

**24** | **CONSERVATION AREA AUDIT &  
MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS**

**36** | **KNIGHTSBRIDGE**

**37** | **KNIGHTSBRIDGE GREEN  
ALBERT GATE**



City of Westminster

PLANNING & CITY DEVELOPMENT

**Date:** 20.04.2009  
**Status:** Adopted Supplementary Planning Document  
**Document ID No:** **2944**  
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## PREFACE

Since the designation of the first conservation areas in 1967 the City Council has undertaken a comprehensive programme of conservation area designation, extensions and policy development. There are now 55 conservation areas in Westminster, covering 76% of the City. These conservation areas are the subject of detailed policies in the Unitary Development Plan and in Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents. In addition to the designation of conservation areas and the formulation of general planning policy, the City Council is required to undertake conservation area appraisals in order to devise local policies in order to protect the unique character of each area.

Although this process was first undertaken as part of the various designation reports, more recent national guidance (as found in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 and English Heritage guidance documents) requires detailed appraisals of each conservation area in the form of formally approved and published documents. This enhanced process involves the review of original designation procedures and boundaries, analysis of historical development, identification of all listed buildings and those unlisted buildings making a positive contribution to an area and the identification and description of key townscape features, including street patterns, trees, open spaces and building types.

Given the number and complexity of Westminster's conservation areas the appraisal process has been broken down into three stages, the first of which is complete. This first stage involved the publication of general information leaflets or mini-guides for each conservation area covering in brief a series of key categories including Designation, Historical Background, Listed Buildings and Key Features.

The second stage involved the production of conservation area directories for each Conservation Area. A directory has now been adopted for 51 of the City's conservation areas and includes copies of designation reports, a detailed evaluation of the historical development of the area and analysis of listed buildings and key townscape features.

The City is now working on a programme to prepare conservation area audits for each of its conservation areas. This will form the third and final stage of the appraisal process. As each audit is adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document it will incorporate the directory for that conservation area.

Councillor Robert Davis DL

Deputy Leader  
Cabinet Member for Built Environment





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# 1 INTRODUCTION AND POLICY CONTEXT

1.1 Conservation areas are ‘areas of special architectural and historic interest, the character and appearance of which is it desirable to preserve or enhance.’ They are areas which are immediately recognisable for their distinctive townscape.

1.2 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 obliges local authorities to identify which parts of their areas are of special architectural and historic interest. The City Council has a statutory duty to review the character and boundaries of its conservation areas. This audit is the third and final stage of a review process. The overall appraisal strategy is based upon the English Heritage publications: *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* and *Guidance on Conservation Area Management* (2006).

1.3 The audit describes both the historical development, and character and appearance of the conservation area. It is designed to identify and explain important local features such as unlisted buildings of merit, unbroken rooflines and local views. In addition the audit also seeks to apply relevant Unitary Development Plan policies to the local context in order to preserve and/or enhance the character and appearance of the area.

1.4 This is a Supplementary Planning Document and will supplement Westminster’s emerging Local Development Framework, as well as the saved policies in Westminster’s Unitary Development Plan, referred to below. This Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared in accordance with the advice contained in PPS12 and the Town and Country Planning (local development) (England) Regulations 2004. Consultation has been carried out in accordance with

Westminster’s Statement of Community Involvement. A sustainability appraisal and statement setting out how the public have been involved in preparation of the document is set out in the SPD Documents, which form an appendix to this document.

1.5 This conservation area audit covers three conservation areas: Knightsbridge, Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate.

1.6 It was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document by the Cabinet Member for Built Environment on 20.04.2009. The Knightsbridge Conservation Area was designated on 4 January 1968 and extended on 9 February 1978. The Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area and the Albert Gate Conservation Area were designated in January 1989. The designation reports can be found in the directory at the back of this document.

## POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

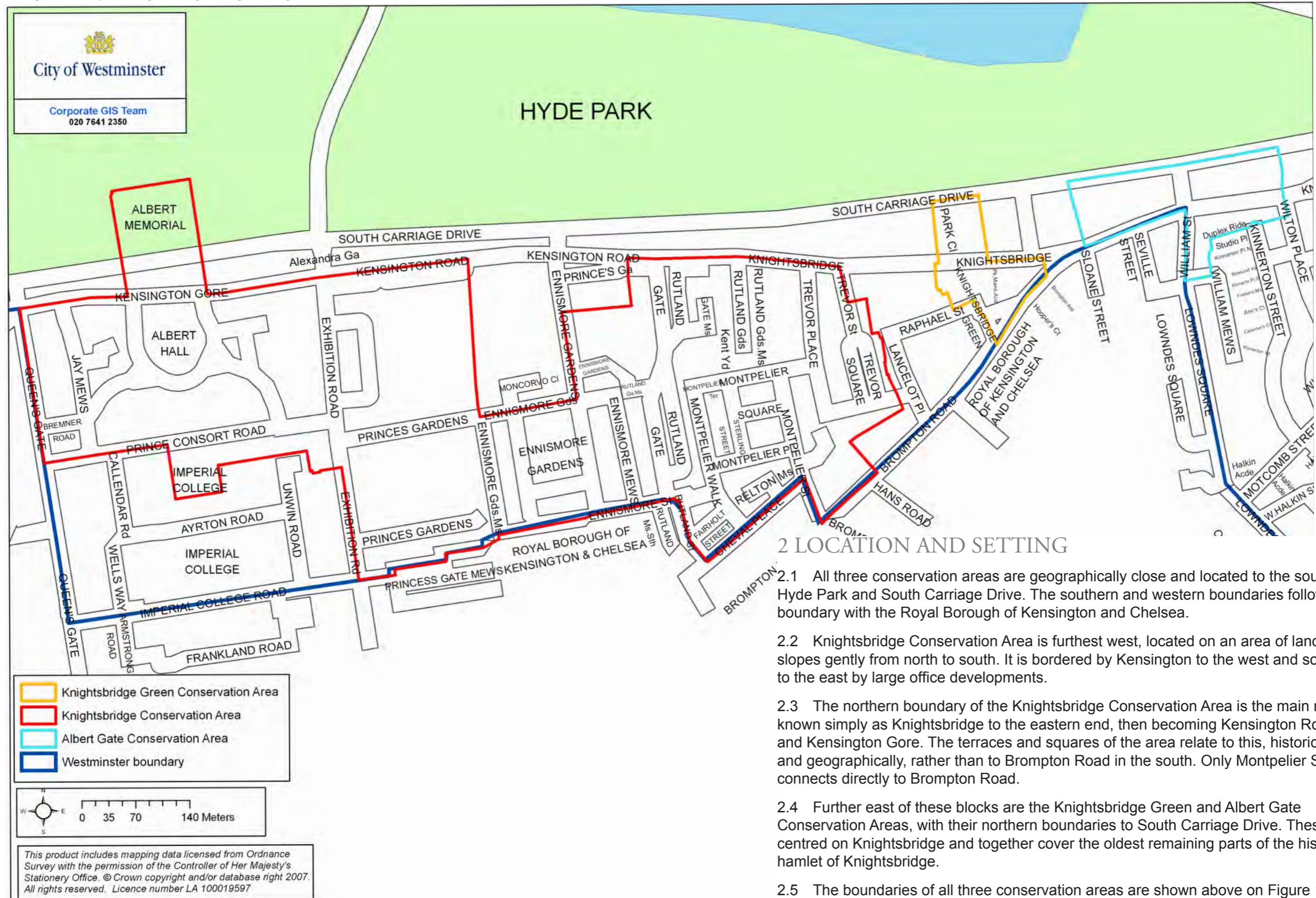
The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in January 2007 and is the statutory document setting out planning policies for developing land, improving transport and protecting the environment in Westminster. Relevant policies from the UDP are referred to throughout the audit.

General guidance on additional planning controls in conservation areas can be found in the Council’s Supplementary Planning Guidance: *Development and Demolition in Conservation Areas and Conservation Areas: A Guide for Property Owners*.





Figure 1: Map of Knightsbridge, Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas



## 2 LOCATION AND SETTING

2.1 All three conservation areas are geographically close and located to the south of Hyde Park and South Carriage Drive. The southern and western boundaries follow the boundary with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

2.2 Knightsbridge Conservation Area is furthest west, located on an area of land which slopes gently from north to south. It is bordered by Kensington to the west and south, and to the east by large office developments.

2.3 The northern boundary of the Knightsbridge Conservation Area is the main road, known simply as Knightsbridge to the eastern end, then becoming Kensington Road and Kensington Gore. The terraces and squares of the area relate to this, historically and geographically, rather than to Brompton Road in the south. Only Montpelier Street connects directly to Brompton Road.

2.4 Further east of these blocks are the Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas, with their northern boundaries to South Carriage Drive. These are centred on Knightsbridge and together cover the oldest remaining parts of the historic hamlet of Knightsbridge.

2.5 The boundaries of all three conservation areas are shown above on Figure 1.



### 3 HISTORY

3.1 The area of Knightsbridge has always been poorly defined, having no topographical features to form a boundary. Knightsbridge, Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas all fall within this area, which has its origins as a small hamlet south of the royal deer park in Hyde Park, and on the main road to the village of Kensington.

3.2 First written references to Knightsbridge can be found in a charter, now in the British Museum, which shows that Edward the Confessor held lands in the area and gave the monks of Westminster Abbey ‘every third tree, and every horse-load of fruit grown in an adjacent wood at Kyngesbyrig [or King’s Bridge], as heretofore by law accustomed<sup>1</sup>.’



Figure 2: View of Knights’ Bridge at Knightsbridge, by Giles Firman Phillips, c. 1825 (Copyright Collage, Guildhall Library Collections)

3.3 The name ‘Knightsbridge’ referred to the bridge over the Westbourne River, located where Albert Gate now stands (Figure 2). This was dammed to create the Serpentine in Hyde Park in 1730 and the river was subsequently completely covered and now runs underground.

3.4 Knightsbridge was not a parish in itself and has never had administrative independence. In the mid 19th century, as the area developed, it was described as being a ‘name without a town<sup>1</sup>’ since it was split between four parishes. The largest part still belonged to St Margaret, Westminster, west of Exhibition Road and into Hyde Park. Other areas belonged to St George, Hanover Square, St Martin-in-the-Fields and St Luke, Chelsea. This situation continued until the new church of All Saints was built for Knightsbridge in Ennismore Gardens in 1849. Its assigned parish included most of the old Knightsbridge hamlet, as well as parts of Kensington, but it had no civil administrative function.

3.5 The administrative division continues today in the border between Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea. These divisions, and the fact that no one single estate was responsible for the land in Knightsbridge, meant most development was sporadic as land became available.

#### The Hamlet of Knightsbridge until 1800

3.6 Initial development of the hamlet of Knightsbridge was clustered around the bridge, with a village green to the west, where Knightsbridge and Brompton Road now divide.

3.7 Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area is on the site of this village green, a triangle of manorial land between the two main roads, which formerly belonged to Westminster Abbey. The line of Knightsbridge Green, the street, still marks the transition from single land ownership to varied ownership further west.

1. Survey of London Volume 45: Knightsbridge (2000), pp. 1-18



3.8 In the Middle Ages a lazar-house or hospital was built on the strip of land north of Knightsbridge, on the east side of the Westbourne River (where the French Embassy is today), where it remained until the early 18th century. Its chapel was rebuilt in the 1860s as Holy Trinity Church, which was then demolished in the early 20th century. West of this was a scattering of inns, whilst beyond was overwhelmingly rural.

3.9 Knightsbridge the road was the main route west to Kensington and, until the 17th century, had a reputation for being unsafe to travel. It remained outside London until the beginning of the 19th century, a situation reinforced by the presence of a toll both – or turnpike – near Hyde Park Corner from the early 18th century until 1825.

3.10 In the late 17th and 18th centuries, ribbon development began to spread along the main road. A significant impetus for this development was the creation in the 1730s of Royal Carriage Drive, which replaced Rotten Row as the Royal route through the

park. At this time, the park location began to be appreciated and, from the late 17th until the beginning of the 19th centuries, large new villas were oriented towards it on the strips of land running down from the park.

3.11 Further change also came to the eastern part of the area at this time. The first Knightsbridge Barracks was built in 1792, just to the west of Knightsbridge Green, whilst on the west bank of the Westbourne, the Cannon Brewhouse was built in 1804. Terraces were gradually built up lining the road east of the Barracks at Knightsbridge. By the mid 19th century, the layout of Knightsbridge Green with its enclosure and narrow passage had evolved to as it is today.

### Late Georgian/Early Victorian Knightsbridge

3.12 Greenwood's map of 1830 (Figure 3) shows large villas built on former fields along what is now Knightsbridge. Behind the estates were nurseries and market gardens. At the western extremity, Gore Lane, running south from Kensington



Figure 3: Greenwood's map of 1830 (Copyright, Motco Enterprises Ltd)

Gore, is lined with cottages and terraces. This lane can still be seen today in the line of Jays Mews behind the Royal College of Art.

3.13 Also visible on Greenwood's map are the oldest remaining buildings in the area today, those developed as part of the Trevor Estate. Trevor Square and adjoining streets were laid out in 1813 and completed by the mid-1820s.

3.14 From here, development spread westwards, with developers building terraced family houses; the development around Montpelier Square followed in the late 1820s but was not finished until the 1850s. South of this, smaller workers' houses were also built around this time.

3.15 The development, however, remained speculative and haphazard as no single estate was responsible for the land available and there were fluctuations in the building trade and demand for property in the area.

3.16 During this same, early Victorian, period, eastern Knightsbridge continued to develop further, not simply as a residential area but with a mixed use character. The area became known as a centre for entertainment, with a large number of taverns and music halls. Tattershall Market for thoroughbred horses was established around this time on Knightsbridge Green and shops, pubs and lodging-houses adjoined Knightsbridge Barracks.

3.17 The area from the road junction to Trevor Place housed an eclectic jumble of buildings including taverns, music halls and boarding houses. These remained along the High Street, as it was known, until it began to be redeveloped in the late 19th century.

3.18 Although there was never much large-scale industry in the area, there were two floor cloth factories, one in the far south of Knightsbridge on the site of what is now Harvey Nichols. The other, Smith

and Barber, was on the Trevor Estate, on the west side of Trevor Place (Figure 4). It was built in the early 1820s and had a tall belvedere tower and was a distinctive local landmark until the late 19th century. The tower was demolished in the 1890s when the factory closed and the building was converted to the Prince's Skating Club (an ice-skating rink where the 1908 Olympic figure skating championships were held). It existed as a shell until the 1970s, being used finally as a garage.

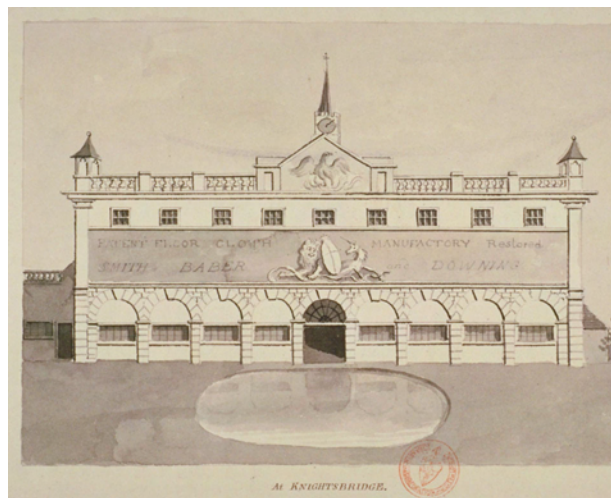


Figure 4: The Smith and Barber floor cloth factory on Trevor Place. The tower was a local landmark (Copyright Collage, Guildhall Library Collections)

## Mid-Victorian Improvements

3.19 The concentration of Victorian Knightsbridge's noisy night-life, near the Barracks, the Green and the High Road (as the road immediately west of present-day Scotch Corner was called) was loathed by better-class inhabitants and the mid-Victorian period therefore saw attempts to improve this area.

