May to 3 July 2019.

The Council published the draft Vision and Urban Strategy document and exhibition material summarising the document, and invited feedback via a questionnaire, in writing or in person. The information was available in Holborn Library and online. There were two public drop-in sessions in Holborn Library with Council officers available to talk people through the consultation material.

There were over 120 responses to the consultation and these have provided a rich source of material to further develop the Vision and Urban Strategy.

What happens next?

The feedback will be used to inform the development of the draft document and there will be a further stage of consultation.

It is the Council's intention that the final version of the document be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The document will therefore have material weight in determining planning applications within the area.



Questionnaire
Available online and at
Holborn Library

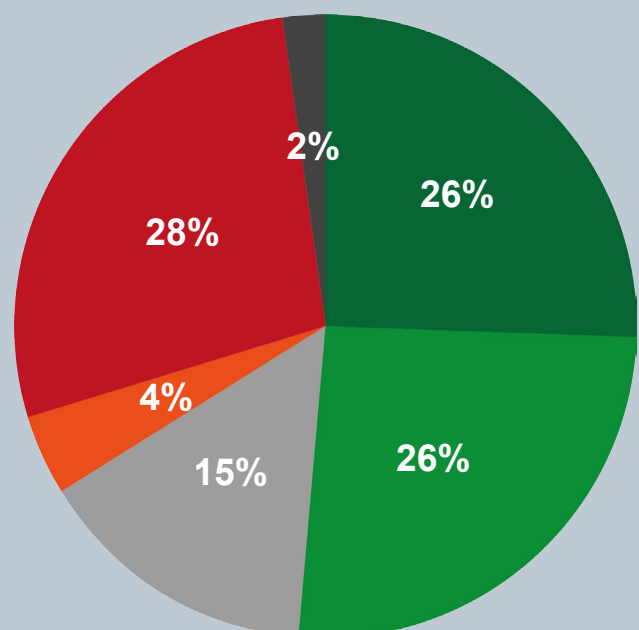


Written feedback
Organisations, businesses
and individual responses



Drop-in events
Thursday 11 June and
Tuesday 20 June 2019

Do you agree with the draft framework's overall approach?



Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree
Disagree Strongly disagree Not answered

What you told us...



Overall approach

There was significant support for the overall approach set out in the draft Holborn Vision and Urban Strategy.



Vision and objectives

Your priorities for the area are clean air, sustainability, safe routes, housing, greener spaces, social and community uses and improved public realm.

You want the vision and objectives to focus more on existing communities.



Museum Quarter

You support the key actions to improve the Museum Quarter area.

Your suggestions for the future of the area were varied. You feel the document could be clearer in what it sets out to achieve.

Some of you were concerned about road access being restricted for essential vehicles and taxis and would like these vehicles to access outside Great Russell Street and the British Museum.

You want a reduction of noise pollution, clearer street signage and wayfinding.



Holborn Gateway

You support the key actions to improve the Holborn Gateway area.

Your suggestions for the future of this area were varied. You would like vehicular access through the area and feel that blocked roads will create congestion elsewhere. There was support for the removal of the gyratory.

You want safe cycle lanes to prevent accidents with other vehicle users.



Holborn to the City

You support the key actions to improve the Holborn to the City area.

You want the issues of crime, noise and anti-social behaviour particularly on Leather Lane and Brook's market to be addressed.

You want Leather Lane market to provide more for local people and feel it is focusses on lunchtime trade.

1 How we engaged

The public consultation was open to local residents, businesses, landowners, workers, community groups and everyone with an interest in the area. A range of consultation techniques were used to engage the public and interested parties, in order to encourage feedback:

- Emails to interested parties
- Advertisement in the Camden New Journal
- Press release sent to a range of local media organisations and published on the Camden website
- Availability of the draft Holborn Vision and Urban Strategy document at Holborn Library
- Public drop-in sessions at Holborn Library
- Questionnaire available at local libraries, drop-in sessions and online
- Dedicated consultation email address
- Dedicated consultation phone number allowing members of the public to speak directly to the team
- Site notices in the local area
- Facebook advertisements
- Public exhibition with a display of the consultation material and copies of the questionnaire at Holborn Library during the duration of the consultation period. The display could be viewed during normal library opening hours.

Drop In sessions

The Council held two staffed public drop-in sessions during the consultation on Thursday 11 June from 1pm to 4pm and Thursday 20 June from 5pm to 8pm. The sessions were held in Holborn Library and attended by over 60 people. The sessions enabled in-depth discussions about the area and provided officers with a rich source of feedback to further develop the Council's vision for this diverse and important area.



Public exhibition at Holborn Library

2 Summary of questionnaire responses

A questionnaire was designed to capture feedback on the draft Vision and Urban Strategy. This was available online at www.camden.gov.uk/holbornvision.

Paper copies were available at Holborn Library and at the drop-in sessions. Questionnaire responses could be submitted electronically via the Camden consultation portal and in paper form via a collection box at Holborn Library.

Methodology

Camden Council conducted the analysis and reporting of the consultation responses.

Not every respondent answered all of the questions or ranked all of the options when expressing preferences.

