

Walkable London

Exploring the relation between human & commercial activity and area's pedestrianization level

What can data tell about the effects of pedestrianization: fueling centralities and local economy or, otherwise, leading to inner periphery emergence and real estate degradation?

The presented analysis is the data-driven argument for the walkability increase in several areas in central London presented by Zaha Hadid Architects in collaboration with Habidatum. We compiled and processed urban data to study the interconnections of pedestrianization and socio-economic trends.

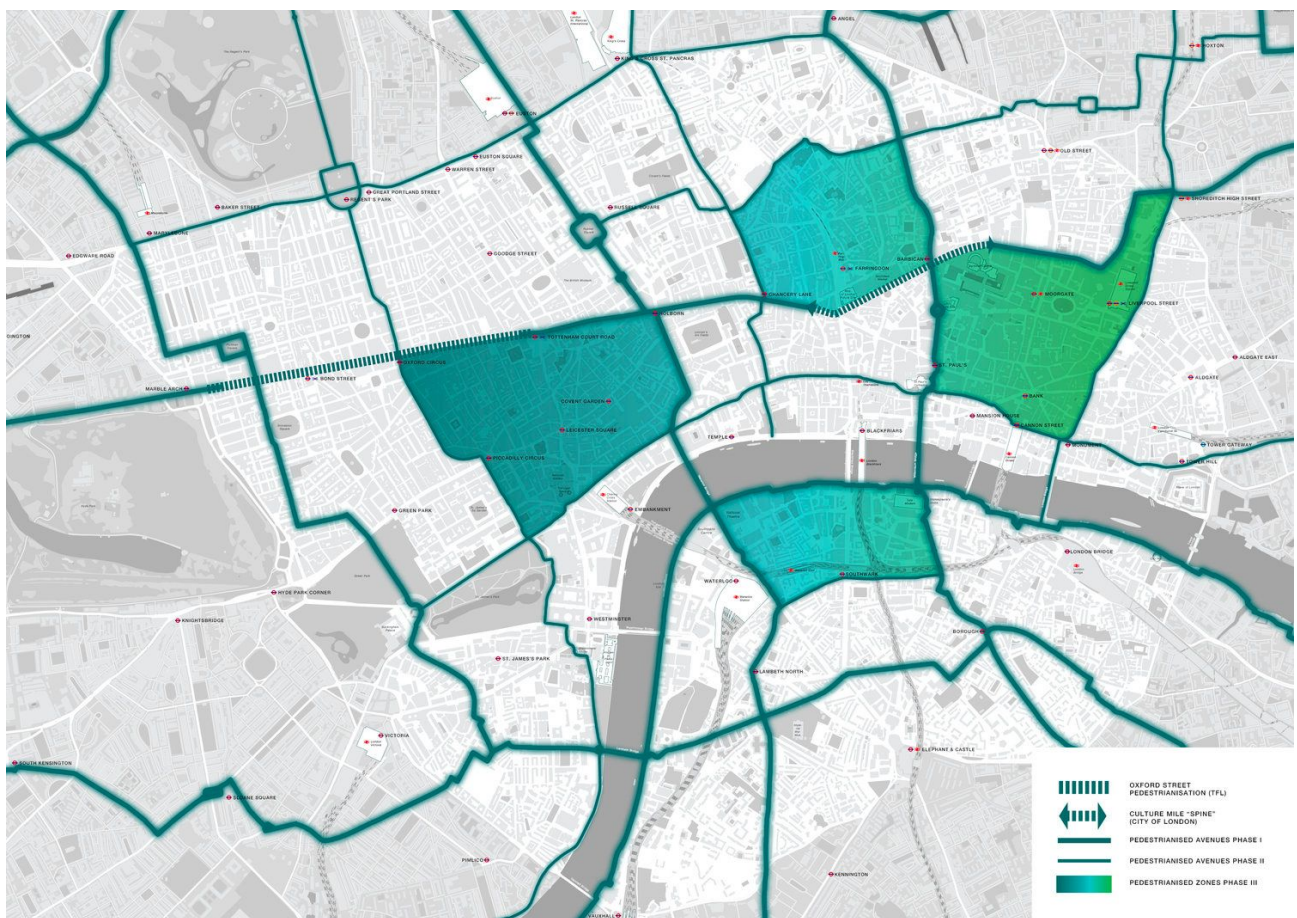


Fig. 1. Zones and avenues proposed to be pedestrianized.

Open data for human mobility (social media data) and business operations is used in order to compare happiness and activity, commercial density and diversity, and the length of pedestrian streets across London.