3.20 Most notable amongst these improvements was the demolition of the brewhouse and the lazar-house for Thomas Cubitt's Albert Gate in the 1840s. This consisted of two great mansions on either side of the now-covered Westbourne, designed to form a new gracious entrance to the park. This started



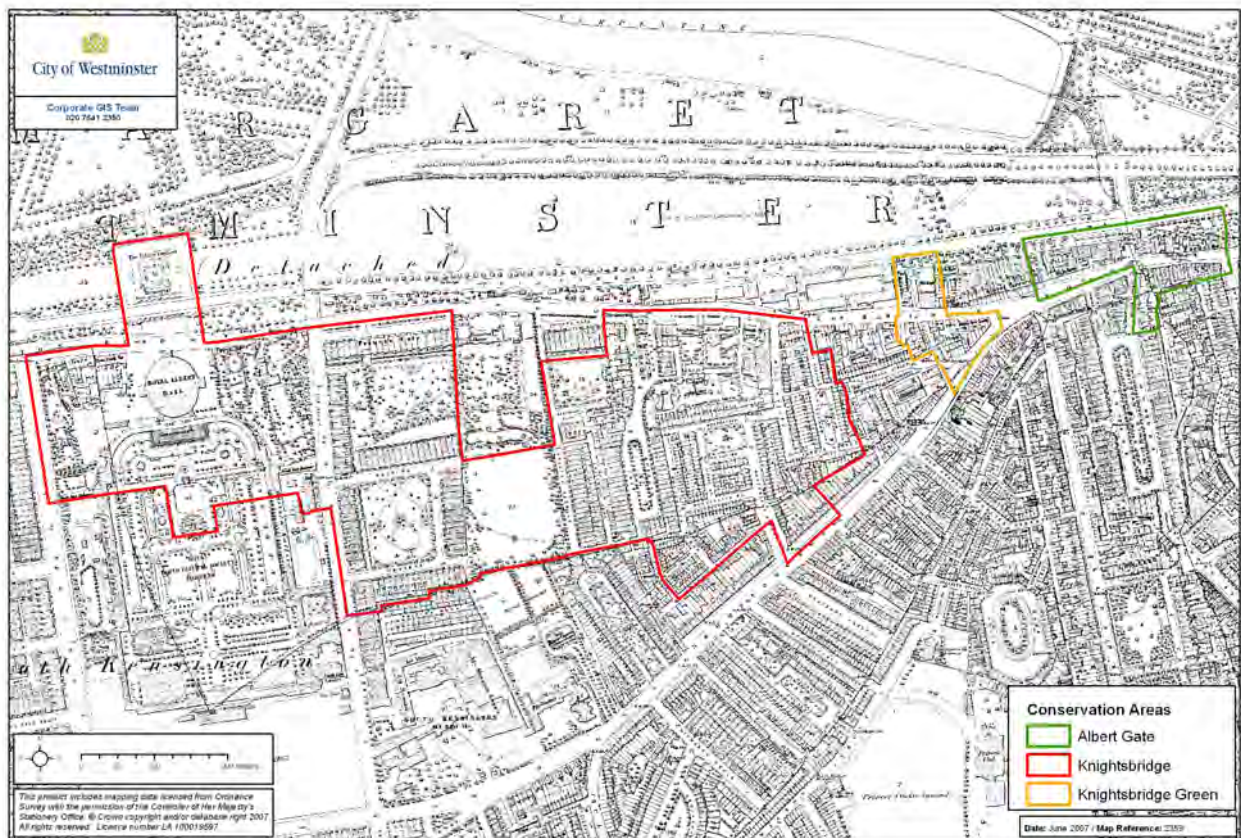


Figure 5: Ordnance Survey map of 1870

to change the impression of the area from shabby hamlet to fashionable suburb.

3.21 Later development to the west of Trevor and Montpelier Squares took place from the mid-1840s up until the 1880s. This sought to emphasise the area's relationship with the park and copied the Italianate style of Albert Gate. The new grander mid-Victorian developments were located around squares or on streets called 'Gate', associating them with privileged access to the now-fashionable park (although in the case of Rutland Gate this access never existed). Development continued south of Kensington Road but was related by name to the gates – Prince's Square and Rutland Gardens – because these had been so successful.

3.22 Trevor and Montpelier Squares, immediately adjacent to the rowdy Barracks and entertainment area, had started to gain a bad reputation within two or three decades of being built due

to the large number of boarding houses in the area and were considered of lower status. There was therefore purposefully no physical connection made between these and later developments along Knightsbridge.

### 1851 Exhibition and Development of the South Kensington Area

3.23 1851 was a key year for the area, as the Great Exhibition was held in Hyde Park on a site immediately north of Knightsbridge Road.

3.24 In the early 19th century, the land between Exhibition Road and Queen's Gate (and beyond) still contained a number of small estates. These were acquired by the Royal Commission for the Exhibition for educational institutions and a concert hall.

3.25 The exhibition proved very successful, resulting in the creation of Exhibition Road in the late 1850s in



commemoration of the event. Other international exhibitions took place in 1862 and 1886 and, although almost all the exhibition buildings have now vanished, the institutions that replaced them remain. When Prince Albert, the President of the Commission, died in 1861 his memorial was built in Hyde Park, opposite the site. Prince Albert had a vision of an area devoted to the arts and sciences. 'Albertopolis', as it was dubbed, is evident today in the unique collection of colleges and museums in South Kensington.

3.26 The road pattern around the Albert Hall reflects the layout of the paths in the Royal Horticultural Society Gardens. Visible on the 1870s Ordnance Survey map at Figure 5, the paths were on this site with temporary exhibition buildings. Later, the temporary buildings were demolished and the permanent buildings of the many educational institutions in the area today were built.

3.27 The largest of these educational institutions is Imperial College. It was founded in 1907, joining three institutions previously established at South Kensington. Other institutions in the area of South Kensington included in the Knightsbridge Conservation Area include the Royal College of Music, the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal College of Arts (now housed in a listed 1960s building).

### Late Victorian–Early 20th Century

3.28 By the late Victorian period, Knightsbridge had taken on much of its modern street pattern and the 1851 Exhibition had helped in raising the profile and status of the area, further encouraging development. By the late Victorian period, many of the grand family terraced houses were considered too large and new development took the form of blocks of mansion flats instead of houses. Some of the first were in the area around the Albert Hall, with one of the pioneers

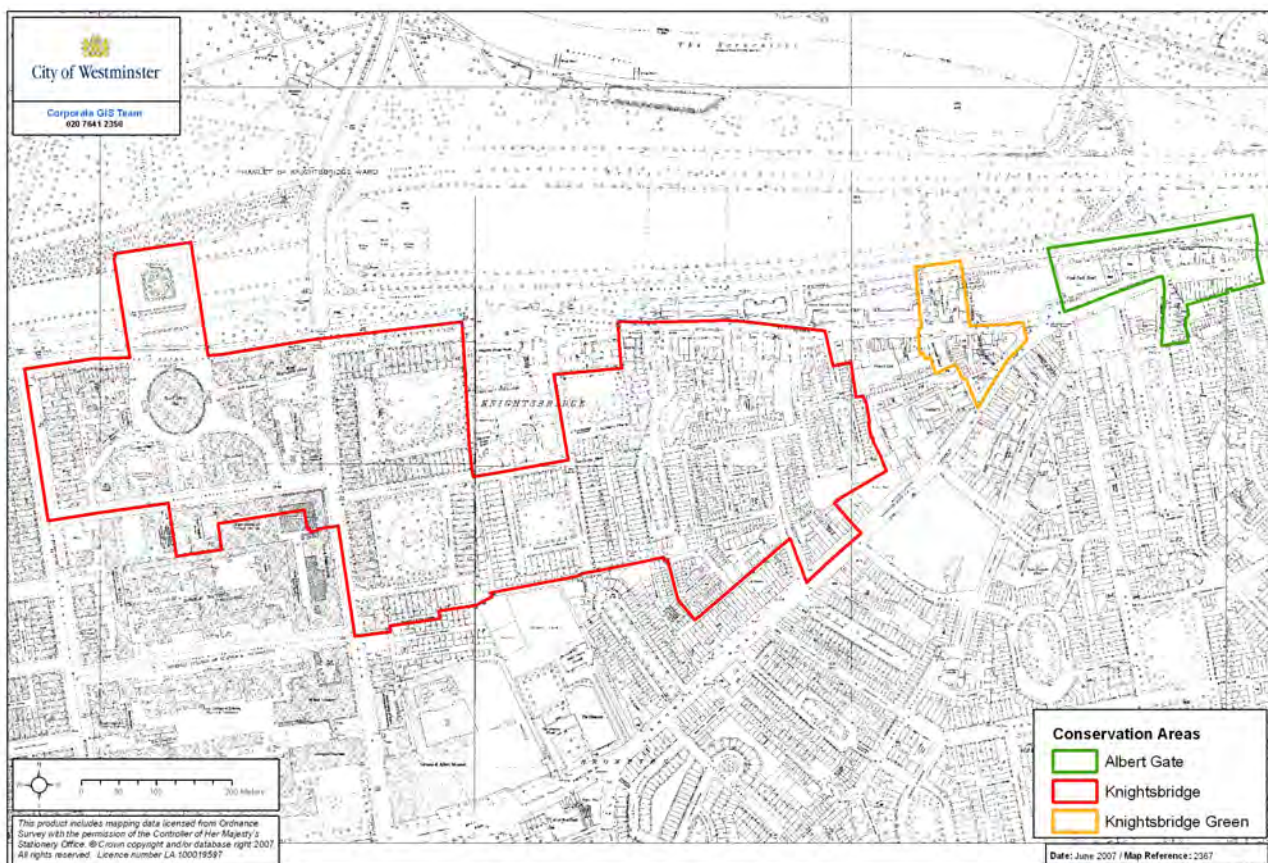


Figure 6: Ordnance Survey map of 1950

being Norman Shaw with his Albert Hall Mansions in 1870. These luxurious red-brick apartments were designed in the new 'Queen Anne' style and were immediately copied elsewhere in Knightsbridge and throughout London.



Figure 7: View of Knightsbridge c.1900, with the Hyde Park Hotel at the centre

3.29 Not only were the old houses going out of fashion, but they were increasingly unsuited to the busier, noisier environment of the major roads and lost their appeal as residences for that reason. By the end of the 19th century, shops and houses along Knightsbridge were replaced by mixed commercial and residential blocks, especially along the main thoroughfares. Many of these were built in a style and scale quite different to earlier development and the construction of the massive Hyde Park Hotel provoked particular controversy due to its impact on views from Hyde Park. Knightsbridge Barracks was also rebuilt in 1878.

### Late 20th Century

3.30 Following the First World War, redevelopment with blocks of flats resumed in the 1930s, a pattern which continued until the 1960s when the last residential buildings in the area were built.

3.31 Other earlier buildings in the Knightsbridge Green/Albert Gate area survived until after the Second World War when office-building altered the appearance of the area and large blocks were built facing Knightsbridge and Brompton Road.

3.32 In the 1950s, the terrace of shops on the east side of Albert Gate was truncated to allow for road widening. It had previously tapered to a point and the resulting narrow road had meant the 'village street' feel was retained until this time.



Figure 8: Bowater House prior to demolition

3.33 Just outside Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green Conservation Areas, one of largest of the new blocks was Bowater House by Guy Morgan and Partners built in 1956–58. This had a significant impact on the character of the area until its demolition in 2006.

3.34 In the late 1950s, plans for Knightsbridge Green were put forward which, had they been implemented, would have turned the road intersection at Scotch Corner into a roundabout comparable to those at Marble Arch and Hyde Park Corner, overlooked by some of the biggest tower-blocks in central London.

3.35 This was never implemented. However, an idea of the scale of proposals can be had from Knightsbridge Barracks, which was also rebuilt in 1967.

Although also outside the conservation area, the current Brutalist tower forms the background of many views through Knightsbridge, which again led to much debate about the effect of tall structures on the views across Hyde Park.

3.36 Imperial College also expanded after the war, with a number of modern buildings replacing old terraced houses to the west of the area in the 1960s, including Weeks Hall, Southside, Linstead Hall and a sports centre. All but Weeks Hall were demolished and redeveloped in 2005-7.

3.37 Elsewhere, late 20th century development has been more small-scale. Many of the large terraced houses have been converted to flats or taken over by embassies and institutions. Some are now being converted back to single dwellings.

3.38 Knightsbridge was designated as a conservation area in 1968, and Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green in 1989. A timeline for the conservation area is overleaf.



## Knightsbridge Timeline

|                     |             |   |
|---------------------|-------------|---|
| <b>Middle Ages</b>  |             | A lazaret-house (hospital) built north of Knightsbridge on the east side of Westbourne River  |
| <b>18th century</b> | 1730        | Rotten Row made into the Royal Carriage Drive and the Serpentine dammed   |
|                     |             | Large country mansions constructed on strips of land south of Hyde Park   |
|                     | 1792        | First Knightsbridge Barracks built on north side of Knightsbridge. Rebuilt twice: 1878 and 1967   |
| <b>19th century</b> | 1804        | Cannon Brewhouse constructed on the west bank of the river  |
|                     | 1813-20     | Development of the <b>Trevor Estate</b>   |
|                     | 1825        | Toll booth near Hyde Park Corner removed, meaning Knightsbridge entered London  |
|                     | 1825-50     | Development of the <b>Montpelier Estate</b>   |
|                     | 1840        | Thomas Cubitt's <b>Albert Gate</b> constructed  |
|                     | 1849        | New church of All Saints built for Knightsbridge in Ennismore Gardens, facade rebuilt 1891-92(now Russian Orthodox Cathedral)   |
|                     | 1850s-1880s | Old mansions lost and Rutland Gate, Prince's Gate, Ennismore Gardens and Prince's Gardens developed   |
|                     | 1851        | Great Exhibition held in Hyde Park on a site immediately north of Kensington Gore. Exhibition Road laid out shortly after   |
|                     | 1861        | Holy Trinity Church erected   |
|                     |             | Area by Knightsbridge Barracks and the Green occupied by music halls, pubs, lodging houses and noisy street life  |
|                     | 1871        | Albert Hall constructed   |
|                     |             | Norman Shaw's Albert Hall Mansions  |
|                     | 1888        | Hyde Park Hotel constructed near Albert Gate  |
|                     |             | Residents waged war against the prominence of popular entertainment in area to improve its reputation and conditions  |
|                     | 1897-1902   | Park Mansions, Knightsbridge Green built; later developments of Wellington Court and Albert Gate Court in the area following  |
| <b>20th century</b> | 1901        | Founding of Imperial College, the largest educational institution in the area, with the Royal College of Music, the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal College of Arts all nearby |
|                     | 1906        | Knightsbridge tube station opens  |
|                     | 1930s       | Erection of larger scale modernist flat blocks including Eresby House (1934) and 59-63 Prince's Gate (1938)   |
|                     | 1950        | Terrace of shops east of Albert Gate truncated for road widening  |
|                     | 1956-58     | Bowater House built on site of earlier buildings  |
|                     | 1960-63     | Expansion of Imperial College's South Kensington campus into Prince's Gardens   |
|                     | 1968        | Designation of Knightsbridge Conservation Area, followed by Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green areas in 1989   |
| <b>21st century</b> | 2006        | Demolition and redevelopment of Bowater House and Imperial College buildings around Prince's Gardens  |

## 4 CHARACTER

### General

4.1 For the purposes of description, the three conservation areas in this audit can be subdivided into three character areas. **Figure 12** shows these three areas: (1) a network of domestic terraces and squares to the centre, (2) the area of large-scale institutional buildings and Victorian mansion blocks to the west and (3) the two conservation areas of Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green, centred on the busiest section of Knightsbridge and including a mix of mansion blocks and retail uses.

4.2 The western portion of **Knightsbridge Conservation Area** (Area 2) is dominated by a number of large-scale cultural and educational institutions, centred on the Royal Albert Hall and including the large mansion blocks adjacent to the hall. Buildings in this area are mainly in red brick, on large plots and of a large scale. The area is bounded by Queen's Gate and Exhibition Road.

4.3 This character area relates strongly to the corresponding Queen's Gate Conservation Area in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea immediately to the south. Together they make up the area of cultural and educational institutions known as 'Albertopolis' and these uses



Figure 9: Knightsbridge, Area 2

are extremely important to the area's character.

4.4 The central section (Area 1) is the eastern half of Knightsbridge Conservation Area, an area of residential terraces and garden squares (Figure 10). Here, buildings are generally lower in height than in Area 1, plots are smaller and streets narrower, creating a sense of intimacy rather than grandeur. Terraces are mainly of yellow stock brick, stucco, half stucco or a few are faced in stone.



Figure 10: Typical Area 1 residential street in the eastern section of Knightsbridge Conservation Area

4.5 This area can also be subdivided into two parts with a distinct change in character moving east to west; the western half having larger, grander terraces, predominantly in stucco and set around larger squares.

4.6 The seven garden squares are of central importance to the character of the area. Despite an absence of street trees, the planting in the private garden squares gives the area a quiet, leafy character.

4.7 The two conservation areas at **Knightsbridge Green** and **Albert Gate** form character Area 3 to the east and consist mainly of large-scale red-brick mansion blocks and hotel buildings.



Figure 11: Mansion block on Knightsbridge, in the Albert Gate Conservation Area

4.8 This area is given over extensively to retail uses at ground floor, forming part of the Knightsbridge/Kensington shopping area. These uses on Knightsbridge and Brompton Road give the area an intensely busy, bustling character, in sharp contrast to the leafy squares of Knightsbridge. Heavy traffic also influences the area but has a negative impact on character.

4.9 Knightsbridge Green has a more consistent character with its townscape comprising buildings of one period, style and scale, whilst Albert Gate has a mixed townscape.

4.10 Of great importance to the character of all three areas is their setting with Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens to the north. The park provides a backdrop to each area, forming a green northern edge to each area. It is visible through gaps between buildings, through formal park gates or over rooftops. Equally, the buildings along Knightsbridge provide the setting to the Royal Parks Conservation Area. The scale, materials and design of these buildings creates a consistent and attractive setting for views across the park.