Qualitative responses were categorised and divided into themes. Responses received by email and in writing were also included into the categories and themes. Due to the numbers and range of responses received only the most common responses are shown in this summary report. All responses have, however, been considered in the consultation.

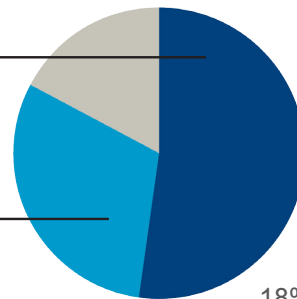
Who responded?



55%
of respondents were local residents



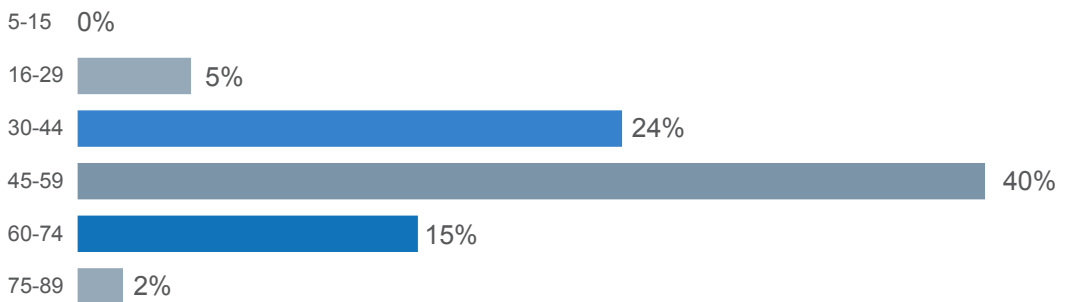
32%
of respondents were local businesses



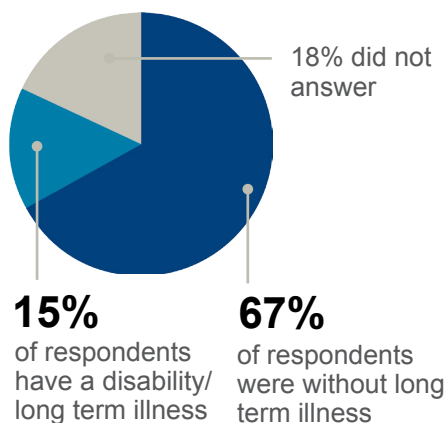
18% did not answer



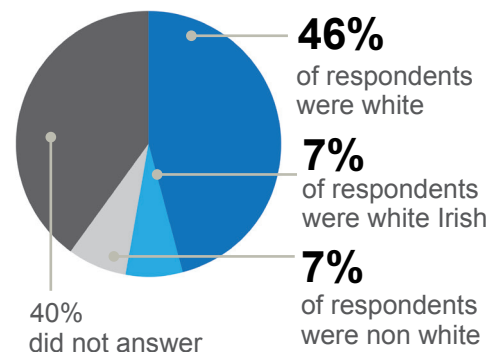
AGE



HEALTH



ETHNICITY

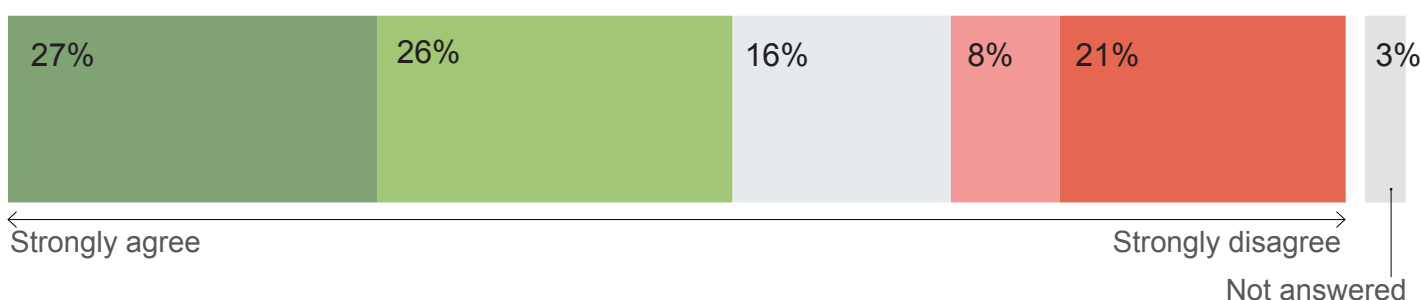


Question 1: Vision

Vision statement:

Holborn will build on its strengths as a gateway for business in the capital that is open to all whilst creating a more vibrant and well-connected neighbourhood in the heart of Central London. A rejuvenated public realm will create places of social, cultural and economic activity to harness the benefits of the area's world-class institutions and rich heritage. The area will be a safe place to walk and cycle that connects to key surrounding destinations. Its new high quality public realm will be complimented by new, high quality development, homes and transport infrastructure. Holborn will be at the forefront of the Mayor's ambitious clean air targets to lead the way in delivering sustainable growth for future generations.

Q1a. Do you agree with the emerging vision for the future of Holborn?



Commentary

Q1a. The majority of respondents (52%) agreed to the emerging vision for the future of Holborn, and of these 28% strongly agreed. Although significantly fewer respondents disagreed to the emerging vision for the future of Holborn (29%), a large proportion of these (21%) strongly disagreed.

