



## Taxi and Private Hire Guidance for Developers

Taxis and private hire vehicles make a valuable contribution to public transport in London, enabling short trips to be made efficiently, often when time is at a premium. They are important for the business community, tourists, shoppers and leisure visitors. Many women feel more secure using taxi services, which take them door-to-door at night. Taxis also provide door-to-door transport for disabled and mobility impaired people.

Transport for London (TfL) sets regulations and policies for taxi (black cab) and private hire (minicab and chauffeur) services to protect customers, and ensure vehicles are safe, accessible and meet strict environmental standards. We are responsible for licensing all taxi drivers and vehicles, and private hire operators, drivers and vehicles in London. We also set the requirements for licensing to ensure that we maintain the highest standards possible in both industries.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to developers, borough planning officers and other relevant parties who are carrying out works on the public highway or private land where works might impact existing taxi rank facilities or where there is an opportunity to incorporate provision for taxi ranks. Taxis can use ranks to ply for hire and pick up passengers – this is in contrast to private hire vehicles, who do not require ranks because all private hire journeys must be booked in advance of the journey via an operator.

It is important that all developments and regeneration proposals take into consideration taxi and private hire services and facilities. It is also important that engagement with TfL's Taxi and Private Hire Ranks and Infrastructure team takes place at the initial stages of a project to ensure that the facilities provided are suitable and to avoid additional complications or expenses as a result of having to incorporate facilities at a later stage.

### Taxi Ranks

The Capital's taxis are iconic, recognised by Londoners and visitors alike as being part of the city's fabric. Around 70 million taxi journeys are completed every year in London, with more than one-third of these starting from a taxi rank. As well as helping passengers get to their destination safely, these trips also contribute to the Capital's growing economy.

At TfL, we have appointed in excess of 600 taxi ranks in London, meeting demand for taxi services from railway stations, hotels and night time hot spots, among others. London has one of the most accessible taxi fleets in the world and ranks are particularly important for disabled passengers as they allow wheelchairs to be loaded safely. Late night taxi ranks also play an important role in passenger security by offering safe travel at locations which may be less well served by other forms of transport.

TfL is responsible for appointing taxi ranks in all London boroughs except for the City of London, where ranks are normally appointed by the City of London Police.

TfL is committed to ensuring that London's taxi rank network continues to improve to meet the evolving needs of passengers and drivers. This includes protecting existing taxi ranks when new schemes or changes are proposed and also increasing the number of taxi ranks. We've published a [Ranks Action Plan](#) setting out plans to enhance the taxi rank network and ensure that taxi ranks remain an integrated part of the transport system across the Capital. Furthermore, in the Mayor's Taxi and Private Hire Action the Mayor has stated his commitment to deliver the Ranks Action Plan and "*create a vibrant taxi and private hire market*" in the Capital.

It is a key part of the Mayor's Transport Strategy to increase the number of accessible ranks across the Capital and to address the high emissions issues.

There are different kinds of taxi ranks, including working ranks, rest and refreshment ranks, and ranks that only operate at certain times of day.

When designing new taxi ranks it is important that:

- Passengers board on the nearside of the taxi, as this is the side with the wheelchair ramp and other accessibility features
- The front of the rank is close to the main exit from the building/interchange that the rank serves
- The front of the taxi and the TAXI light is visible as passengers exit the building/interchange the rank serves
- The rank has a sufficient number of spaces. Where space is restricted then a taxi rank can be split into different sections
- The rank meets TfL's taxi rank accessibility standards
- Consideration is given to a dedicated rank position for Zero Emission Capable vehicles with the supporting infrastructure required to service the fleet such as rapid charge points

The provision of rank space for taxis should be considered at the inception of a scheme and during all stages of the design and approval process. This is to ensure that space is available and that the location of the taxi rank will work for both passengers and drivers, ensuring the level of service provided meets the expected customer demand.

We can also appoint taxi ranks that only operate at certain times or on certain days. For example, a late night taxi rank can be appointed which supports the night time economy.

Further information about taxi ranks is available in the following documents:

- Taxi Ranks at Major Interchanges – Best Practice Guidelines
- [Ranks Action Plan 2015](#)
- [Mayor's Transport Strategy](#) (MTS)

- [Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan 2016](#)

Where there are multiple demands on kerbside space or other spaces then this should be discussed with TfL's Taxi and Private Hire Ranks and Infrastructure team to assess what taxi rank spaces or other facilities can be provided, and how to maximise accessibility.

### **Drop-off and pick-up areas**

Taxis and private hire vehicles can drop off passengers on most places on the highway, including most of the Transport for London Road Network (Red Routes). However, where there is expected to be a high number of taxis and private hire vehicles dropping off passengers, a designated area to allow this to take place safely and quickly should be provided. Space for both pre-booked private hire vehicles and taxis to pick up passengers may also be required and should be considered at the same time. This can help to remove vehicles from highways and help reduce emissions and improve air quality along with helping to reduce congestion.