## CHARACTER SUMMARY

### Knightsbridge

- Western half dominated by late Victorian cultural complex centred on the Albert Hall and adjoining mansion blocks
- Residential area of leafy squares and intimate terraces to the east; the scale and grandeur of terraces increasing moving east to west

### Albert Gate

- Historic entranceway to Hyde Park  
Dominant presence of Hyde Park to north
- Busy thoroughfare of Knightsbridge at the centre with larger scale late Victorian buildings and shops at ground floor

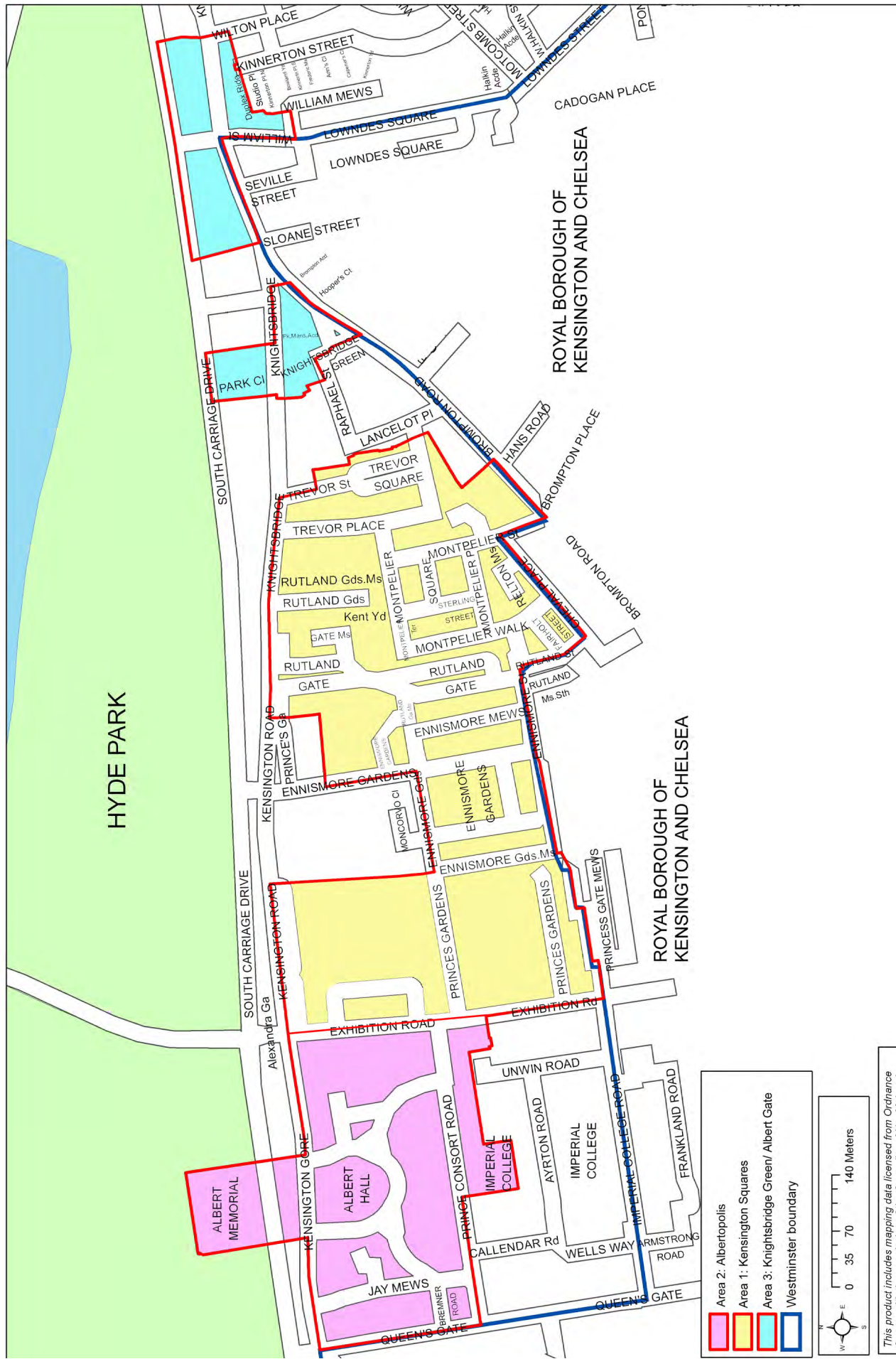
### Knightsbridge Green

- Busy retail centre fronting major roads
- Prominent corner mansion block at Scotch Corner forms central landmark
- Pedestrian routeways following historic routes lead through area to Hyde Park

**Hyde Park forms the green northern boundary and setting to all three of the conservation areas.**



Figure 12: Character Areas



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## Streets and Spaces

4.11 The historic street layout and the relationship of built form to open space define the overall framework of an area. Within this framework, the fine grain of the townscape, including sizes of plots and building lines, are important in establishing the pattern and density of development. This has a significant impact on the character of an area, dictating the scale of development and level of enclosure or openness.

4.12 The street pattern of **Knightsbridge Conservation Area** varies from east to west. The eastern half of the area has a circuitous street pattern. Although the main roads in the area, Knightsbridge/Kensington Road and Brompton Road, are busy with traffic, the only direct routes between them are Exhibition Road and Queen's Gate.

4.13 This is a result of the way the area developed, not as one and at one time, but built as a series of small linear estates, which ran southwards from Hyde Park. In some cases, access to the main road had to be acquired from the neighbouring estate (e.g. Montpelier from Trevor). In other cases, in order to retain the exclusive nature of new development, access to and from surrounding estates was not considered desirable (e.g. Trevor Square to Raphael Street, Rutland Gate to Montpelier Square). As a result the area developed as a series of quiet and secluded squares, which today retain a sense of enclosure and separateness.

4.14 The open spaces within the area are extremely important to its character. The centrepiece of the squares are the seven private gardens, as well as the large, less-visible private gardens set behind Prince's Gate. In addition, the expansive presence of Hyde Park north of Knightsbridge and Kensington Road gives a more open, green aspect to the area as a whole. The squares to the east are much smaller and

small pedestrian routes lead between streets.

4.15 Travelling west through the area, terraces get later in date and grow larger in scale. Streets are wider, plot sizes bigger and development less dense. Throughout the area, set behind principal frontages, are the low, secluded mews which provide a contrast in scale and character.

4.16 To the west, the area of South Kensington that is within the Knightsbridge Conservation Area has an unusual street pattern stemming from earlier uses of the site. Here, the curved streets sloping down from the Albert Hall to Prince Consort Road reflect the pattern of the paths of the earlier Royal Horticultural Society Gardens.



**Figure 13:** The curves and slope of the streets leading from Kensington Gore down past Albert Hall Mansions are an important part of the area's character

4.17 The boundary of the conservation area, Jay Mews, is one of the only streets in the area, apart from Knightsbridge, to follow the line of a pre-existing road - Gore Lane, seen in Greenwood's map, Figure 3.

4.18 Both **Albert Gate** and **Knightsbridge Green Conservation Areas** are now dominated by the main traffic routes of Knightsbridge. Their northern boundaries, however, are formed by the wide and leafy South Carriage Drive, linking the conservation areas into Hyde Park.

4.19 **Albert Gate** itself was originally created as a main entrance into Hyde Park but is now closed to traffic. As a result it

forms a dead end, aligned not with a major road but the relatively minor William Street.

4.20 **Knightsbridge Green** has a distinctive street pattern, following the lines of the old village green. The area contains a network of intimate public routes and spaces which contrast with the broad busy character of Knightsbridge and Brompton Road.



Figure 14: The arcade at Park Mansions

4.21 The narrow arcade running through Park Mansions and the pedestrianised routes of Knightsbridge Green and Park Close follow historic routes and provide links with the park.

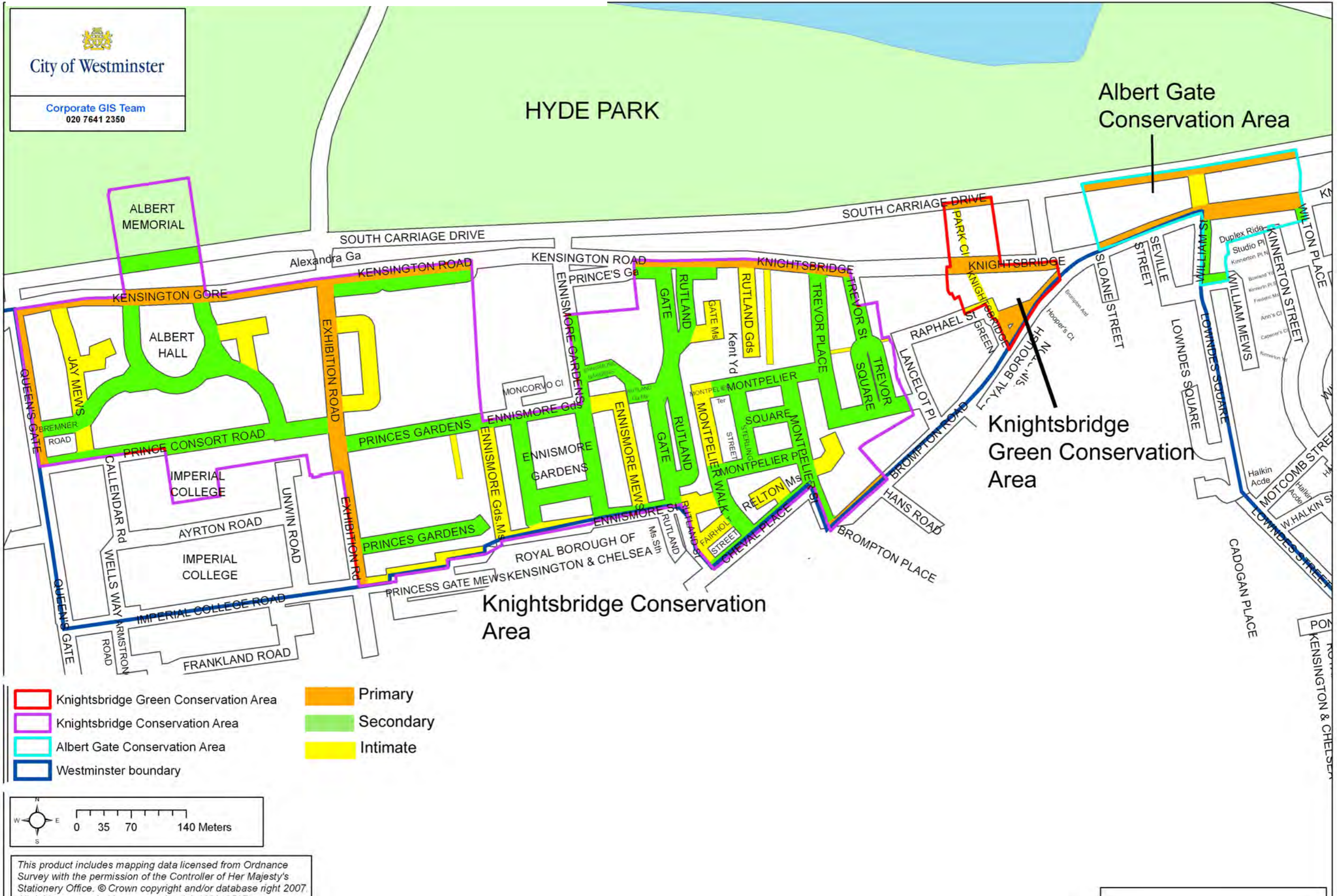
4.22 For the purposes of the Conservation Area Audits, the Council has defined three categories of routes or spaces according to a combined analysis of their scale, level of enclosure and the function they perform within the area. These are defined as Primary Routes and Spaces, Secondary Routes and Spaces, and Intimate Routes and Spaces. The map at **Figure 15** shows the hierarchy of routes and spaces within the conservation areas.

#### POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

Dominant street patterns and the character of spaces should be respected, and where historic patterns remain these should be protected and reflected in any proposed schemes. Policies DES 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 12 should be consulted.



Figure 15 : Hierarchy of streets and spaces in conservation areas





# Architecture

## Overview

4.23 Across the three conservation areas there are a wide variety of building types, ages and styles. The building ages maps below and overleaf show the vast majority date from the early-late Victorian period. However, there are also some earlier Regency/late Georgian buildings, and a number of 20th and 21st century re-developments.

4.24 The map at **Figure 17** shows the predominant building ages in the **Knightsbridge Conservation Area**. This shows a concentration of late Georgian and early Victorian development to the east of the area, with mid-Victorian development at the centre and late Victorian/Edwardian development to the west.

4.25 The earliest Georgian development at Trevor Square and its neighbouring, slightly later squares comprise simple flat-fronted yellow stock brick houses, built to classical proportions. The mid-Victorian squares and terraces, while following the

same pattern, tend to be larger and in stucco or stone.

4.26 The later Victorian development to the west tends to be highly decorative, the principal building materials being bright red brick and terracotta. Scale and design in this area is much larger, with the Albert Hall and Albert Memorial forming a dramatic set piece at the centre.

4.27 **Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area** has the most homogeneous architectural character and comprises a cluster of relatively large-scale, red-brick late Victorian/ Edwardian buildings.

4.28 **Albert Gate Conservation Area** has a more diverse architectural character, despite its small size, with Victorian terraces and classical townhouses at the centre, flanked by mansion blocks, a grand hotel and 20th century infill.

4.29 An overview of the main buildings within each conservation area is provided below. These are described geographically: Knightsbridge is considered first in two parts, followed by the other two conservation areas.

Figure 16: Building ages in Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas

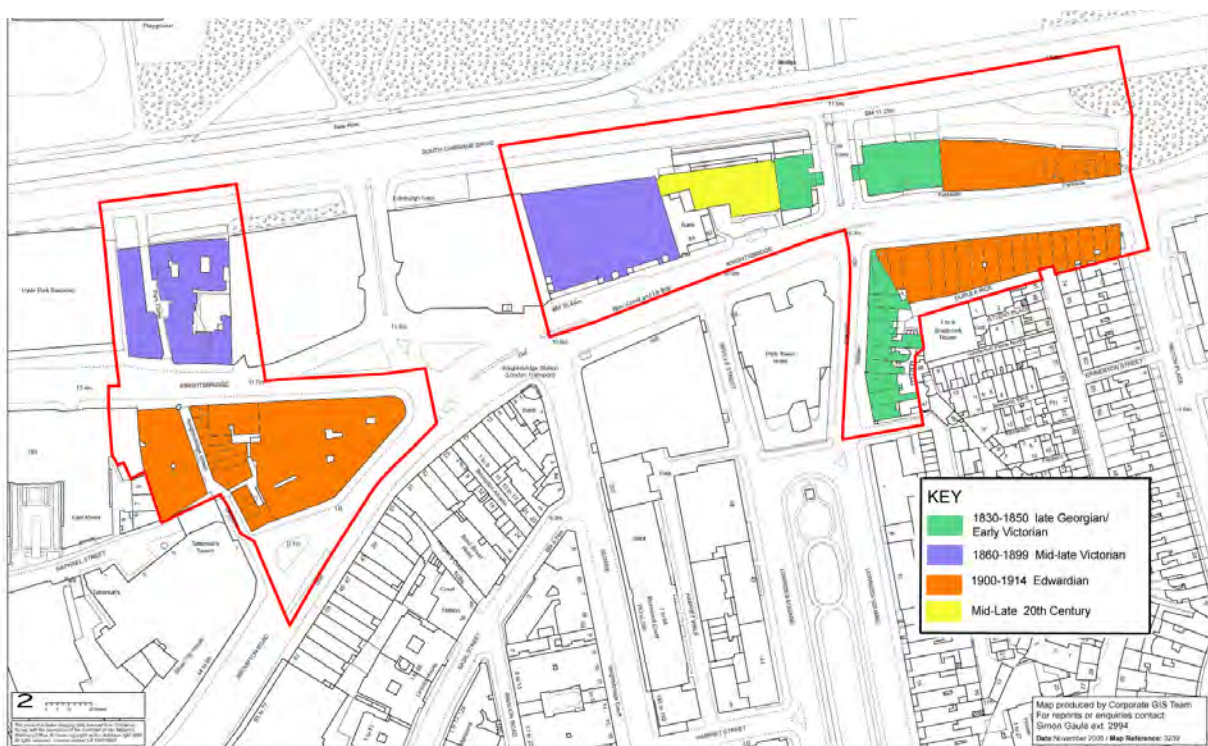
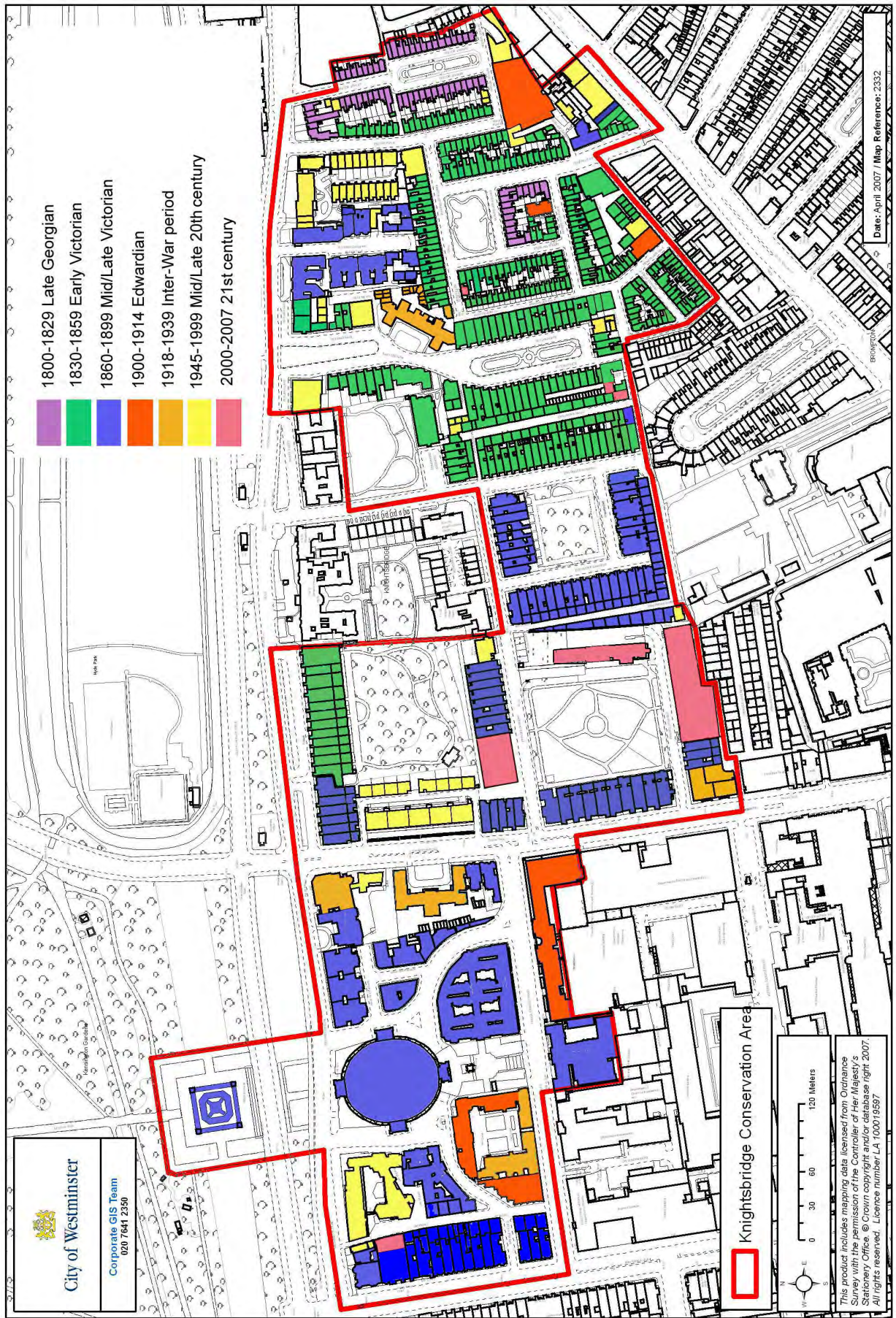