Q1b. When asked about what the priorities should be for the future of Holborn, the top six most stated were: clean air and sustainability, safe pedestrian and cycling, housing especially affordable, green space and urban greening, social and community uses, improved public realm.

Q1c. The more detailed responses to this question were varied. A large proportion of respondents would like the Vision and Urban Strategy to show support for existing communities and felt that it focuses too strongly on new businesses, business development and routes through the area. A significant number of respondents welcome the proposals particularly the encouragement of active travel. There were also a significant number of respondents who would like to see less traffic and fewer vehicles in the area.

Q1b. To help us develop the vision further, please tell us your priorities for the future of Holborn



Top 6 priorities in order:

1. Clean air and sustainability - 57
2. Safe pedestrian and cycling – 55
3. Housing especially affordable – 47
4. Green space and urban greening – 38
5. Social and community – 31
6. Improved public realm - 30

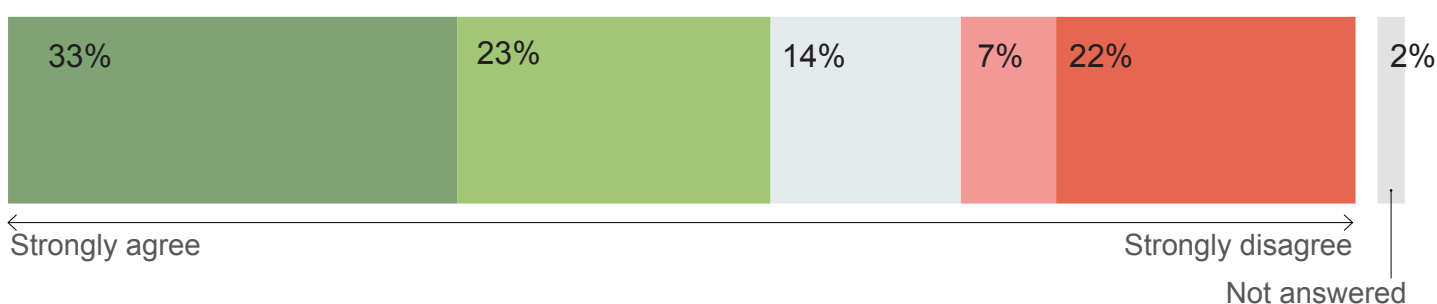
Question 2: Objectives

The draft Holborn Vision and Urban Strategy sets out a number of objectives for the area based around business, heritage, travel and the community.

The primary objectives aim to achieve the following 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

Q2a. Do you agree with the objectives for the future of Holborn?



The majority of respondents agreed (55%) with the objectives for the future of Holborn (Q2a), with a significant proportion (33%) strongly agreeing. Although fewer respondents disagreed overall with the objectives (29%), a large proportion of these strongly disagreed (22%).

Q2b. Do you have any other comments about the objectives for the future of Holborn?

The more detailed responses to this question were varied. A significant proportion of respondents mentioned that the objectives should consider the needs and provision for existing local residents including educational provision.

A number of respondents were concerned about pedestrian and cycle conflict, and want to ensure pedestrian comfort is not compromised.

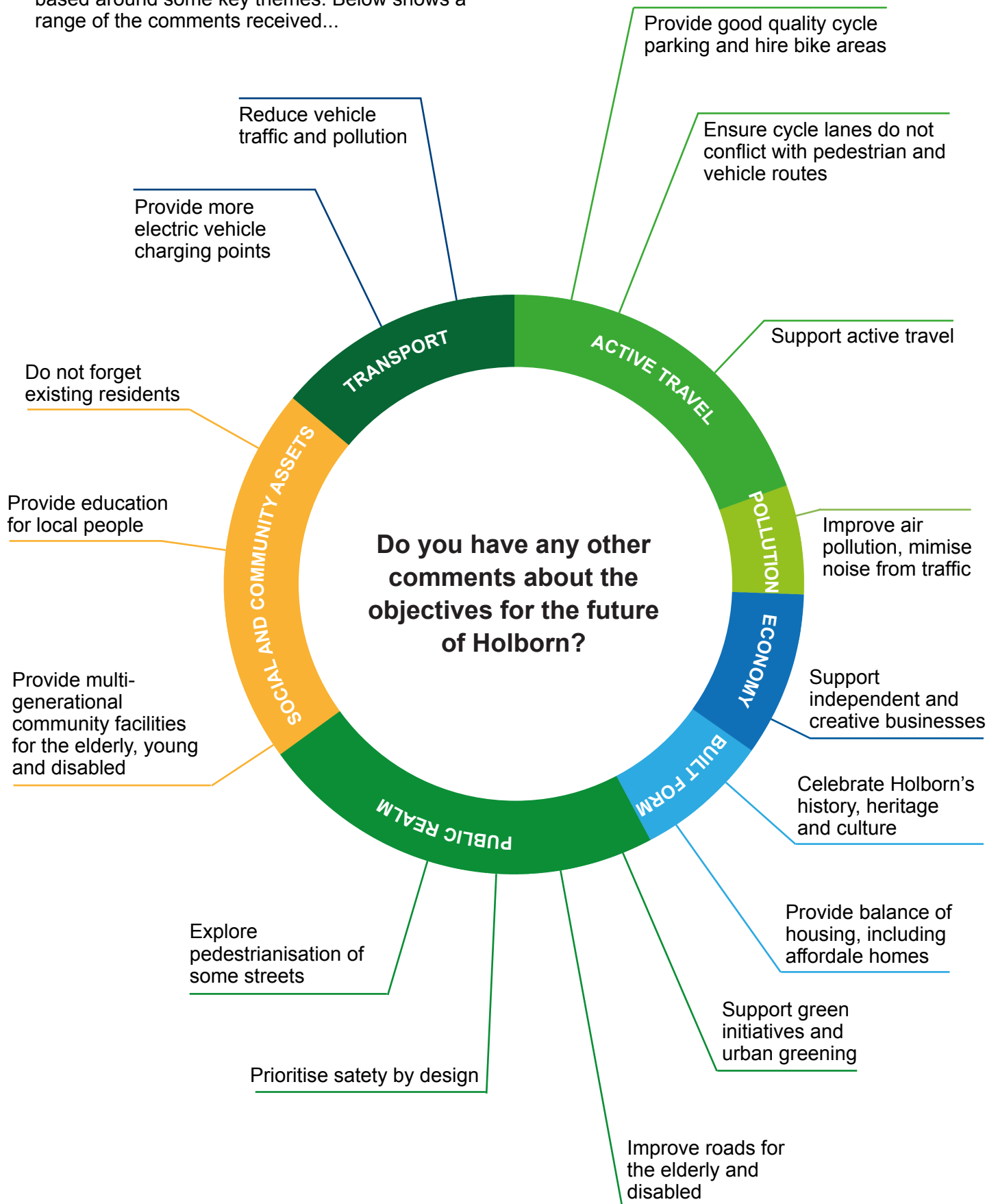
There were many responses expressing support for green initiatives including urban greening.