Designated drop-off or pick-up bays should:

- Allow passengers to board and alight safely and on the footway. Where a bay is to be used by taxis then passengers must board and alight on the nearside of the vehicle so the accessibility features in the taxi can be used
- Have a time restriction in place (e.g. two minutes). This is important to ensure vehicles do not park in these bays and that they cannot be used by unauthorised vehicles
- Be clearly marked out and signed so we can enforce the bays

### **Accessibility**

Taxis and private hire vehicles provide an important service for disabled and elderly passengers and anyone who may have difficulty accessing other forms of transport.

All taxis are wheelchair accessible and also have a number of other accessibility features to support passengers including hearing loops, intermediate steps, swivel seats and grab handles. Some private hire operators also provide wheelchair accessible private hire vehicles. All taxis and private hire vehicles also carry assistance dogs at no extra cost.

It is essential that taxi rank facilities are designed to be accessible and make it easy for disabled and other passengers to board and alight.

Examples of design features that make taxi ranks more accessible include:

- Clear, on-carriageway, vehicle bay markings within pick-up and drop-off areas that facilitate vehicles to manoeuvre past one another. This is important in the event a disabled or older person requires more time and/or assistance when boarding/alighting a taxi

- Enabling vehicles to stop parallel to, and ideally within 50mm of, the kerb
- Facilitating boarding and alighting through the nearside (kerbside) door. This is the designated accessible passenger access point in TfL's Conditions of Fitness, from which a ramp facility (stowed on-board) is required to be available as a condition of licensing
- Pavement widths of between 4-5 metres to accommodate the ramp from the taxi, while allowing space to manoeuvre a wheelchair and avoid conflict with pedestrians
- Kerb height at ranks is relevant in relation to the taxi vehicles that are picking up and dropping off passengers. A 125mm average kerb height is used as the basis for TfL's accessible bus stop guide, and is also used by taxi vehicle manufacturers
- Appropriate drainage facilities to prevent 'ponding', and thoughtful positioning of street furniture and utilities equipment, considered within the design process

Key features in respect of facilities and street furniture include:

- Only providing absolutely necessary street furniture in immediate drop-off and pick-up areas
- Shelter from the elements of some form provided at all but the smallest/quietest taxi ranks
- Queuing areas and railings
- Signage and information for passengers
- Luggage trolleys (at major interchanges)
- High-quality lighting, CCTV and seating features. Standing is difficult and painful for some disabled people, particularly those with arthritis, rheumatism and back problems
- Passenger help points (at larger ranks)

### **Booking taxis and private hire vehicles**

All private hire vehicles must be booked through a TfL-licensed private hire operator in advance of the journey, and taxis can also be booked for immediate or future travel. The usage of smartphone apps to book taxis and private hire vehicles has grown significantly in recent years, which increases the importance of providing designated areas for taxi and PHV passengers to be dropped off and picked up. Having a designated taxi rank also remains important as taxis on the rank can choose to accept bookings from a smartphone app.

### **Safety**

Having designated taxis ranks plus private hire drop-off and pick-up areas can help reduce the risk from illegal 'cabs' and can also have other safety benefits. Taxi ranks can help to disperse people quickly, as passengers can easily access taxi services, and this can reduce anti-social behaviour and other potential offences. This can also help reduce the fear of crime and contribute to

an increased feeling of security in an area and some late night taxi ranks have been appointed to specifically help with these issues.

### **Hotels**

Taxi ranks should always be considered for luxury hotel developments with the front of the taxi rank close to the main exit from the hotel, so guests can safely and easily access taxi services. Taxi ranks can be appointed on hotel forecourts or split between the forecourt and the road.

A review of the taxi arrangements at similar hotels should be carried out to help establish what the taxi rank requirements are.

Examples include:

The Beaumont Hotel, Balderton Street

- Three space taxi rank, operational 24 hours and on the highway

Corinthia London, Whitehall Place

- Three space taxi rank, operational 24 hours and on the highway

The Dorchester, Deanery Street/Stanhope Gate

- Two space taxi rank in Deanery Street with a eight space feeder rank in Stanhope Gate, both of which are 24 hours and on the highway

InterContinental London Park Lane, Hamilton Place

- Two space taxi rank on the hotel forecourt with a eight space feeder rank on the highway, both of which are operational 24 hours

Jumeirah Carlton Tower, Cadogan Place

- Five space taxi rank, operational 24 hours and on the highway

Le Meridien Waldorf Hotel, Piccadilly

- Four space taxi rank, operational 24 hours and on the highway

The Melia White House Hotel, Osnaburgh Terrace/Albany Street

- One space taxi rank in Albany Street with a three space feeder rank in Albany Street, both of which are operational 24 hours

Mondrian London, Upper Ground

- Three space taxi rank, operational 24 hours and on the highway

### **Taxi and private hire management plan**

For certain developments such as hotels, large office blocks, entertainment venues, etc. a taxi and private hire management plan should be prepared and shared with TfL.

The plan should include details of:

- Proposed taxi ranks

- Proposed taxi or private hire drop-off bays
- How the demand for taxi and private hire services will be managed
- Any other measures proposed to assist taxi and private hire passengers

**Contacts**

You can contact TfL's Taxi and Private Hire Team by emailing:

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