Figure 17: Building ages in Knightsbridge Conservation Area





## Knightsbridge Conservation Area East (Area 1)

### Terraces and Squares

4.30 Within the eastern part of the **Knightsbridge Conservation Area**, between Trevor Square and Exhibition Road, the townscape consists largely of terraces of houses arranged around garden squares and interconnected by short streets. These show an evolution of scale and style across the area. In general terms, moving westwards plot sizes become larger and buildings become higher, grander and more imposing. However, these terraces do retain similar characteristics:

- Most are 3-5 storeys over basement, all properties set behind railings with open basement lightwells.
- Palette of materials consists of mix of yellow stock and stucco and natural slate roofing giving a consistent character.
- Decorative detail: porticos, stucco and ironwork railings and balconies and detail often consistent within groups, but varying between squares and according to the status of buildings.
- Many other attractive original architectural details: fanlights, rainwater goods, painted house numbers, have been retained.

4.31 The earliest buildings in the area can be found in **Trevor Square** and its continuation on **Trevor Street**- modest Regency terraces dating from 1819-23. These are simple but attractive three-storey houses, with basement, each two bays wide and constructed in yellow stock brick with channelled stucco to the ground floor.

4.32 Detailing includes simple gauged brick arches above windows, 6-over-6 timber sashes and painted timber

panelled doors with semi-circular fanlights. The primary decorative feature is the ironwork, including railings and projecting balconettes. Buildings are terminated by a straight parapet, but the roofline is stepped, following the gentle downhill slope. To the eastern side, many have



Figure 18: Trevor Square, western side



Figure 19: Typical door detail on Trevor Square with semicircular teardrop fanlight



Figure 20: Nos. 235-239 Knightsbridge (originally Trevor ) are grander properties from the same period as Trevor Square, with curved bays facing Hyde Park

had mansard extensions but otherwise the buildings are largely unaltered. No. 38 Trevor Square is an exception and has been enlarged and embellished with stucco decoration.



Figure 21: Trevor Place, the north-east terrace

4.33 The transition in architectural style between terraces of different ages is visible in architectural detailing. Following a similar pattern, although slightly later in date, are the three-storey, early Victorian buildings on **Trevor Place** (Figure 21). This street has a more mixed character overall, with variations between the northern and southern sections. However, most properties incorporate a heavy stucco cornice at parapet level and stucco window surrounds. Windows are again 6-over-6 sashes but doors have simpler rectangular fanlights. To the south of the street the end houses are marked by additional attic storeys and giant pilasters. To the north, the western half of the street is a 1980s terrace of houses and, whilst not making a significant contribution to the area, these maintain the scale and form of the earlier buildings.

4.34 In neighbouring **Montpelier Square** detailing is similar to the Trevor Estate terraces but the houses are larger and grander: four storeys and a basement. The northern side is in yellow stock with channelled stucco to ground floor and there is a continuous balcony at first-floor level, with decorative ironwork railings of



Figure 22: Montpelier Square, north side several different designs. Most window openings have stucco surrounds, some with pediments above. A simple moulded cornice runs the length of the terraces at parapet level, below recent roof extensions.



Figure 23: Montpelier Square, south side

4.35 These terraces were built over three decades from the 1830s to 1850s and again show a transition in style. There is also much variety of detailing between different buildings and to each side of the square, which adds interest to the area. A particular feature of the north side is the number of houses with later alterations to ground-floor level, especially shallow bay windows inserted in place of the original sashes. The south side of the square is the earliest and forms a set piece, entirely rendered in stucco (Figure 23). There are a number of later roof extensions here, some poorly detailed.





Figure 24: Rutland Gate

4.36 Moving west to **Rutland Gate** (Figure 24) there is a more marked change in the style of terraces, which are considerably grander. To the southern part of the street, these are fully in stucco, with each property three bays wide. The rhythm of grand projecting porches set on Tuscan pillars with railings above is an important feature of the street scene. Window surrounds are embellished with Corinthian pilasters and pediments to first floor and there is a heavy parapet level. The northern part of the street has a more mixed character including mid 20th century flatblocks. The two ‘gateway’ blocks to Rutland Gate are again large scale stucco townhouses—though those on the west side are a 1980s pastiche.

4.37 To the west of this **Ennismore Gardens** includes a terrace on the east side built first, and is similar in detail to Rutland Gate and three mid/late Victorian



Figure 25: Ennismore Gardens



Figure 26: Porch detail, Ennismore Gardens

terraces around a private garden dating from 1870.

4.38 The three later terraces are faced in ashlar and are larger (five storeys) with cornices marking each floor, pediments above first-floor windows and porches, most with Corinthian columns but which vary in detail between terraces. They also have bay windows at ground-floor level to the south and north terraces.

4.39 Finally, the terraces of **Prince’s Gate**, its continuation on **Exhibition Road**



Figures 27 and 28: Prince’s Gardens, north side (above) and west side (below)



and **Prince's Gardens** are the largest and grandest in the area, although many houses were demolished or converted. Entirely stuccoed, the classical detailing is more fanciful, including balustrades to balconies rather than railings and swags, decorative corbels and raised quoins.

### Mews and Workers' Housing

4.40 There are also several mews within this part of the conservation area, particularly to the east and south. These are characterised by their intimate scale and are generally two storeys in height and relate to the plot width of the principal building with which they are associated.

4.41 Constructed in brick and usually simply and robustly detailed, most mews originally had timber carriage doors to the ground floor and smaller openings above, usually with timber sash windows.

4.42 Although some mews in the conservation area have been substantially altered, these tend to retain the character, scale and form of traditional Georgian or Victorian mews buildings.



Figure 30 and 31: Original timber carriage doors (above) and arched entranceway leading to Rutland Gardens Mews (left)

4.43 A particularly well-preserved mews is Ennismore Gardens Mews; an L-shaped mews to the south and east of Ennismore Gardens. Many of the buildings here retain original features, including a consistent and unbroken roof parapet line. Ennismore Gardens Mews has a guidance booklet, *Ennismore Gardens Mews: a*



Figure 29: Ennismore Mews



Figure 32: Picturesque street scene in Ennismore Gardens Mews



*Guide to Alterations*, setting out in detail Westminster's policy on development work here. This forms an appendix to this Audit.

4.44 Relton Mews (Figure 33) is another distinctive and largely intact later Victorian mews in yellow brick with red-brick detailing. Important characteristics of this mews include the hipped slate roofs, prominent chimney stacks and pots, and simple arched window openings. Relton Mews is also subject of a planning guidance document: *Relton Mews: Guidelines for Alterations* (see appendix).



Figure 33: Relton Mews

4.45 There have also been some small-scale new buildings inserted into Ennismore Mews and the mews behind Rutland Gate terraces. These are largely contextual in terms of design and materials.

4.46 The significant features of Knightsbridge mews, which should be retained or reinstated are:

- Scale: both the small size of mews buildings, and their scale in relation to their primary buildings, are defining characteristics.
- Materials: brick and timber are the principal building materials in the mews.
- Doors and window openings: timber coach doors, often with small unit glazing to the upper part, winch doors and sliding sash windows are all

typical of mews, and important to their character.

- Paving materials and pattern: the use of setts, usually granite, and their arrangement with central or side gutters are of great importance to the character of mews.
- Architectural details: winch brackets, stone bollards, lanterns and cast-iron rainwater goods.

4.47 In addition to the mews, there are some streets in the Knightsbridge Conservation Area which do not have service buildings attached to a specific primary building, but are smaller workers' houses, nonetheless built to the scale and form of traditional mews, although often set back behind railings. Montpelier Walk, Rutland and Fairholt Streets are examples of this form of development.



Figure 34: Smaller workers' houses in Montpelier Walk



Figure 35: Montpelier Place



## Other Buildings

4.48 There are a number of other infill buildings within this part of the conservation area. Of particular note is the Harrods warehouse at the bottom of Trevor Square dating from 1913-20. This creates an unusual variation in the scale and height of buildings in the area and is constructed in red brick and terracotta, unusual in the east of the area.



Figure 36: The former Harrods warehouse makes up one side of Trevor Square

4.49 There are also several Victorian churches within the area. The only Gothic building, the **Deutsche Evangelische Christuskirche**, is in Montpelier Place, and the **Russian Orthodox Cathedral** is in Ennsimore Gardens. These are discussed in more detail in the Landmark Buildings section later in the Audit.



Figure 37: Deutsche Evangelische Christuskirche

4.50 Also of interest is some of the larger scale, early-mid 20th century development,



Figure 38: Eresby House, Rutland Gate

mostly flat blocks which are located along Knightsbridge and in the Gates. T. P. Bennett & Son's Eresby House (1934) in Rutland Gate is an Art Deco block in brick with Portland stone dressings. Although somewhat out of scale with adjoining buildings, it is an attractive building of its type, the curved corners of the projecting front wings giving a slight streamlined effect to its design. Important decorative features include balcony fronts in a basket-weave pattern and a stone relief above the attractive, chrome, main entrance.

4.51 Prince's Gate, an inter-war block is located at 59-63 Exhibition Road, a de luxe apartment block of the 1938 by Adie, Button & Partners. Replacement windows have marred its appearance slightly; however,



Figure 39: 59-63 Exhibition Road

it is an interesting early-modernist block whose colour and façade treatment echoes the rusticated ground and first floors of the 19th century houses nearby.



Figure 40: Weeks Hall in context

4.52 Finally, the area around Princes Gate has also had a number of more recent buildings inserted within it, largely related to Imperial College. This includes the 1957 Weeks Hall by Sheppard Robson, which is listed. There is at the time of writing a programme of rebuilding taking place within the University, which has already replaced halls of residence on the south side of the Prince's Square and built a sports centre on the north side. This has been designed to echo the colour, scale and fenestration of the original terraces better than the earlier buildings.



Figure 41: Ethos, the recently built Imperial College sports centre, next to a late 19th century terrace

## Knightsbridge Conservation Area West (Area 2)

4.53 To the west of Exhibition Road the architectural character changes completely. This area is characterised by large-scale late Victorian and Edwardian buildings, set on curving streets around the Albert Hall and using a combination of bright red brick, stone and terracotta, in marked contrast to the stucco buildings in adjoining areas. These are mostly either mansion flats or buildings for Imperial College and other educational or cultural institutions. The exception are the more conventional townhouses on Queen's Gate.

4.54 The area was not built to a master plan and there is no uniformity of design. Whilst buildings use similar materials they are in quite different styles - classical, eclectic, Dutch and Domestic Revival and many of the buildings are richly detailed and decorated, a variety which adds considerably to the townscape.

### Cultural and Institutional Buildings

4.55 The area is best known for its cultural and institutional buildings, which were constructed over a period of around 60 years on the northern part of the site acquired from the proceeds of the 1851 exhibition. The majority of these are listed and many form well-known landmarks. These are therefore described in more detail in the section on Landmark Buildings below.

4.56 Built first was the ostentatious **Albert Memorial**, by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, dated 1863-72. This glittering structure topped by a Gothic spire is set on the axis of Albertopolis. The **Albert Hall** opposite contrasts in style and was built to designs by Captain Francis Fowke, in 1867-71, in red brick and with a distinctive elliptical roof form. Both are listed Grade I (see list description in Directory).



4.57 Adjacent to this and perhaps the most unusual building in the area is the colourful **Royal College of Organists** by H.H. Cole, constructed in 1875-76. The cream, pale blue and maroon sgraffito (incised plaster) decoration is by F.W. Moody and a frieze of musicians decorates the front elevation.



Figure 42: The Royal College of Music

4.58 South of this, the grand **Royal College of Music** by Blomfield, dates from 1890. It is on the axis with the Albert Hall and also in red brick, with stone dressings. It is in contrasting grand French Baronial style with two tall corner turrets and the entrance in the projecting central stone bay.

4.59 The **Royal School of Mines**, now part of Imperial College, on Prince Consort Road is another imposing building but differs from the other buildings in the area.



Figure 43: The Royal School of Mines, Imperial College

It is in an Edwardian classical revival style with a Portland stone facade, including monumental statuary.

4.60 Also on Prince Consort Road, and of more modest design, the unlisted **Beit Hall** is set around a quadrangle with the Imperial College Union to the rear; this also has a frontage to Bremner Street. The back by Sir Aston Webb was built in 1910-11 and enlarged 1955 and the front by Maurice Webb in 1929.



Figure 44: Beit Hall from Prince Consort Road

4.61 Of a much more intimate scale and picturesque appearance is **Lowther Lodge** 1873-75, at the corner with Exhibition Road. By Norman Shaw and in Queen Anne style, this house has been occupied by the Royal Geographical Institution since 1911. Again in red brick it has tall chimneys, Dutch pilasters and gables. In 1929 Kennedy & Nightingale enlarged the building westwards to create a lecture theatre on the site of the stable block. It has a modern glazed extension to Exhibition Road dating from 2003.

Figure 45: Gable to Lowther Lodge, with inset floral motif







Figure 46: 29 Exhibition Road and 1 Lowther Street

4.62 Of similar style are the two houses at **29 Exhibition Road** and **1 Lowther Gardens** dating from 1876 by J J Stevenson and again in red brick in Queen Anne style, with asymmetric windows and gables, decorated with cut brickwork.



Figure 47: The Royal College of Art

4.63 The main 20th century building in the area is the **Royal College of Art**, a dark brick and concrete block of 1956-59, which is Grade II listed. It is the highest building along the length of Knightsbridge (except the barracks tower which is outside the boundaries of the conservation area). The massing of the building was intended to complement Albert Hall Mansions, to the east of the Albert Hall, when seen from the park.

4.64 Also on Prince Consort Road the **Holy Trinity Church** by G.F. Bodley is Grade I listed (see list description in the Directory).

## Mansion Blocks

4.65 Immediately adjacent to and south of the Albert Hall are a number of luxurious, large-scale Victorian and Edwardian mansion blocks in bright red brick. These are of a distinctive late Victorian/Edwardian character, incorporating modelled fronts, bay windows, tall roofs with shaped gables and tall chimneys.

4.66 Some of the most prominent are **Albert Hall Mansions** of 1880-87 by Norman Shaw, Driver and Rew. These three blocks are Domestic Revival in character, with steep Gothic roofs and high chimneys. The symmetrical front block faces the park. The rear block's detailing is simpler and balconies run along each floor, a feature particularly effective as the building curves sinuously towards Prince Consort Road following the layout of the Royal Horticultural Society Gardens.



Figure 48: Albert Hall Mansions, front view



Figure 49: Rear blocks to Albert Hall Mansions

4.67 On the opposite side of the road, south-east of the Albert Hall, **Albert Court** by R.J. Worley (1894–1900) occupies a large triangular site, also fronting Prince Consort Road. It is extremely large in scale, of seven storeys over basement with attic storey, its mass broken up by horizontal stone banding and dressings, bay windows and corner turrets.



Figure 50: Albert Hall Court viewed from Prince Consort Road

4.68 To the east of the Albert Hall on Bremner Road, the attractive **Queen Alexandra's House** was constructed in the 1880s as student accommodation. Of dark red brick, it follows the curve of the road, the elevation subdivided by projecting bays, with the most prominent features being the stepped Dutch gables and projecting entrance bay.

4.69 Of a plainer stripped classical design is the unlisted **Prince's Gate Court** on Exhibition Road dating from 1927 by T.P. Bennett and Sons. This simple and



Figure 51: Queen Alexandra's House



Figure 52: Prince's Gate Court

attractive building is a good example of its type and date but somewhat monolithic in scale.