Several respondents showed support for small independent creative businesses.

“ Decluttering is essential for a more friendly pedestrian environment ”

“ We need spaces where all sections of communities can mingle ”

There were many reponses relating to the objectives based around some key themes. Below shows a range of the comments received...



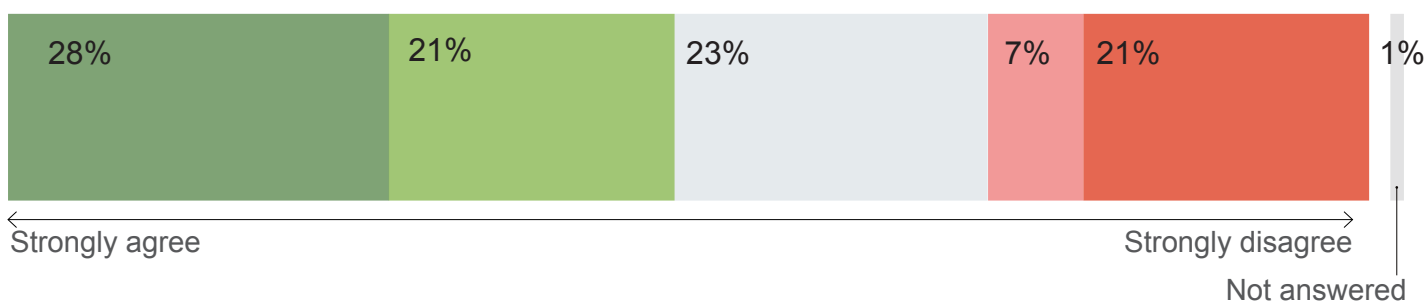
Question 3: Museum Quarter

This section sets out the urban strategy for Holborn. It takes a closer look at the three key areas setting out the opportunities and providing guidance.

For Museum Quarter, key actions include:

- Continue the public realm enhancements underway through the West End Project through the Holborn area.
- Encourage redevelopment of the Travelodge site in a manner that makes the maximum possible contribution to delivering the vision and objectives for Holborn
- Camden to work with partners to explore opportunities for public realm and way finding projects to support the areas residents and visitors, including the area around the British Museum and connections to Covent Garden.

Q3a. Do you agree with these key actions to improve the Museum Quarter area?



The majority of respondents (49%) agree with the key actions to improve the Museum Quarter area, of which (28%) strongly agreed. Although fewer respondents disagreed overall with the key actions to the Museum Quarter area, a large proportion of these strongly disagreed (21%).

Q3b. Do you have any other suggestions for the future of the Museum Quarter?

The more detailed responses to this question were varied. A significant number of respondents thought the Vision and Urban Strategy is unclear in what it sets out to achieve.

