



# Vision for Soho

## FAQs

### 1. What is the Vision for Soho?

- a. The Vision for Soho aims to develop **a vision statement, set of objectives, and a holistic set of projects (mostly focused upon the public realm)** that will address current and emerging pressures facing Soho, to ensure Soho's future is equal to its incredible past. To do this, we are working with Soho's communities, listening to aspirations, concerns, and ideas, and building off the wealth of past work that has been produced for Soho.

The Vision for Soho is led by Westminster City Council (WCC) Place Shaping team, who comprise Architects, Landscape Architects, Urban Designers, Masterplanners, Town Planners and Placemakers.

The Place Shaping team began work on the Vision for Soho in 2019, prior to a pause in the project due to Covid-19, and will be the design lead, as well as responsible for the management of the project. They are supported by Kanda, who will be leading on community engagement, and Norman Rourke Pryme (NRP) who will advise on transport and movement solutions.

### 2. Why is this worth my time?

- a. This is an opportunity for you to have a say in the future of Soho, helping to shape how it functions, and ensuring its future is as incredible as its past.

As Soho continues to evolve with new trends, economies, and experiences, with planned London wide projects such as the Elizabeth Line and the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) changing the way we move, and with the devastating impacts of COVID-19, we need to ensure the changes that will occur in Soho's future enhance, rather than compromise, its incredible spirit.

With many different people loving Soho for many different reasons your aspirations, ideas and concerns are what will make the Vision for Soho a vital plan to enhance the spirit of Soho in the future.

### 3. How is the Vision for Soho different from the Soho Neighbourhood Plan?

- a. The Soho Neighbourhood Plan was produced by the Soho Neighbourhood Forum. It is a statutory policy document that forms part of the development plan for Soho. It has been created to ensure Soho's communities have a say in the policies and statutory process that will affect the future of Soho.



The Vision for Soho is not a statutory document, and as such can be more dynamic and can easily evolve with the neighbourhood, and the aspirations of Soho's communities. Largely focused on Soho's public realm, it will build upon the Soho Neighbourhood Plan, and the wishes of Soho's communities, to take aspiration forward and deliver upon it.

For more information about the Soho Neighbourhood Plan, please visit <https://planforsoho.org/>

#### **4. How will the Vision for Soho be used to guide Soho's future?**

- a. The Vision for Soho will sit alongside the Soho Neighbourhood Plan and together will provide a comprehensive plan for Soho's future, with both bodies of work being developed by Soho's communities, for Soho's communities. The Neighbourhood Plan will act as the community's statutory voice, while the Vision for Soho will be the community's proactive voice of action that will help guide Council's approach and future investment in the neighbourhood.

Moreover, the Vision for Soho, as well as the Soho Neighbourhood Plan must be read and considered alongside all existing WCC policies, strategies, and commitments. These plans do not remove the need for Planning or Licensing permissions in Soho.

#### **5. Is this a consultation specifically about the future of the temporary Al-fresco schemes that were in Soho?**

- a. No. The temporary al-fresco schemes that was developed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to allow Soho businesses to trade in accordance with government restrictions came to an end on 30 September 2021. We can consider what worked, and what didn't work, and if requested by Soho's communities, we can consider options towards a more sustainable outdoor dining experience in Soho, that balances other uses and pressures.

#### **6. How is the Vision for Soho being developed and what is the timeline?**

- a. To develop the Vision for Soho, we are consulting extensively with the local community to understand aspirations for Soho and where opportunities exist to improve the area, building upon existing studies and research including the Soho Neighbourhood Plan.

The first and second phase of consultation has already been completed and included a series of meetings with local stakeholders, in-person and virtual workshops, pop-ups in Berwick Street Market, and online surveys.



You can find all materials, and copies of the consultation reports produced for each phase [here](#).

Phase three of the Vision for Soho will commence on 9<sup>th</sup> November and run until 19<sup>th</sup> November. After this, a formal consultation period will run between 29<sup>th</sup> November and 16<sup>th</sup> January.

In late January 2022, a full report outlining the full Vision for Soho process, as well as the finding of the formal consultation period will be made available. There may be further consultation on specific projects as and when they come forward.

## **7. What about past studies and plans for Soho? What happens to them?**

- a. All past studies and plans are being reviewed and being considered for inclusion into the Vision for Soho. This includes public realm studies, traffic studies, and previous plans that were produced. While we accept that aspects of some of this work may be out of date, we are confident that most of this work will still have value. Any work that we feel could address existing aspirations or issues within Soho will be presented to Soho's communities for consideration for inclusion within the Vision for Soho.

## **8. How can I get involved, and who can be involved?**

- a. Everyone who is a resident, worker, visitor or has an interest in Soho can have their say and provide feedback. To get involved please monitor our website [visionforsoho.co.uk](http://visionforsoho.co.uk) or email the project team at [visionforsoho@kandaconsulting.co.uk](mailto:visionforsoho@kandaconsulting.co.uk)

## **9. What is being done to encourage Soho's communities to get involved with this process?**

- a. We have undertaken an extensive consultation process, with the first phase of consultation taking place during July and August 2021. The consultation took place as a series of meetings with key local stakeholders, a series of in-person and virtual workshops, and pop-ups in Berwick Street Market over a four-week period. The consultation was promoted via the council's existing networks and further activities from the first phase included:
  - A flyer promoting the consultation sent via Royal Mail to 4,369 addresses in Soho
  - A social media campaign on Facebook, with a reach of 24,128 people, advertising the virtual workshop sessions and the opportunity to provide feedback via the consultation website
  - 2 in-person workshops with 35 attendees across both sessions with 60 people having signed up to attend the sessions
  - 2 virtual workshops with 35 attendees across both sessions
  - 12 meetings with local stakeholder groups



- 2 pop-ups on Berwick Street Market with 87 people engaging across both sessions
- A consultation website – [VisionforSoho.co.uk](http://VisionforSoho.co.uk).

Promotion for the second round of consultation included:

- A flyer promoting the consultation sent via Royal Mail to 4,369 addresses in Soho
- A social media campaign on Facebook, with a reach of 37,533 people, advertising the virtual workshop sessions and the opportunity to provide feedback via the consultation website
- 2 in-person workshops with 60 attendees across both sessions with 64 people having signed up to attend the sessions, those placed on the waiting list attended after some people who had signed up could no longer attend
- 2 virtual workshops with 28 attendees across both sessions
- 2 meetings with local stakeholder groups
- 1 pop-up on Berwick Street Market
- A consultation website – [VisionforSoho.co.uk](http://VisionforSoho.co.uk) which has been viewed by 708 visitors at the time of writing with an online survey that has been completed by 291 respondees.

We are aware that a number of flyers did not arrive, and we are looking into this with our distribution partners. If you would like to have your say on our plans or get in touch with the project team, please email [visionforsoho@kandaconsulting.co.uk](mailto:visionforsoho@kandaconsulting.co.uk). We will also (where possible) leave flyers in key locations around soho for people to pick up and find out more.

#### **10. How can I stay informed with the progress of the Vision for Soho?**

- a. This website is the best place to stay up to date with the latest developments for the Vision for Soho. We will also send flyers in the post to ensure those without the internet are kept up to date with upcoming events also.