### Queen's Gate and Jays Mews

4.70 Finally, and in contrast to the rest of this part of the conservation area, Queen's Gate was developed with a range of expensive townhouses in a variety of styles. To the north of the street and on the Knightsbridge frontage are large Italianate stucco buildings which are similar in



Figure 53: Houses on Queen's Gate



Figure 54: Jays Mews



character to those found elsewhere in Kensington. Further south, Nos.190-196 are a more eclectic late Victorian group with stepped gables and in a mix of red brick and stucco, which are more similar in character to the rest of this part of the conservation area. To the rear of Queen's Gate, Jays Mews is an attractive group of Victorian mews buildings (Figure 54).

## Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area

4.71 Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area shares some characteristics with the western part of Knightsbridge. It is dominated by its late Victorian/ Edwardian townscape which tends to be large in scale and uses a palette of red brick and stone.



Figure 55: Park Mansions

4.72 Of particular significance to this character is **Park Mansions**, a block of flats and shops erected in 1897-1902. This occupies the eastern triangle of the Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area, also known as **Scotch Corner**. The site was developed in two phases: the eastern corner in 1897-98, and the western part in 1900-02. Between these two parts, the Park Mansions Arcade was built with a central octagon under a glazed cupola, subsequently known as the Knights Arcade and now incorporated into a shop. The building rises to a prominent eight storeys at the intersection between Knightsbridge

and Brompton Road. Faced in red brick and Bath stone, with red granite pilasters, it has double height shopfronts to the groundfloor.

4.73 Windows vary in size and composition but are all timber sash in design, with stone Gibbs-style surround. The rhythm of bays is also varied, arranged with alternate protruding bay windows.

4.74 The mansard roof has dormer windows broken up by a central three-window-wide gable. Tall red-brick stacks further divide the skyline with the most striking element being the circular tower to the corner (Figure 56).



Figure 56: Corner tower to Park Mansions

4.75 The Grade II listed **Paxton's Head** public house (1900-02 by G.D. Martin) was rebuilt as part of the western section



Figure 57: Elevation to Knightsbridge with Paxton's Head at ground-floor level



of Park Mansions. Seven storeys, it is also in red brick with stone dressings, the first floor painted. The mansard roof is in slate and a red brick stack straddles the angle of the roof.

**4.76 Nos. 159 and 161 Knightsbridge** (on the corner of Knightsbridge Green) originally consisted of 18 apartments known as 'Hyde Park Chambers', but were converted in the 1960s into the Knightsbridge Green Hotel. It has red-brick upper storeys, stone dressings and timber sashes.

**4.77** The narrow passage of **Knightsbridge Green** is one of the few remaining features that survived post-war redevelopment and has a much more intimate scale. This now houses a number of small-scale retail and restaurant premises giving the passage a unique character. Buildings are in red brick with square-headed timber sashes.



Figure 58:  
Knightsbridge  
Green

**4.78 Nos. 24-26 Brompton Road** occupy the corner plot of Knightsbridge Green onto Brompton Road. This is a four-storey early 20th century building, resembling a small-scale warehouse, in stucco and red brick with casement windows. **Nos. 15-17 Knightsbridge Green** are also part of this building with a two-storey stucco surround to the shopfront and red-brick facing to the upper façade.

**4.79** The former **Normandie Hotel, Nos. 163–169 Knightsbridge**, was built as the Knightsbridge Palace Hotel in 1910–11 for the Land and Leasehold Securities Company Ltd and leased to the West End Hotel Syndicate Ltd. The hotel was designed by the Viennese-born architect Paul Hoffmann, a specialist in large offices and apartment blocks. In red brick with stone dressings and bay windows overlooking Knightsbridge, its style could be described as Edwardian Baroque.

**4.80** In 1937 the Knightsbridge Hotel ('Palace' having been dropped by 1918) was renamed the Normandie. It closed c.1977 and the upper floors were then converted to apartments for 'holiday' lets. Since 1987 the building has been vacant and permission has been granted for its demolition.



Figure 59:  
Normandie Hotel

**4.81 Wellington Court** (1895), north of Knightsbridge on the Hyde Park side, is faced in red brick with Portland stone dressings. Floor-to-ceiling window openings and French doors onto iron-railed balconies with console brackets give the building a more Continental European appearance. The ground floor is grand in detailing, with Corinthian columns dividing stucco bays.

**4.82** The back elevation, looking onto Hyde Park, has varied fenestration and bay composition. Console brackets in Portland stone support balconied areas with French doors opening up the façade.



Figure 60: Wellington Court viewed from South Carriage Drive

4.83 **Albert Gate Court** (1887), is adjacent and of similar design to Wellington Court. Faced in red brick with Portland stone dressings, it has cast-iron decorative balconies across the entire façade. The square-headed 2-light timber sash windows have stone Gibbs surround detailing and there are softer single-light round-headed sashes on the angled façade moving into Park Close. Its Dutch gables dominate the roofline onto Knightsbridge. It dates from 1887 and was designed by Henry Charles Newmarch.



Figure 61: Window detail, Wellington Court

4.84 Ground-floor premises are dominated by retail on the Knightsbridge side while residential premises are located to the Hyde Park side. The narrow 2-bay-wide back elevation is consistent on all storeys, consisting of one canted bay framing a 2-light central window next to a flat 2-light window section with an iron-railed balcony across the entire façade.



Figures 62 and 63: Albert Gate Court, park elevation, (left) and its Knightsbridge roofline, (below)



Figure 64: Entrance doorway to Park Lodge

4.85 **Park Close** is a narrow passage providing access from Knightsbridge to Hyde Park. Several shopfronts are found on the lower levels as well as entrances to the residential blocks Albert Gate Court and Park Lodge. The architecture to the side elevations is understated with simple unadorned red-brick facades.

4.86 **Park Lodge**, at the back of Wellington Court, is entered off the narrow Park Close passage. Completed in 1892, it was designed by G Martin and E Purchase. Faced in red brick, with similar stone detailing to both Wellington and Albert Gate Court, this has led to windows with variations in coloured and decorated glass.

## Albert Gate Conservation Area

4.87 Albert Gate has a surprisingly mixed architectural character, with a range of different building types and materials and buildings of varying scale. At the centre are Thomas Cubitt's grand stucco houses to Albert Gate, aligned with modest Victorian terraced houses to William Street. These are quite different in scale and character to the rest of Knightsbridge, and more akin to neighbouring Belgravia. Flanking these, and lining the rest of the main road, are much larger late Victorian and Edwardian buildings, more typical of Knightsbridge.



Figure 65: Albert Gate

4.88 **Nos. 1 and 2 Albert Gate** face each other, with elevations to both Knightsbridge and South Carriage Drive. These were designed by Thomas Cubitt in the 1840s as a classical set piece to create a grand entrance to Hyde Park. Both are five storeys and fully in stucco, rusticated to the ground floor. They use grand Italianate detailing, including pedimented window surrounds at first-floor level and balustraded balconies to the second floor. No. 1 Albert Gate (The French Embassy) was extended in 1899-1902 to create **58 Knightsbridge**, a three-storey stucco-fronted building, which echoes the detailing of the main building

4.89 Aligned with Albert Gate, **1-12 William Street** is a modest, early Victorian terrace. This is simply detailed, in yellow



Figure 66: 1-12 William Street

stock brick, and is canted along the line of the street. The roof is set behind a straight parapet and there are shopfronts at ground-floor level. Above the shopfronts there is an attractive continuous projecting cast-iron balcony (from Nos. 4-12), set on cast-iron brackets. Windows are 6-over-6 sashes, most replaced at first-floor level. Nos. 1-3 have been more substantially altered and painted.

4.90 **Nos. 55-91 Knightsbridge** are a particularly attractive group of Grade II listed Edwardian flats above shops. Designed by W.D. Carøe, this large block is in red brick, with richly carved stone dressings. Bow windows subdivide the elevation and windows are leaded lights. A plaque records the year of building as that of Edward VI's coronation, 1902.

4.91 On the northern side of Knightsbridge, **Parkside Flats**, Nos. 26-56, are more simply detailed. Designed



Figure 67: Nos. 55-91 Knightsbridge



by A.H. Hart and Leslie Waterhouse and erected in 1906–7 by the Waring White Building Company Ltd, the block is six storeys and in red brick, with horizontal banding and dressings of Hartham Park stone. Windows are multi-pane casements. It has had a very large and prominent roof extension (see Negative Features).

4.92 On the opposite side of Albert Gate, beyond 2 Albert Gate (the Embassy of the State of Kuwait), **Hyde Park House, No. 60 Knightsbridge**, is a 1960s L-shaped block faced in grey Spanish granite, and raised on an irregularly shaped two-storey podium clad in dark marble. It is simply detailed with horizontal strips of windows.



Figure 68: Parkside Flats detail



Figure 69: Hyde Park House from the park

4.93 Next to this, **64 Knightsbridge**, formerly a bank, is smaller in scale and was designed by Frederick W. Porter. Grade II listed, it dates from 1885. It is faced in stone, with giant Corinthian columns to the upper floors.

4.94 Perhaps the most flamboyant building in the conservation area is the grand



Figure 70: 64 Knightsbridge



Figure 71: Hyde Park Hotel

Mandarin Oriental **Hyde Park Hotel**, a tall building, dating from 1890 in red brick with stone dressings. In extravagant high Victorian style, it has a picturesque skyline of turrets and pediments.

#### POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

Any proposal should take into account the character of its context. Policy DES 1 A should be consulted on the principles of development, DES 4 for infill development and DES 5 for alterations and extensions.

Original architectural features, materials and detail are vital to the architectural quality of individual buildings and the character of the Conservation Area. Policy DES 9 C encourages reinstatement of missing traditional features to the original design detail and materials. Other relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents are noted throughout the audit.

## Roof Profiles

4.95 Roof profiles are fundamental to the architectural character of any building or group of buildings and, as such, contribute to the character and appearance of conservation areas. Alterations at roof level, including extensions, terraces, telecommunications equipment and roof plant, can have a negative impact on this.

4.96 As part of the conservation area study a survey of roof profiles has been undertaken. This identifies, for example, where buildings have already been extended or are designed with an existing roof storey, making it unlikely a roof extension would be acceptable, or where buildings may have a historic roof structure of interest. Findings are described below and identified on the maps at Figures 75 and 76.

4.97 This survey has been undertaken from street level only and a full analysis of proposals would be required as part of any application received, considering amenity and other implications. It should also be noted that a high proportion of buildings in these three conservation areas are listed. The roof form, structure and materials of listed buildings are very often of interest, and where historic fabric exists this should generally be retained. Where a listed building has been identified as suitable for roof extension, this is in townscape terms only and further analysis would be required as part of any application to establish the impact on historic fabric.

### **Knightsbridge Conservation Area West (Area 2)**

4.98 In Area 2 the majority of buildings are listed, late Victorian buildings with flamboyant roofscapes, integral to their architectural composition. Non-listed buildings in this area also tend to be of a relatively large but consistent scale, with limited capacity for extra roof-level accommodation.



Figure 72: Stepped, Victorian gabled roofscape to Queen Alexandra's House

### **Knightsbridge Conservation Area East (Area 1)**

4.99 Most buildings in the eastern half of Knightsbridge are terraced Victorian townhouses. These were detailed as groups and most originally with their roofs concealed behind a parapet. A large number of these have had mansard roof extensions added, especially in Rutland Gardens and Ennismore Gardens.



Figure 73: Montpelier Square West; the terrace to this side of the street has a consistent roof profile with no mansard extensions above the line of the parapet

4.100 There are some instances in this area where a well-designed roof extension would fill in unsightly gaps to the roofscape caused by ad-hoc extensions.

4.101 Other terraces in this area retain a parapet line unbroken by roof extensions. Roof extension to these terraces would disrupt the unity of groups and is therefore unlikely to be acceptable.

## Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area

4.102 Within Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area there are a number of large mansion blocks, with elaborate roofs incorporating mansards, gables and turrets. These are generally of a consistent scale and their distinctive character means that further upward extensions are unlikely to be acceptable. On Knightsbridge Green itself, the buildings are smaller in scale, but many buildings already have roof extensions.

## Albert Gate Conservation Area

4.103 Albert Gate has a variety of roof profiles, reflecting its varied architectural character.

4.104 As in Knightsbridge Green, there are a number of large, late Victorian mansion blocks, with distinctive rooflines, visible in views across Hyde Park. Some of the buildings in the area, for example, the Mandarin Oriental Hotel (Figure 74) have had unsympathetic alterations at roof level, which damage the existing roofscape. Where this is the case, then alteration/extension which rationalises and improves the roofscape is likely to be acceptable in principle.



Figure 74: The picturesque roofscape of turrets and gables to the hotel in Albert Gate could be damaged by insensitive roof extension

4.105 William Street is a terrace of townhouses of smaller scale, with roofs hidden behind a parapet. Any upward extension here would disrupt the unity of the group.

4.106 Throughout all three conservation areas there are examples of unsympathetic later roof extensions and alterations (see Negative Features below). Improvements to these will be encouraged as part of redevelopment proposals. Properties where it is considered roof extensions are unlikely to be acceptable are shown on the maps at **Figures 75** and **76**.

### POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

Policy DES6 of the UDP highlights instances where roof extensions and other roof structures are unlikely to be acceptable without proper justification.

Further advice is given in the publication 'Roofs: A Guide to Alterations and Extensions on Domestic Buildings' (1995). 'Mews: A Guide to Alterations' explains how these policies apply in mews streets.



Figure 75: Roof profiles in Knightsbridge Conservation Area

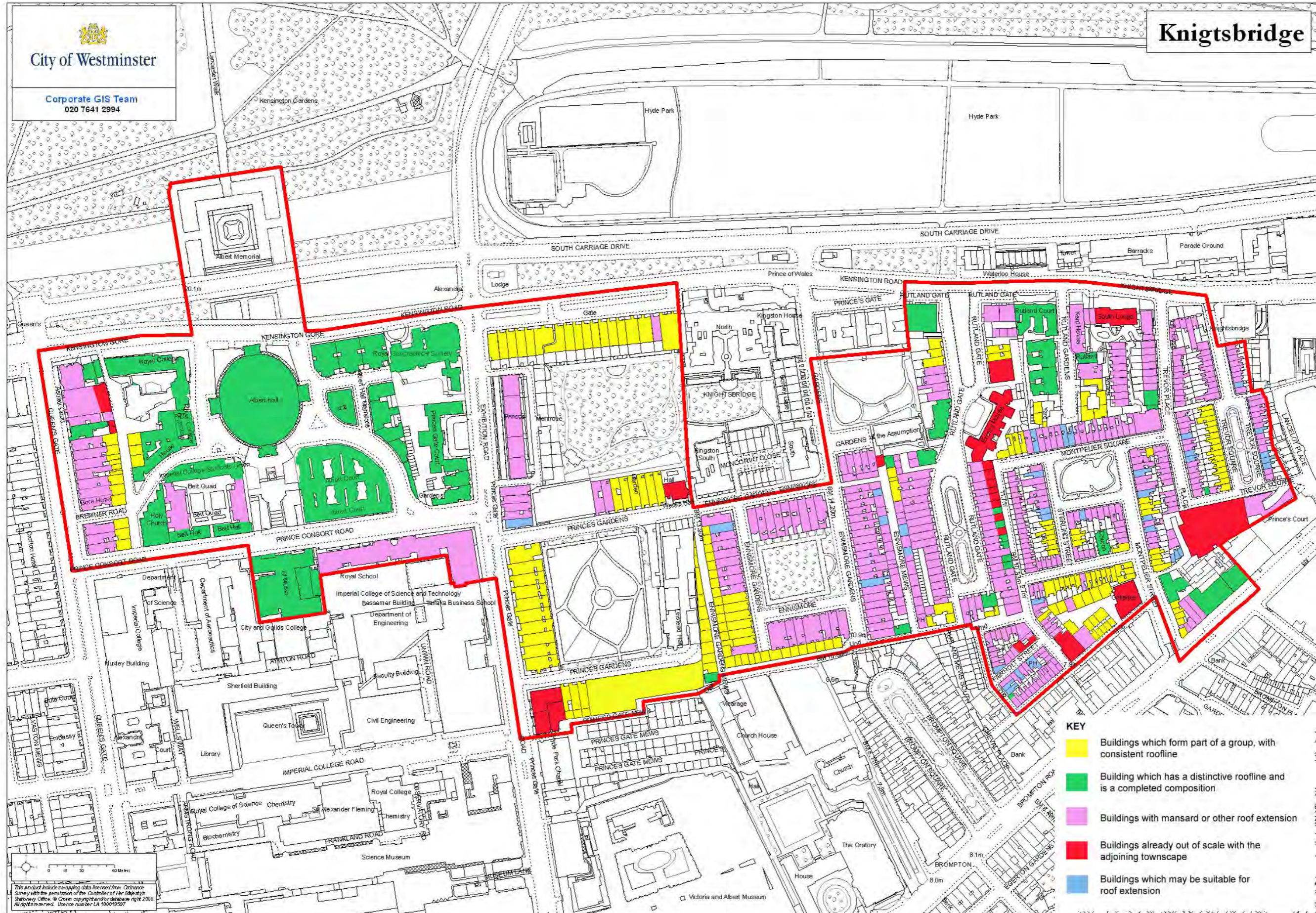
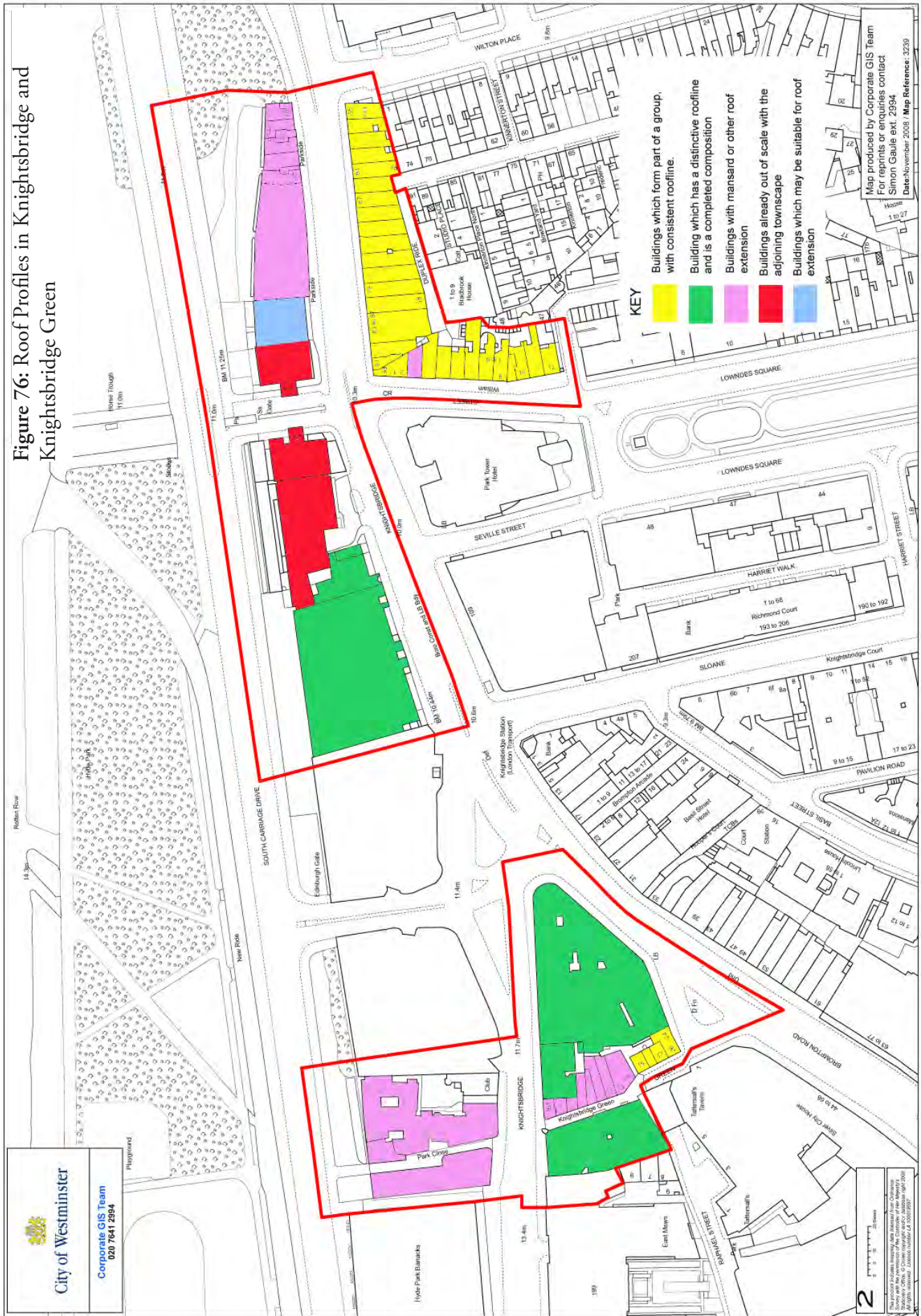