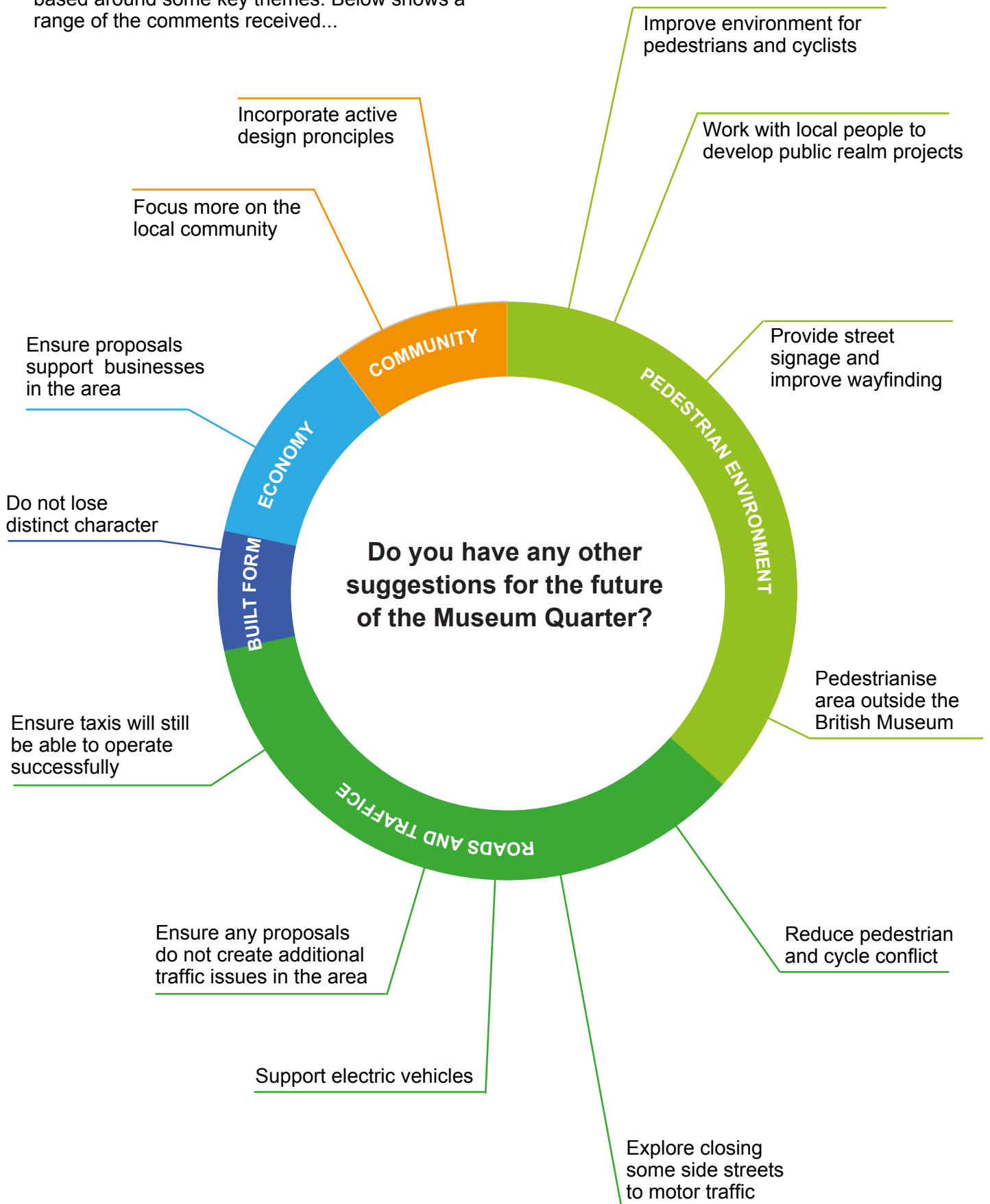
There were a number of respondents who were concerned about vehicular road access being restricted including for taxis, which could affect those unable to engage in active travel and potentially create queues of traffic elsewhere.

Several respondents emphasised support to improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists with some suggesting to pedestrianise and only allow essential vehicle access outside Great Russell Street and the British Museum.

There were some comments to reduce noise pollution, provide clearer street signage and wayfinding and to provide more focus on the local community.

“ The Museum Quarter must continue to be a place where local people can live ”

There were many reponses relating to the objectives based around some key themes. Below shows a range of the comments received...



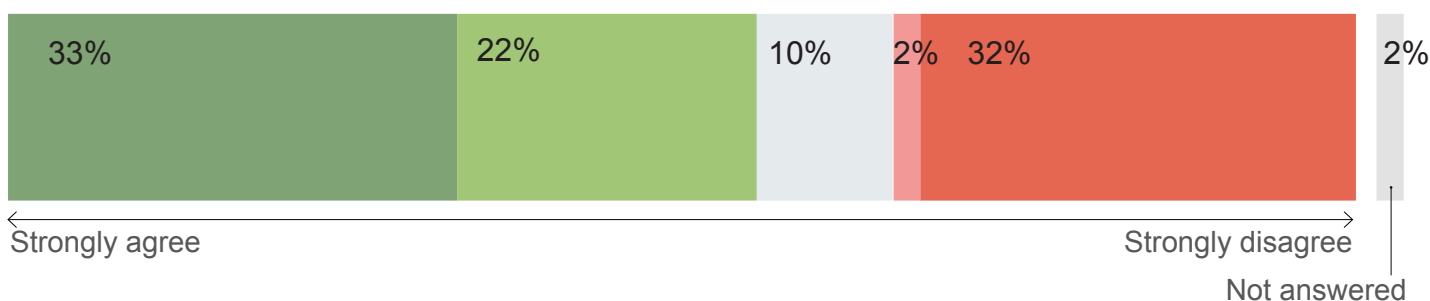
Question 4: Holborn Gateway

This section sets out the urban strategy for Holborn. It takes a closer look at the three key areas setting out the opportunities and providing guidance.