As a result, we found areas with high social and commercial activity but not many pedestrian streets. These places are supposed to have a strong basis for walkability as it

is expected to increase people's activity and support commercial development there. The performed data analysis helps assess the existing conditions of such locations and select the appropriate scope of pedestrianization to manage its future effects to enhance the growth of local centres.

London: through the lens of data

Together with Zaha Hadid Architects we are promoting the use of urban data across the urban planning, design and architecture fields. The Walkable London project highlights the potential for these new methods for exploring and interpreting the effects of design decisions on all aspects of urban life.

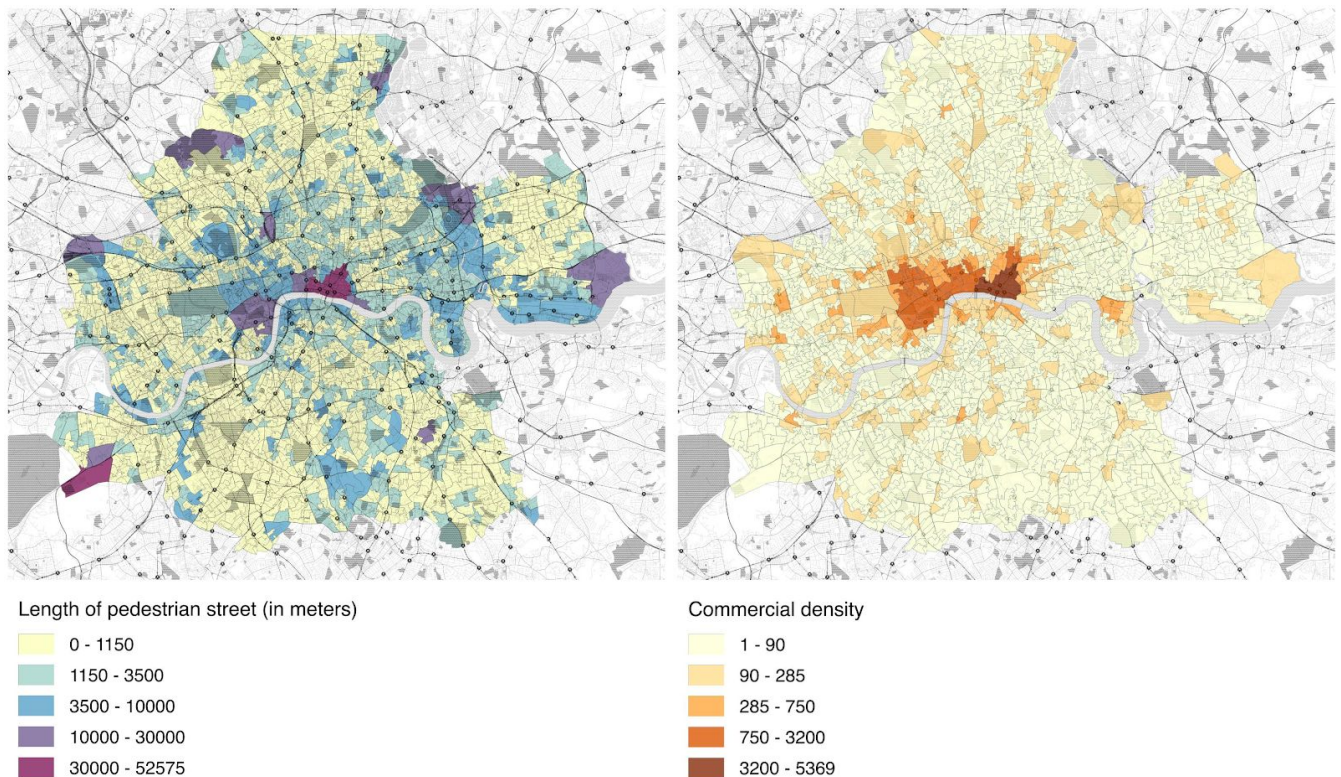


Fig. 2. Most pedestrianized and commercially diverse areas: length of pedestrian streets in comparison to the number of businesses there.

The project is the the London-wide study of the interconnections between pedestrianization and socio-economic trends, with a focus on the areas where the Walkable London concepts are introduced. Using data on human activity and business operation we compare three metrics across London: social media activity, commercial density & diversity and pedestrianization rate (the length of pedestrian streets per LSOA¹).

¹ LSOA – a Lower Layer Super Output Area, a geographic hierarchy designed to report small area statistics in England and Wales.