Figure 76: Roof Profiles in Knightsbridge and Knightsbridge Green



## Unlisted Buildings of Merit

4.107 More modest unlisted buildings also contribute to the character and quality of the local area. This may be due to their value within the townscape, their architectural qualities or local historic and cultural associations. They are defined in the audits as 'Unlisted Buildings of Merit'. By definition these properties are considered to be of value to the character and appearance of the conservation area and their demolition or unsympathetic alteration will normally be resisted.

4.108 Those buildings which have been identified as unlisted buildings of merit and listed are described for each conservation area below and identified on the maps at **Figures 77** and **78**.

### Knightsbridge Conservation Area

4.109 The vast majority of 19th century terraced housing and the large institutional buildings of South Kensington are listed. However, there are some later or less uniform terraces not included in the statutory list, as well as mansion houses in Rutland Gate and Rutland Gardens. Not necessarily of high individual architectural value, they still contribute considerably to the character of the local townscape.

4.110 The 20th century red-brick buildings in South Kensington have been built to complement their surroundings- the Royal Albert Hall, Albert Mansions and Court, and the Royal College of Music. Although most are listed, those which are not generally relate well to their context and are considered to be of merit.

4.111 Most notably, the many mews houses of Knightsbridge are not listed. These are fundamental to the area's character, in terms of their history as workers' housing, stabling and workshops, as well as in terms of their appearance and contribution to the local townscape.

- **Cheval Place** (*evens*) 2-10, 26-46
- **Ennismore Gardens** 35
- **Ennismore Gardens Mews** (*odds*) 1-9, 11a-31, (*evens*) 2-16, 20, 20a, 26-32
- **Exhibition Road** 1-38, 9-88
- **Fairholt Street** (*odds*) 3-5, (*evens*) 6-10
- **Jay Mews** 2-8, 12-30, 41-45
- **Kent Yard** 1-5
- **Knightsbridge/Rutland Gardens**  
Rutland Court
- **Lowther Gardens** 1
- **Montpelier Mews** 9,10
- **Montpelier Place** 1-5, 18-23, 25-29
- **Montpelier Square** 44-47
- **Montpelier Street** 10-18
- **Montpelier Walk** 1-29, 33-35, 38-45, 57
- **Montrose Court** 1-8
- **Prince Consort Road** Beit Hall
- **Prince's Gardens** 1-7 (Ethos), 46-48, Imperial College halls of residence on the south side
- **Prince's Gardens Mews** 1-8, 11-37
- **Prince's Gate** 59-63
- **Queen's Gate** 189-195
- **Relton Mews** 2-8, 10-13
- **Rutland Mews West** 1-4
- **Rutland Mews East** 1-3
- **Rutland Gardens** 1, 2, Kent House, Rutland House, The Lodge, Rutland Lodge
- **Rutland Gate** 2-8, 24, Eresby House
- **Rutland Gate Mews** 1-5
- **Rutland Street** (*evens*) 2-6, 10-28
- **Sterling Street** 9,10



- **Trevor Place** 2-24, 25-36
- **Trevor Square** 19-22
- **Trevor Street** 17

### **Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area**

4.112 Knightsbridge Green has only one listed building, but almost all other buildings within the area have been identified as of merit. These were all built at a similar time and relate to each other in terms of style and materials.

- **Brompton Road** (*evens*) 2-26

**Knightsbridge** (*evens*) 118-124, (*odds*) 127-151, 155-161, Park Lodge Studio Club

### **Knightsbridge Green 7-17**

- **Park Close** 1-7
- **Wellington Court** 1-40

### **Albert Gate Conservation Area**

4.113 The majority of buildings in Albert Gate are listed but there are a number of unlisted buildings of note. The flamboyant Mandarin Oriental (formerly Hyde Park) Hotel is a good example of High Victorian architecture. Other buildings, such as 1-4 William Street complete the listed terrace and relate to this in scale and detail, although they have been altered. They are therefore also identified as of merit.

- **Knightsbridge** (*evens*) 28-30, 38-50, 54-56, 66
- **Parkside Knightsbridge** (*evens*) 1-46
- **William Street** 1-4

4.114 Within the conservation area there are buildings which are considered to neither detract from nor enhance the character of the conservation area. These are identified as making a neutral contribution, meaning that their scale and materials may blend with the local townscape but could be of bland appearance or these may be buildings which have been altered to a significant extent. Those buildings identified as neutral are also shown on the map at **Figure 77**.

#### **POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE**

Policy DES9 B states that permission will not normally be given for proposals which involve the demolition or substantial demolition of buildings which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Permission will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the existing building cannot be repaired or adapted so as to extend its useful life and that the proposed development will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. The requirement may be balanced against the City Council's other policy objectives.

The English Heritage Guidance: *Conservation Area Appraisals* (2006) sets out the criteria for assessing the contribution made by unlisted buildings to the character and appearance of conservation areas.



Figure 77 : Map of unlisted buildings of merit, listed buildings, neutral and negative buildings in Knightsbridge Conservation Area

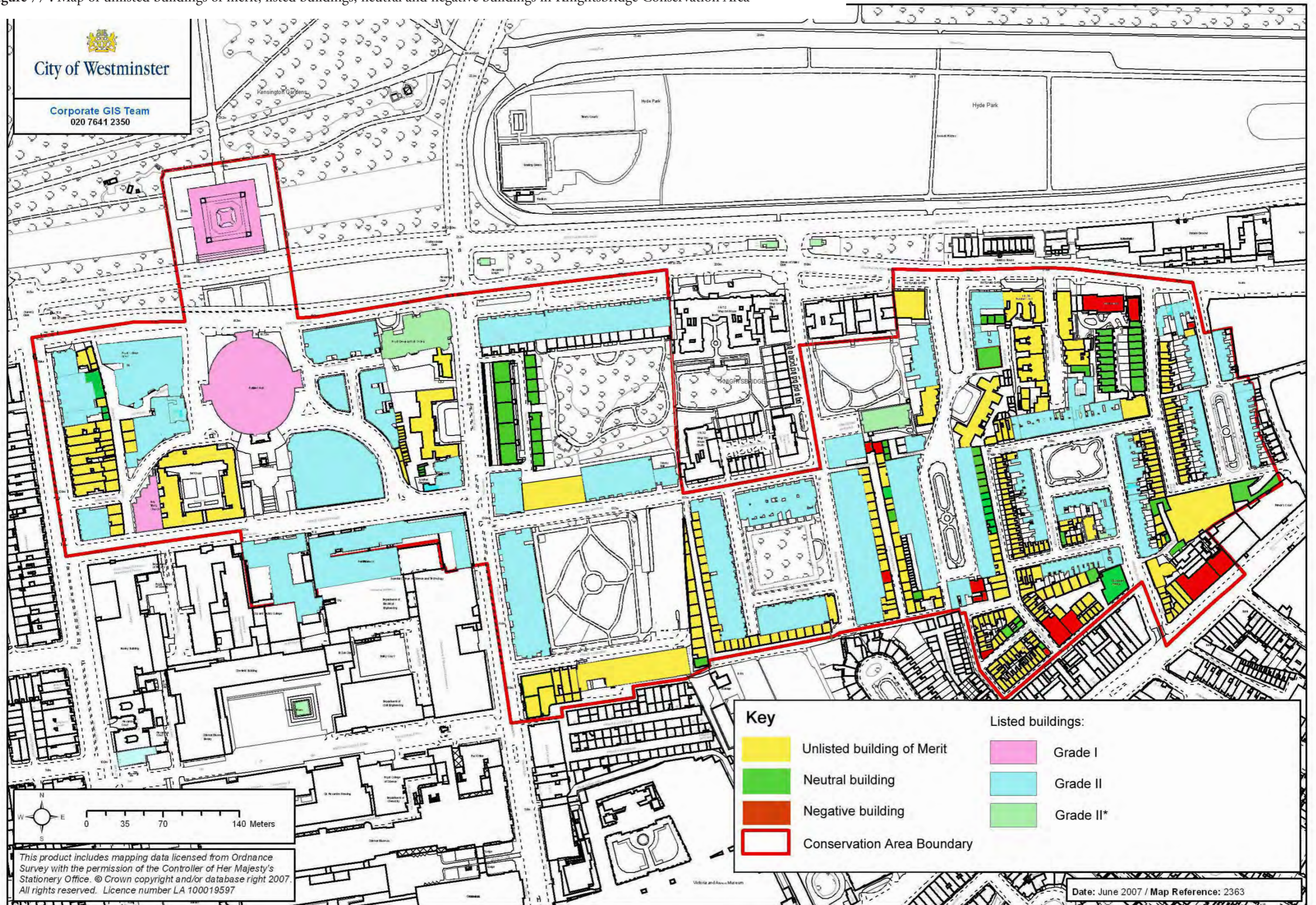
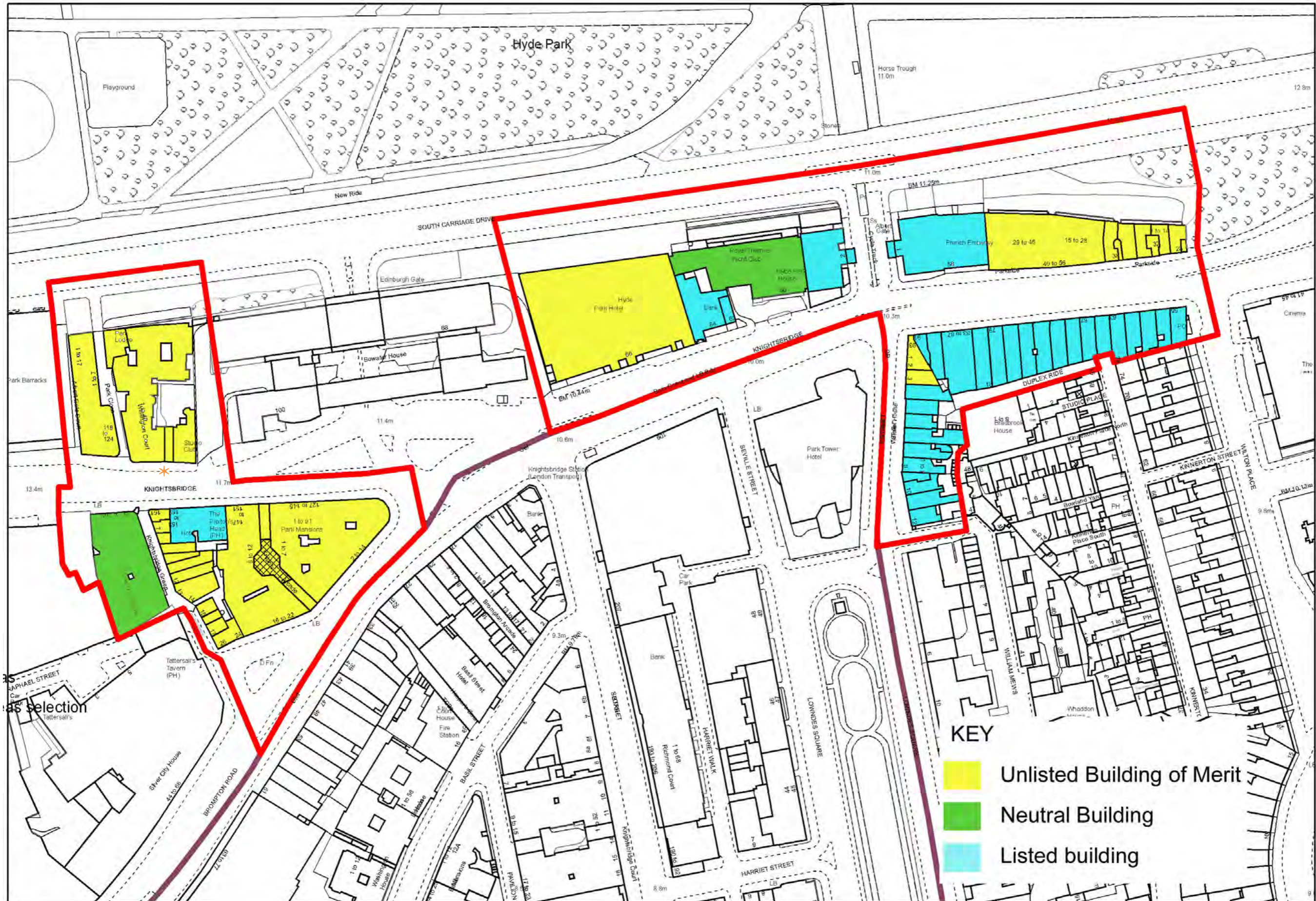




Figure 78: Unlisted buildings of merit in Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green Conservation Areas





## Landmark Buildings

4.115 Landmark buildings are those that, due to their height, location and detailed design, stand out from their background. They contribute significantly to the character and townscape of the area, being focal points or key elements in views.

### Knightsbridge Conservation Area

4.116 Landmark buildings in Knightsbridge are those which stand out from the more usual Victorian and Georgian terraces, mansion or mews houses. These include churches, the Royal Albert Hall and the educational institutions surrounding it.



Figure 79: The Royal Albert Hall from the south with the Great Exhibition Memorial in the foreground

4.117 There are three churches in the area. The **Deutsche Evangelische Christuskirche** in Montpelier Place, although small, stands out from its surroundings, being built in a Gothic style in red brick and stone. The **Russian Orthodox Cathedral**, Ennismore Gardens, (formerly All Saints Church) is built of stone in a Lombardic style. This appears exotic in the context and the campanile is visible from many parts of the area. **Holy Trinity Church**, Prince Consort Road, is Gothic in style and built in Bath limestone. It stands out from the other buildings on this block which are almost entirely red brick.