For Holborn Gateway, key actions include:

- Remove the gyratory to create the much needed extra capacity for active travel, improved air quality and provide an important catalyst for enhanced public realm.
- The new tube entrance at Procter Street can create a new arrival space and identity for Holborn. The Council, LU, TfL and landowners/developers should work together to maximise the public realm benefits.
- Encourage redevelopment of the large and prominent former University of the Arts site.

Q4a. Do you agree with with these key actions to improve the Holborn Gateway area?



The majority of respondents agreed (54%) with the key actions to improve Holborn Gateway area, and the largest share of these (33%) strongly agreed. Although a much smaller proportion of respondents disagreed (34%) with the key actions to improve Holborn Gateway area, a large proportion of these (32%) strongly disagreed.

Q4b. Do you have any other suggestions for the future of the Holborn Gateway area?

The more detailed responses to this question were varied. A significant proportion of respondents would like vehicular access throughout the area and feel that any blocked roads will create congestion elsewhere.

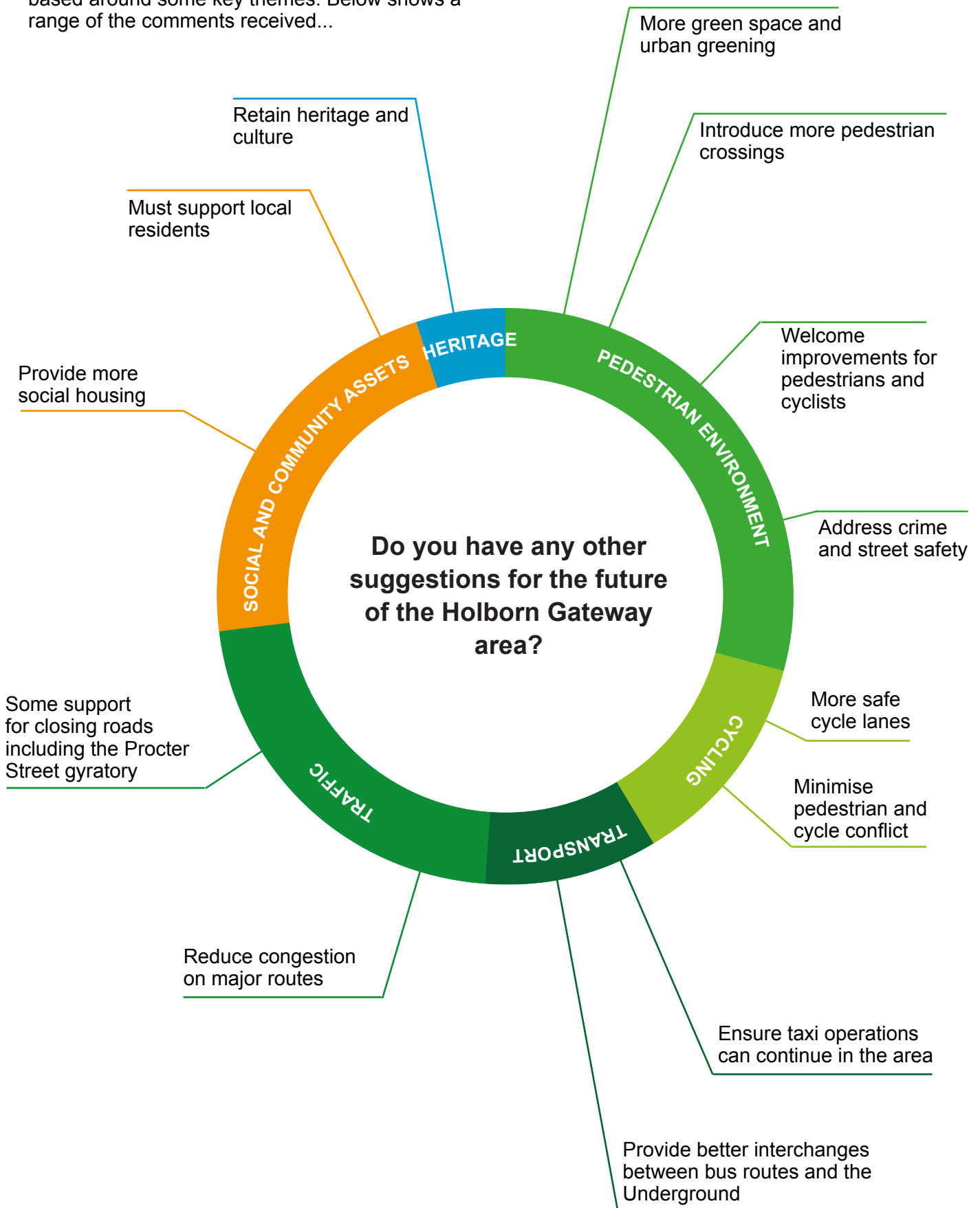
There were a number of comments supporting active travel with a significant proportion requesting safe cycle lanes to prevent accidents with other vehicle users.

