

MAYOR OF LONDON

Karen Buck MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Our ref: MGLA220219-6275

Date: 13 MAR 2019

Acar Karen,

Thank you for your email of 21 February about the site at Royal Oak.

Victoria Coach Station (VCS) has provided a vital service for over 80 years. However, from 2023, parts of the site are expected to become unavailable due to the expiry of leases.

Because Transport for London (TfL) has limited power over coach services in London any facility must be attractive to both coach operators and passengers. As there are no rules or regulations governing where coaches stop, if the site is not attractive it runs the risk of many coaches dropping off in central London's already heavily congested and polluted streets, rather than at a dedicated facility. This brings with it road safety risks and environmental concerns.

This is why my Transport Strategy makes clear that any new coach facility must to be well-connected to London's public transport system, while reducing pollution and keeping coaches moving safely and efficiently.

TfL has been exploring a number of different sites across London for potential new coach facilities and has looked at operating VCS on a reduced footprint. Given the complexities of coach operations in London, this has been a substantial piece of work.

One possible location TfL had been looking at for a partial replacement to VCS is the site at Royal Oak, as part of a mixed-use development. This location was considered worthy of further consideration due to its direct connections to the A40 – one of London's primary coach corridors – which would mean significantly reduced coach movements through the heart of Westminster.

On further investigation, the site at Royal Oak presented significant challenges, relating to the day to day operation of the site and viability. TfL has therefore decided not to take forward plans for a coach station at Royal Oak. TfL will instead develop alternative mixed-use proposals for the site, which do not include a coach facility. Any future plans will of course be subject to extensive community consultation and engagement with the borough and local stakeholders.

With respect to the expiry of leases covering parts of the site at VCS, TfL will continue to investigate other options for providing the coach facilities that London requires.

MAYOR OF LONDON

My Deputy Mayor for Transport, Heidi Alexander, shared with me the concerns of your constituents about siting a coach facility at Royal Oak following your meeting on 22 January. I trust this is a satisfactory outcome for you and your constituents.

I am copying this letter to the Leader of Westminster City Council and other Westminster Councillors, who have also been in touch with me about this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

Cc: Cllr Nickie Aiken, Leader of the Council, City of Westminster
Cllr Adam Hug, Leader of the Labour Group, City of Westminster
Cllr Maggie Carman, City of Westminster
Tony Devenish AM, Greater London Authority