4.118 The **Albert Memorial** at 53 metres high, and encrusted from top to toe in decoration and sculpture, is highly visible in views across Hyde Park and forms a key part of the history of the area. As such, it is considered to be a landmark.



Figure 80: The Albert Memorial of 1872 by George Gilbert Scott

4.119 The **Royal Albert Hall** on Kensington Gore is a well-known public building of very unusual form. Built of red brick decorated with terracotta, the hall takes the form of an amphitheatre with a grey, metal-domed roof. Running around the building is a continuous frieze, again in terracotta, depicting the triumph of the Arts and Letters. It is visible from Hyde Park as well as from Exhibition Road and Prince Consort Road. It is historically important as central to the design of 'Albertopolis', the cultural area of educational institutions now known as South Kensington. Events held in the hall draw many visitors to the area.

4.120 The **Royal College of Organists** is an unusual and individual building which contrasts with the red brick and terracotta of the Albert Hall. The facade is decorated with timber and flat plaster panels rather



than mouldings. Although different to its surroundings in terms of scale, it is unlike any other building in the area, or indeed in the city. It is now a private residence.



Figure 81: The Royal College of Organists designed by Lieutenant H.H. Cole and built 1874-75

4.121 The **Royal College of Music** on Prince Consort Road is an eclectic mid-Victorian building which combines steep Gothic roofs and towers with classical detailing in the same red brick and buff terracotta as the Royal Albert Hall. Its symmetrical facade is on the same axis as the hall and together they make a formal composition.

### **Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green Conservation Areas**

4.122 Park Mansions, Knightsbridge, is a triangular block at the corner of Knightsbridge and Brompton Road. While not particularly high, the flamboyant Edwardian architecture and the highly prominent location at the corner of two busy and well-known roads make it a local landmark.

4.123 None of the buildings within Albert Gate Conservation Area have been identified as landmarks.

## Views

4.124 Policy DES15 in the Unitary Development Plan identifies two categories of views which contribute to Westminster's townscape and historic character.

4.125 Metropolitan Views include both views from Westminster to other parts of London and views from other parts of London into Westminster, such as views along and across the River Thames. They also include views within and across Westminster, particularly views of famous London landmarks.

4.126 Local Views are views of local importance, tend to be shorter, and can be of natural features, skylines, smaller landmarks and structures, as well as attractive groups of buildings and views into parks, open spaces, streets and squares.

### **Knightsbridge Conservation Area**

4.127 There are five Metropolitan Views in Knightsbridge Conservation Area marked on the map at **Figure 84**. These are:

MV11 A,B,C The Albert Memorial from Kensington Gore

MV10A The Royal Albert Hall from the Albert Memorial

MV10B The Royal Albert Hall from the Royal College of Music

4.128 Knightsbridge, Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green are also within the backdrop of views from outside the conservation areas including:

MV1 Buckingham Palace from the Mall

MV8 Admiralty Arch from Constitution Hill

4.129 There are a number of views of local importance, also shown on the map at Figure 84. They are listed below:

1. View along Queen's Gate of the equestrian statue and ornamental gate to Hyde Park, with trees beyond

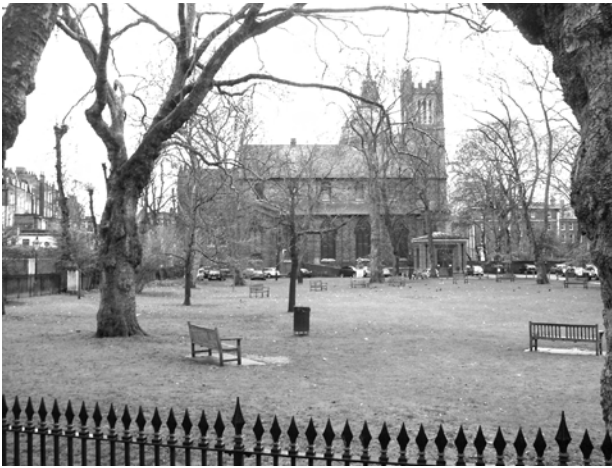


Figure 82: Holy Trinity Brompton viewed from Ennismore Gardens Mews

2. Views from top of Queens Gate, north and south.
3. Views past either side of the Royal Albert Hall to the Albert Memorial and to the Exhibition Memorial and Royal College of Music beyond.
4. Views to the curve of the rear blocks of Albert Hall Mansions.
5. Views from Bremner Road north to the Royal Albert Hall, framed by red-brick buildings, and south to Jays Mews.
6. View to the Royal College of Music from outside the Albert Hall.
7. Views to Albert Hall.
8. View from Exhibition Road, between Albert Mansions, to the Royal Albert Hall.
9. View up Exhibition Road to Hyde Park.
10. View down Ennismore Gardens (west) between the uniform mid-Victorian terrace and mature trees in the square, terminated by a low mews building.
11. Views from Ennismore Gardens Mews south across the churchyard to the Holy Trinity Brompton (Figure 82).
12. View along Ennismore Gardens Mews through archway to trees and houses beyond.
13. View up Ennismore Mews between mews terraces and ending in a mews house with the campanile of the Russian Orthodox Cathedral rising behind it.
14. Views from Rutland Gardens to the tower of the Russian Orthodox Cathedral.
15. View along Cheval Place, terminated by the mews of Brompton Square with the rear of the high terraced houses rising behind and the dome of Brompton Oratory beyond.

Figure 83:  
The Brompton Oratory from Cheval Place



16. View down Trevor Place between terraces, terminated by the high former Harrods warehouse facade.
17. Views towards Harrods along Brompton Road.
18. Views along the length of Kensington Road and Kensington Gore into Hyde Park.

### **Albert Gate Conservation Area**

1. View of the corner of Park Mansions from Albert Gate.
2. Views into Hyde Park from Albert Gate and South Carriage Drive.
3. View from William Street towards Albert Gate, with the greenery of Hyde Park beyond.



## **Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area**

1. View of Harrods from Brompton Road.
2. Views into Hyde Park from Park Close and South Carriage Drive.

### **POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE**

In the Unitary Development Plan policy DES15 seeks to protect Metropolitan and Local Views. The application of policies to protect strategic views is set out in the UDP at DES 14. DES9 F seeks to protect the setting of conservation areas, having regard to local views into and out of the area.

Reference should also be made to the Greater London Authority's View Management Framework and Westminster City Council's emerging Supplementary Planning Document on Metropolitan Views.



Figure 84: Knightsbridge Conservation Area: landmarks and views

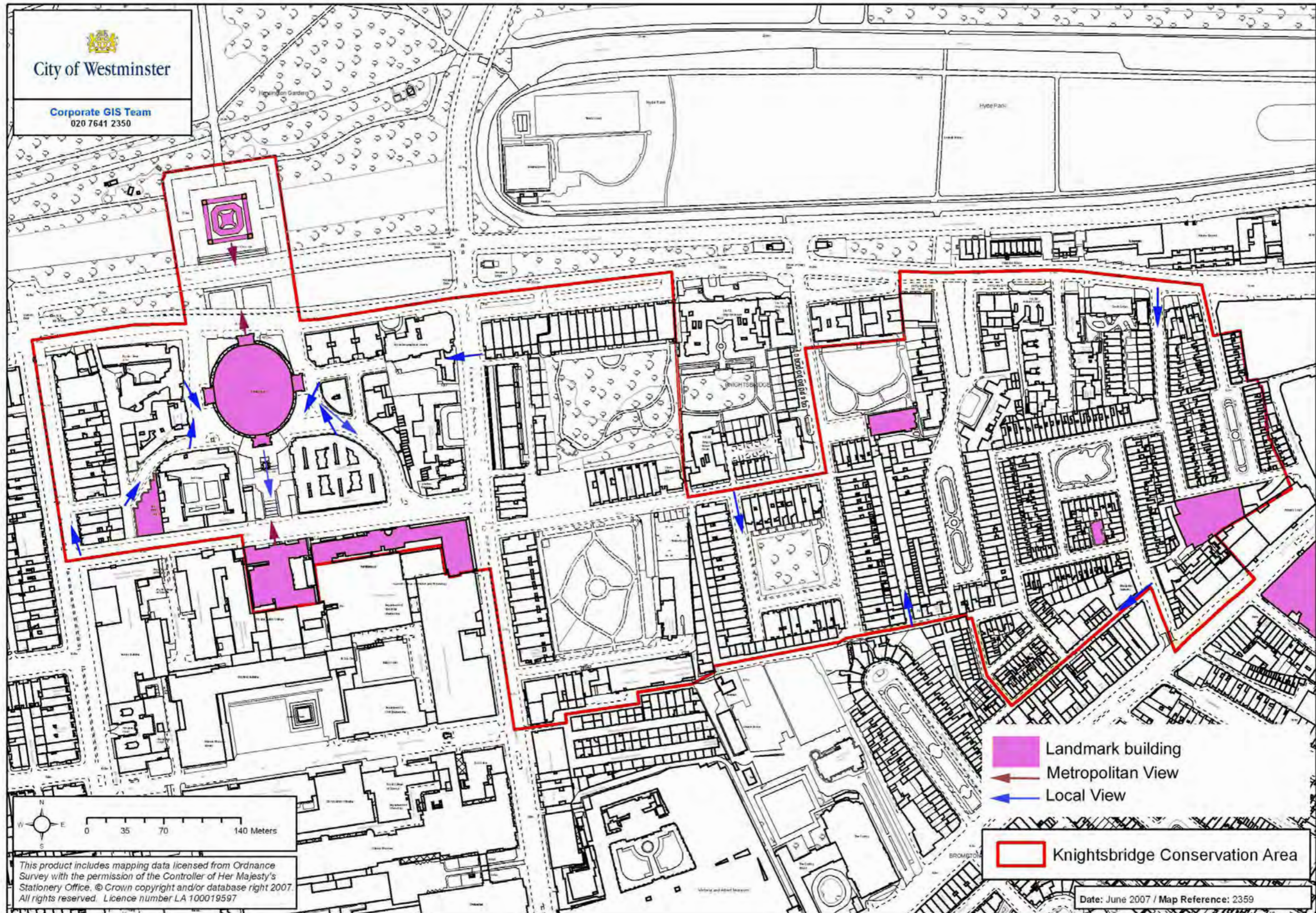
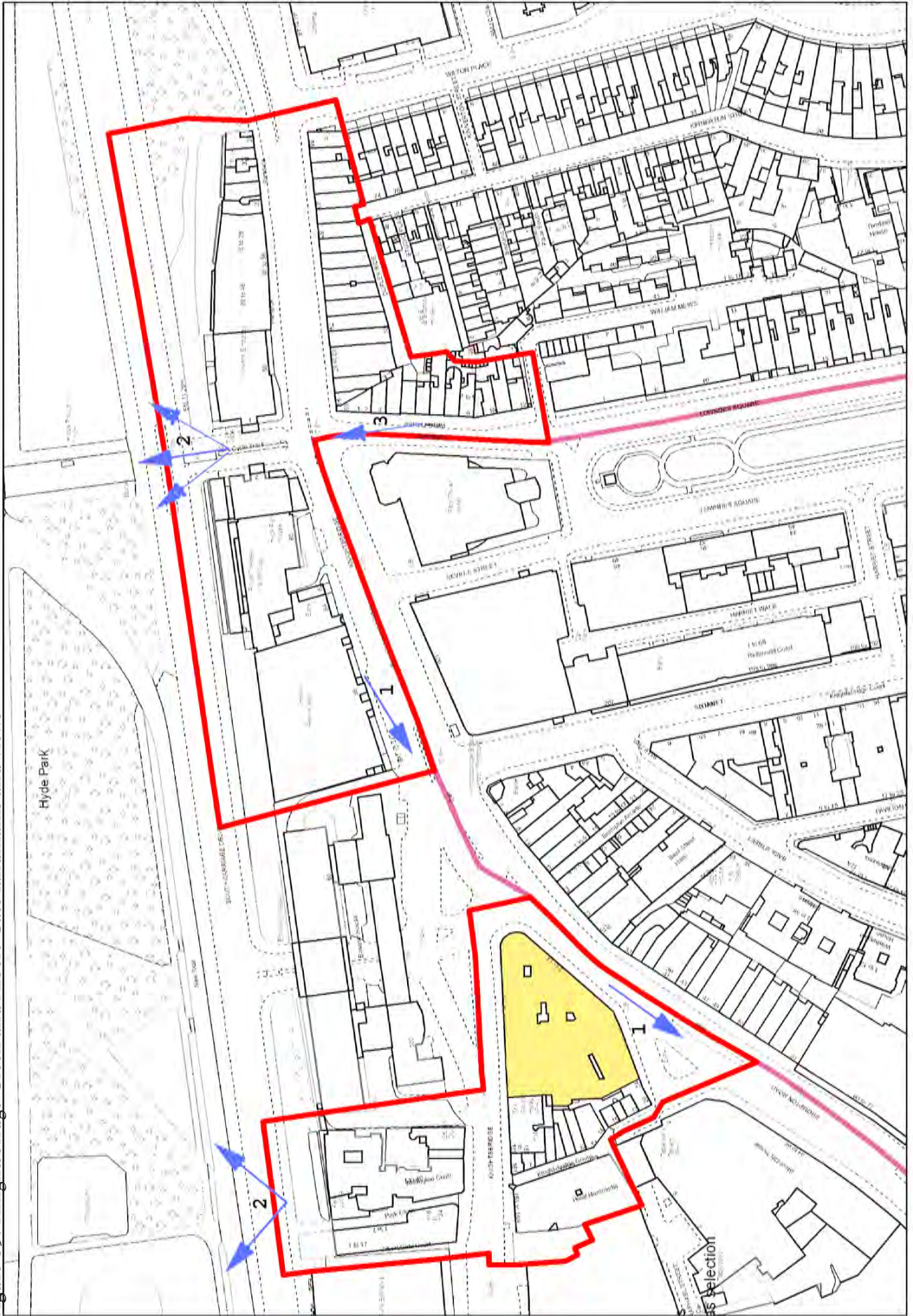




Figure 85: Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate landmarks and views





## 5 Local Townscape Detail

5.1 Other features and details in the townscape also contribute to a sense of local distinctiveness. These can range from distinctive boundary treatments and street furniture, to trees and hard landscaping. Individually and collectively they contribute to the overall quality of Westminster's streetscape as well as enhancing individual areas of character within the City.

### Shopfronts

5.2 Shopfronts, including well-designed contemporary ones, can be of great importance in contributing to the character and appearance of both individual buildings and the conservation areas as a whole, and can be of historic and architectural interest in their own right.

5.3 Shops in **Knightsbridge Conservation Area** are limited to the southern edge, where the conservation area takes in a short stretch of Brompton Road. On Montpelier Street, in particular, the small groups of traditionally detailed shopfronts make an important contribution to character.

5.4 No. 17 Montpelier Street retains a particularly attractive early 19th century timber shopfront. The shops on Montpelier Street at Nos. 4, 6, 8 and 20 are also traditionally detailed.



Figure 86: Nos. 6 & 8 Montpelier Street. Traditionally detailed shopfronts with stallriser, subdivided windows, pilasters and fascia

5.5 Shopfronts on Brompton Road tend to have been subject to greater change and loss of traditional details. However, some elements of the traditional shopfronts do remain, for example pilasters and cornicing, which provide a framework for modern frames and signage.

5.6 Five shops on Cheval Place have been remodelled and now form a row of uniform shopfronts with multi-pane windows. They make an attractive contribution to a varied street scene.



Figure 87: Cheval Place

5.7 There are only two public houses in the conservation area. The Tea Clipper, at 19 Montpelier Street, retains a traditional frontage with large subdivided windows in timber frames and a painted wooden sign that curves around the corner of the building (Figure 88). The other is the Swag and Tails bar and restaurant in a small mews house in Fairholt Street.



Figure 88: The Tea Clipper public house with its simple, traditional front



5.8 The Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green Conservation Areas have a great number of shopfronts of varying interest.

5.9 In **Albert Gate** the Victorian mansion blocks fronting onto Knightsbridge, to the north and south, each have a long parade of shopfronts at ground-floor level.

5.10 Shopfronts in these mansion blocks are integral to the design and are framed by stone surrounds; these are decorated with brackets and festoons and set under a consistent cornice. The individual shopfronts are largely altered; however, Nos. 57, 67 and 91 on the north side retain original features.

5.11 Shopfronts such as these, with consistent surrounds, act as a strong unifying feature. They allow for a mixture of shopfront variation within the surround without upsetting the character of the street.



Figure 89: Shopfront at No. 4 William Street

5.12 There are also some attractive shopfronts to the ground floor of the Georgian terrace on William Street. Some are 20th century replacements, but several, most notably No. 4, retains original elements including fluted Corinthian pilasters.

5.13 In **Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area**, Park Close, between Wellington Court and Albert Gate Court, also contains a group of traditionally detailed timber shopfronts.

5.14 Knightsbridge Green itself has a more diverse range of shopfronts. These retain consistent proportions and are set under a projecting timber cornice and subdivided by Corinthian pilasters. Many have had modern shop frames inserted within this framework and an array of modern signs, blinds and on-street clutter detract, but they nonetheless form an attractive group along this narrow passageway.



Figure 90: Knightsbridge Green shopfronts

5.15 The base of Park Mansions and Wellington Court also incorporates shops, but these are of varying quality. The listed Paxton's Head public house to the Knightsbridge elevation has a traditional timber shopfront.