Some respondents to this question also expressed their lack of support for the vision and urban strategy feeling that it might not focus on improving the quality of life for local residents.

“ ***The air quality is terrible, and the area is a health risk. All plans for improvement are most welcome!*** ”

“ ***The removal of the gyratory system is long overdue*** ”

There were many reponses relating to the objectives based around some key themes. Below shows a range of the comments received...



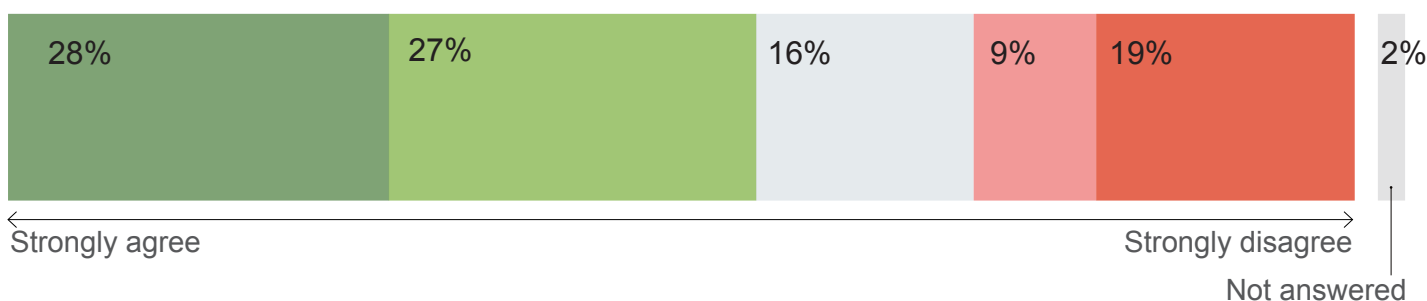
Question 5: Holborn to the City

This section sets out the urban strategy for Holborn. It takes a closer look at the three key areas setting out the opportunities and providing guidance.

For Holborn to the City, key actions include:

- Encourage new development of high quality modern design that is sensitive to context to reverse the process of erosion of historic character and identity
- Address issue of open space deprivation by creating new improved public space at Brooke's Market
- Improve quality of public realm, including de-cluttering and provision of seating to support the ongoing success of the Leather Lane food market

Q5a. Do you agree with these key actions to improve the Holborn to the City area?



A significant majority of respondents (49%) agreed with the key actions to improve the Museum Quarter area, and the majority (28%) strongly agreed. Although a much smaller proportion of respondents disagreed (28%) with the key actions to improve Holborn to the City area, a large proportion of these (19%) strongly disagreed.

Q5b. Do you have any other suggestions for the future of the Holborn to the City area?

In the more detailed responses to this question a significant proportion of respondents mentioned the issues of crime, noise and anti-social behaviour particularly on Leather Lane and Brook's market, and would like these issues to be addressed. The respondents feel that to 'make them over' and provide seating will be to benefit non-residents and will in turn attract more crime and anti-social behaviour. In addition several respondents feel seating on Leather Lane will impinge movement.

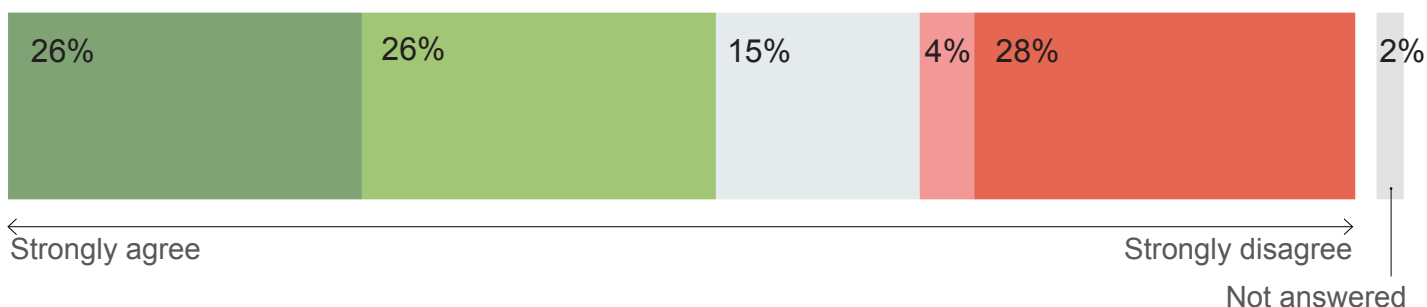
A significant number of respondents would like Leather Lane market to provide more for local people and feel that it focuses too much on lunchtime trade. Issues were raised about the impact of the market in terms of mess and disturbance.

There were many reponses relating to the objectives based around some key themes. Below shows a range of the comments received...



Question 6: Overall approach

Q6a. Do you agree with the overall approach set out in the draft Holborn Vision and Urban Strategy?



Commentary

The majority of respondents to this question (51%) agreed with the overall approach set out in the draft Holborn Vision and Urban Strategy, with 26% strongly agreeing. A significantly less proportion of respondents disagreed (32%) but most (28%) strongly disagreed.

Question 7: Any other comments...

There were a large number of additional comments received covering a number of themes, including green space, public realm and roads

“ At last Holborn is being given some consideration in its own right ”

“ Retain the history of the area including important institutions, buildings and pubs ”

“ There should be a clear focus on the current resident population and improving their living conditions and opportunities ”

“ Reduce pollution and improve air quality in the area ”

“ The document should aspire to do more for existing residents ”

“ Provide community centres, projects and sports facilities ”

3 Summary of organisational responses

Several organisations and bodies issued a formal response. Some of the key comments received are summarised below.

Bee Midtown

BEE Midtown fully supports the objectives of establishing Holborn as a leading centre for business. In particular, BEE Midtown is keen to support the growth of active ground floor use, to increase dwell time and help the district prosper. BEE Midtown believes that the focus of the urban strategy is crucial for promoting more sustainable modes of transport. Although this vision for Holborn is crucial, our area can only continue to grow if this investment is matched as part of wider transport infrastructure improvements. Including upgrade of Holborn Underground Station and removal of gyratory creating the much-needed extra capacity for active travel and improved air quality

Bloomsbury Association

The Bloomsbury Association noted that this is a broad based planning strategy and its boundaries should be more rationally defined with a stringer focus on context. Its priorities should be more clearly focused on Holborn's specific neighbourhoods and character areas. Consideration should be given to local businesses and residents as well as priority projects including those that address public realm, air quality, and environmental issues.

Camden Cycling Campaign (CCC)

The CCC fully supports the aims of the Holborn Vision and Urban Strategy as well as Liveable Neighbourhoods project. Particularly in relation to such interventions as removing gyratory, introducing further cycling infrastructure, and supporting active travel.

City of London (CoL)

The City of London welcomes LB Camden's draft Holborn Vision & Urban Strategy document. It presents an attractive future for an already very attractive area with strong potential to improve. The challenges - especially in terms of vehicle and road dominance and lack of public and green space - are well described and solutions outlined are appropriate to the challenges faced. It highlights various strategies and projects within the CoL that are close to the Holborn area and that the HVUS could support.

Hatton Garden Business Improvement District (BID)

The Hatton Garden BID believes the vision provides a great opportunity for change and could go further. The area has a very distinct character and must be reflected in the plans. Hatton Garden as a road also has many opportunities for regeneration, development and general improvement. Amongst many opportunities, is the chance to introduce traffic calming measures. Hatton Garden as a road needs specific measures to protect its heritage, which needs to be added to this plan. Air quality, waste and the environment in general is high on the priority list for the BID and its businesses. More should be said on this. Overall, the vision has good elements in it, but should go further to address public realm issues.

Historic England

Historic England welcomes and supports the document. Given the sensitivity across the Holborn area, it is important that the document helps to ensure that new development responds to and respects existing character and distinctiveness in the area.

Holborn Community Association (HCA)

Overall the purpose, intent and potential for positive change and regeneration behind the Holborn Vision and Strategy is welcomed by the HCA. In broad terms HCA would argue that the draft materials seen so far place too much emphasis on the needs of 'business' to the detriment of the resident community. A number of detailed comments were made around four themes: nature, open spaces and physical activity; genuinely mixed use space; public realm and public spaces; and drawing on local resources.

London Cycling Campaign (LCC)

The LCC supports the strategy and states it represents a viable and positive vision for the future of the area for walking, cycling and public transport supported as it should lead to high quality schemes to specifically improve walking, cycling and public transport in the area. It refers to other live and forthcoming schemes locally and London-wide that the Vision could help to support, improving cycle safety in central areas of London.

London Property Alliance (LPA)

The LPA strongly supports Camden's vision and commitment to transform the Holborn area which is a strategic gateway, with an emerging identity of its own which has the potential to be further harnessed, which we believe your Vision aspires to. We support Camden's vision to continue to promote it as a key location within central London, creating a place where businesses and institutions want to locate, stay and grow, creating jobs and opportunities. Mentions improving connections, public realm measures including removal of gyratory, and providing a mix of uses including commercial space.

Rugby & Harpur Residents Association

The HRA responded with a number of questions relating to a range of issues. Some of these lie beyond planning policy, and many relate to the impact on existing residents in the area.

Transport for London (TfL)

TfL broadly supports the draft SPD, as overall it aligns well with TfL's current priorities, and the transport-related policies in the draft new London Plan. It would like to ensure that the Healthy Streets Approach in Holborn and its built environment is embedded in the document so that it supports and reflects the Mayor's Transport Strategy. It goes on to mention specific public transport issues in detail as well as support for transformative works to Procter Street, and the future aspiration to upgrade Holborn underground station.

West End Partnership

The Good Growth Task Group welcomes the publication of the draft Holborn Vision & Urban Strategy. The document should emphasise more strongly the links between Holborn and the West End. The Vision and four draft objectives are supported but could be phrased more strongly to acknowledge that Holborn's influence goes beyond the borough boundary, and should address how this links with proposals in Westminster. This Vision and Urban Strategy should recognise that it is part of a comprehensive set of proposals for the wider West End.

REGENERATION
AND
PLACE