5.16 The City Council seeks to retain original shopfronts and shopfront detail wherever possible and new signage should use materials and detailing sympathetic to the age and style of the building and conservation area.



Figure 91: Paxton's Head public house

## POLICY & FURTHER GUIDANCE

The relevant City Council policy concerning historic shopfronts and the design of new ones is DES5 C. Reference should be made to the design guide 'Shopfronts, Blinds and Signs: A Guide to their Design' (1990) and 'Advertisement Design Guidelines' (1992). Guidance specific to pubs and cafes can be found in 'Food and Drink Premises'

## Railings, Boundary Walls & Enclosures

5.17 Railings and boundary walls can contribute significantly to the character of a conservation area. They add interest and variety in the street scene, and provide a sense of enclosure, separating spaces of different character and often marking the boundaries between public and private space.

5.18 Railings and decorative ironwork are a key part of the character of all three conservation areas. These are found in a variety of styles, in both wrought and cast-iron, and are generally painted in black.

5.19 The terraces and squares of Knightsbridge Conservation Area in particular are notable for the survival of original cast-iron railings, which provide a strong unifying element along groups of buildings.

5.20 Almost all the buildings in this part of the conservation area were designed with front railings set around basement lightwell enclosures and railings also surround the garden squares. Railings in the conservation area are nearly always set directly into a stone plinth or dwarf wall, lead welded and caulked.

5.21 Railing types differ from square to square, but tend to follow a single design within each group. The detail of railings is generally simpler in earlier properties. Trevor Square has simple railing uprights topped with spikes (Figure 92), whilst spearhead railings are most common on the buildings around Montpelier Square.



Figure 92: Simple spike railings in Trevor Square



Figure 93: Spearhead railings

5.22 In addition to the railings, a number of properties in the earlier squares retain lamp brackets and holders; examples can be found in Montpelier Square and in Trevor Square.



5.23 Later railings tend to be heavier in appearance and more elaborately designed. The robust cast-iron railings in Rutland Gate and Prince's Gate are more typical of the mid/late Victorian period.



Figure 94: Railing detail in Rutland Gate



Figure 95: Railings at Prince's Gate



Figure 96: Stucco boundary wall at Prince's Gardens

5.24 There are also some examples of different types of boundary walls and gate piers in the conservation area, such as

those at Prince's Gate (Figure 96) and along Knightsbridge.

5.25 Most original railings around the squares were lost during the Second World War, but in recent years replica railings have been installed around many of the squares including Ennismore Gardens, Prince's Gardens, Montpelier Square and Trevor Square, considerably enhancing their appearance.



Figure 97: New replica railings to Prince's Gardens



Figure 98: Guard rail, Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area

5.26 In Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green buildings tend to be later. Many have commercial premises to the ground floor and front directly onto the street with no intervening boundary treatment. However, although there may be less private forecourt space, many mansion blocks and hotels do have railings or smaller railed areas, most commonly in heavy ornamental cast iron.



Figure 99: Delicate wrought iron railings to No. 29 Exhibition Road

5.27 Some later Edwardian revival style buildings and mansion blocks also have more delicate wrought iron detail, such as that to No. 29 Exhibition Road (Figure 99).

5.28 Of particular interest are the set of cast-iron gates (and associated street furniture) on Albert Gate, between the two Cubitt townhouses (Figure 100). These



Figure 100: Albert Gate



Figure 101: Decorative balcony detail to Ennismore Gardens, with matching pot retainers to upper floors

impressive park gates consist of three pedestrian gates and two sets of vehicular gates, with piers surmounted by lanterns and the royal coat of arms on each leaf.

5.29 Other decorative ironwork includes decorative balcony railings, particularly in the terraces to the Knightsbridge Squares, on William Street and to mansion blocks in all three areas. These provide ornament to the simpler terraces, such as those in Trevor Place. They are extremely rich in Ennismore Gardens where they are uniform and continuous around three sides of the square (Figure 101). They are, in some cases, accompanied by matching pot retainers.



Figure 102: Hopper dated 1819 to Trevor Place

5.30 Other features of interest include original bootscrapers to some of the properties. Many of the properties also retain their original cast-iron rainwater goods and hoppers.



**POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE**  
 The City Council will seek to preserve and repair boundary features of interest. Council policy in respect of these is DES7 C and D and further guidance can be found in the design guide 'Railings in Westminster: A Guide to their Design, Repair and Maintenance.'

**Street Furniture**

5.31 Westminster has a fascinating collection of historic street furniture, some of which is listed. The appropriate maintenance and protection of this is important, as is the need to prevent modern street clutter from detracting from its setting.

5.32 Knightsbridge, Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green Conservation Areas have a range of historic street furniture of interest, which makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the areas.

5.33 The main items of street furniture are lamp standards and bollards, but there are also other survivals from the historic streetscape.

5.34 The oldest of the lamp standards in the area are former gas lanterns, converted to electricity. These can be found largely in the squares and terraces



Figure 103: Listed lamp standards in Trevor Square, Montpelier Square and Rutland Gate.

of Knightsbridge, and on William Street. As with railings, lamp standard types are consistent within each square, but vary between different squares.

5.35 The oldest lamp standards have chamfered, foliated or fluted shafts, some with ladder rests, and have either Nico or Windsor lanterns. Most of these types are listed.

5.36 Reproduction Nico lanterns are found within the Knightsbridge Conservation Area and are strongly in keeping with the character of the conservation area. The pedestrian area to the south of the Royal Albert Hall has bespoke lamp columns with ladder rests and both Windsor and oversized octagonal lanterns incorporated in the stone balustrades. Throughout the conservation area, within mews and on mansion blocks, and to gate piers, there are examples of wall-mounted lanterns.



Figure 104 and 105: Stone pillar topped with Nico lantern, Ennismore Gardens (left) and attractive gate piers gates and lanterns on Knightsbridge (below)



5.37 The Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas have mainly Grey Wornum lamp standards, designed in 1954 for Parliament Square, and now

prevalent throughout south Westminster. The Grey Wornum is an elegant lamp column and makes a positive contribution to the character of this area.



Figure 106 and 107: Different styles of letter box, to Trevor Square (left) and to Montpelier Square (right)



Figure 109: Historic street signs on Montpelier Place and Exhibition Road



Figure 108: Chimney adjacent to the Albert Hall



Figure 110: Plaques and building signs: (top) on Brompton Road, (middle) in Knightsbridge Green and (bottom) on Montpelier Street

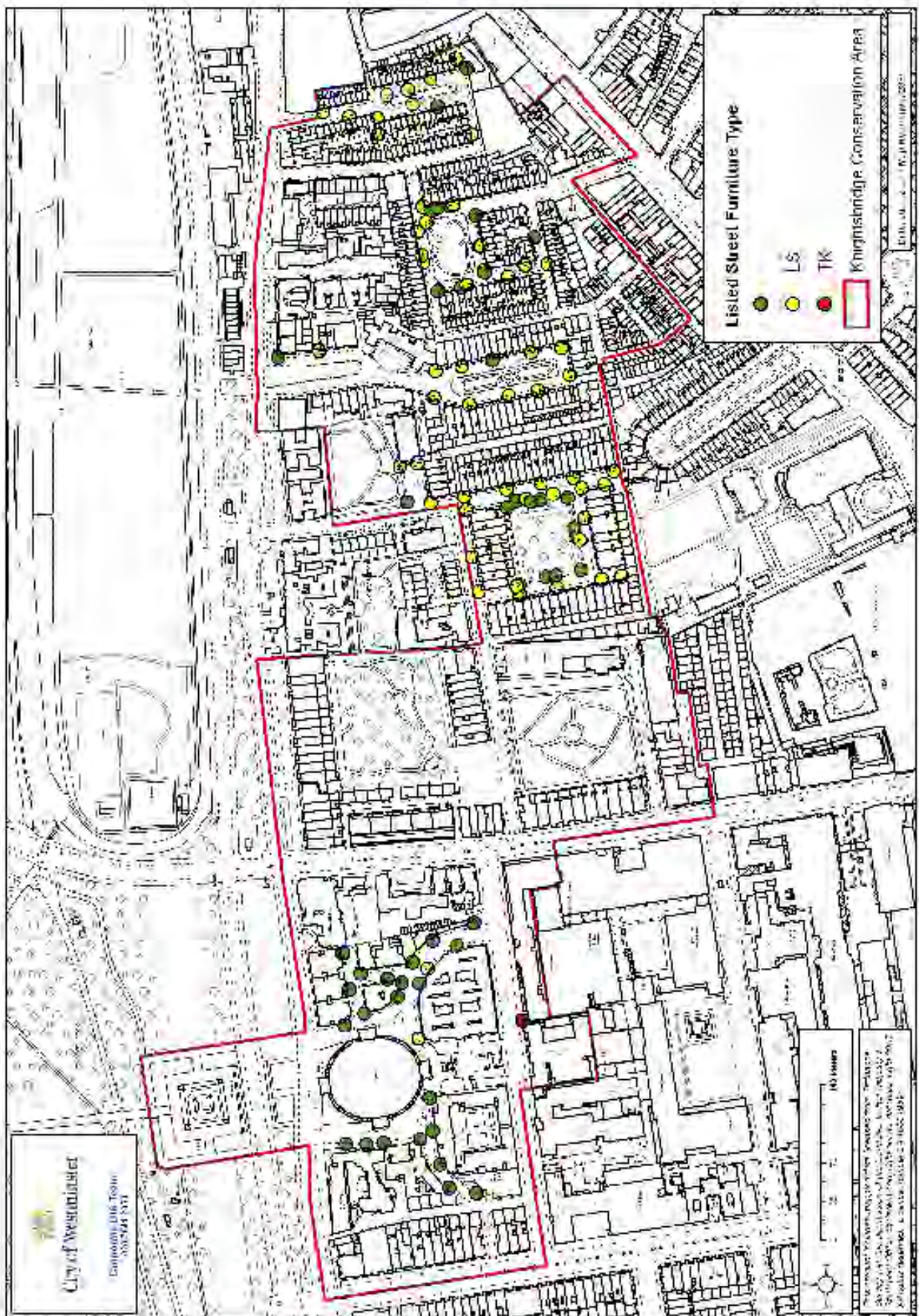
5.38 There are also a number of traditional pillar boxes and telephone boxes throughout the area which form familiar features in the local street-scene. These include a wall-mounted letter box on Trevor Square monogrammed ERVII and several pillar letter boxes, of various dates.

5.39 Other items of interest include a milestone, located outside Lowther Lodge (the Royal Geographical Society) on

Kensington Gore showing the distance to Hounslow and London. Adjacent to the Albert Hall, at the top of Bremner Road, is a tall red brick chimney, which was the steam vent chimney from when the hall was heated by radiators and provides a particularly unusual addition to the street-scene.



Figure 111: Map of listed street furniture in Knightsbridge Conservation Area





5.40 Street names and signs can also be of interest. Old painted signs remain in places within the area and Exhibition Road also features a stone street name. Many mansion blocks incorporate decorative name and date stones. The large stucco houses around Prince's Gardens almost all have their house numbers painted in black on the porticos.

5.41 Other detail and plaques applied to buildings provide an insight into their history (see Figure 110), as do the variety of blue plaques celebrating famous residents in the area.

**POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE**  
Policy DES7 B intends to protect these historic and characteristic features of the street scene.

### Public Art, Statues and Monuments

5.42 Westminster has a high concentration of public art, both in its streets and open spaces, and integrated into its buildings. In Knightsbridge Conservation Area public art ranges from the grandeur of George Gilbert Scott's Albert Memorial to the subtlety of more recent pieces such as Eleanor Long's etched glass panels,



Figure 112: The Memorial to the Exhibition of 1851

outside the Royal Geographical Society (see Figure 119).

5.43 The earliest public art in the area takes the form of memorials to individuals and events. Between the Royal Albert Hall and the Royal College of Music is the Memorial to the Exhibition of 1851, unveiled in 1863, which originally stood in the Royal Horticultural Society Gardens but was moved to its specially created terrace when Prince Consort Road was created. It consists of a column on top of which a bronze of Prince Albert stands, sculpted by Joseph Durham. At the base of the statue are seated a further four bronze figures representing the four corners of the globe. Prince Albert was involved in the design of the memorial personally, although it was only after his death that it was decided that the main figure should be of him; previously it was to represent Britannia.

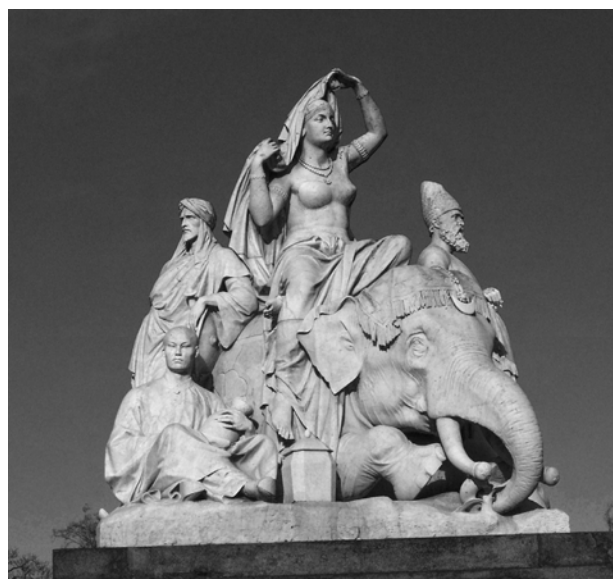


Figure 113: Detail of Asia from the Albert Memorial

5.44 The **Albert Memorial** was built to commemorate the Prince Consort who died in 1861. It faces the Royal Albert Hall across Kensington Gore. It was completed by 1872, although the central gilded statue of Albert was not erected until 1876. The monument is an imposing 53 metres tall





Figure 114: Lord Robert Napier, Field Marshal and Constable of the Tower of London, sited at the top of Queen's Gate

and consists of an iron Gothic canopy inlaid with mosaic, enamel and polished stone. It houses seven tiers of statues. At the corners of the base are monumentally scaled groups in marble representing Asia, Europe, Africa and America. Around Albert's statue are groups representing Agriculture, Manufactures, Commerce and Engineering, while the frieze around the podium represents the artistic professions. The monument was conserved during the 1990s and the surprisingly bright colours and gold make it appear extravagant and exotic.

5.45 An equestrian bronze statue of Lord Robert Napier, Field Marshall and Constable of the Tower of London (1810-90) is at the top of Queen's Gate. Lord Napier looks along Kensington Gore towards the Albert Memorial, seemingly in salute.



Figure 115: Statue of Livingstone on facade of Royal Geographical Society

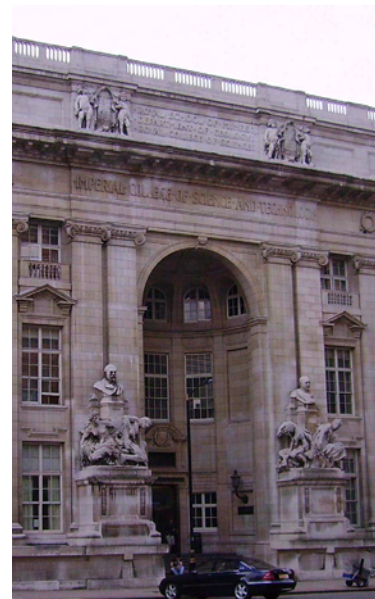


Figure 116: Statuary on the facade of Imperial College, formerly the Royal College of Mines.

5.46 Statuary is incorporated into two facades of the Royal Geographical Society building on the corner of Exhibition Road and Kensington Gore. These represent the famous explorers Livingstone and Shackleton in bronze.

5.47 The figures on Imperial College, formerly the Royal College of Mines, are of Alfred Beit and Julius Wernher, mining and diamond magnates (by P.R. Montford, 1916-20). The building was designed by

Aston Webb and built 1909-13 in Portland stone. The strange proportions of the composition appear quite Mannerist.

5.48 The frieze around the Royal Albert Hall is of terracotta and depicts the 'Triumph of the Arts and Letters'. The procession of figures- artists, craftsmen, musicians, architects, scientists, engineers, patrons, philosophers and students- runs around the hall continuously and below this is written 'This Hall Was Erected For The Advancement Of The Arts And Sciences And Works Of Industry Of All Nations In Fulfilment Of The Intention Of Albert Prince Consort. ' . .etc.



Figure 117: Relief sculpture above entrance to Eresby House

5.49 A much later work of public art on the Albert Hall is Shelagh Wakely's mosaic in a pediment of the new south porch. This was created in 2003. It is a shimmering, water-like surface that changes colour and depth as it is viewed from different angles. It is entirely contemporary but the medium suits the setting and the bright colours are reminiscent of the Albert Memorial.

5.50 Another instance of a decorative panel on the facade of a building in the



Figure 118: Royal College of Organists

area is the relief of a horse and rider above the central doorway of Eresby House. This is by Eric Aumonier and was executed at the time of construction (1933-34) along with a faience relief in the main entrance hall.



Figure 119: Eleanor Long glass panels outside the Royal Geographical Society on Exhibition Road

5.51 A large number of the late Victorian red-brick buildings and mansion blocks also incorporate carved relief panels and decorative signs. In Albert Gate, for example, the mansion block at 55-87 Knightsbridge incorporates a range of carvings and includes six busts, set in pediments over the first-floor windows: they portray Edward VII, Queen Alexandra, Field Marshal Lord Roberts, Lord Kitchener, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Frederick Temple, and Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury.

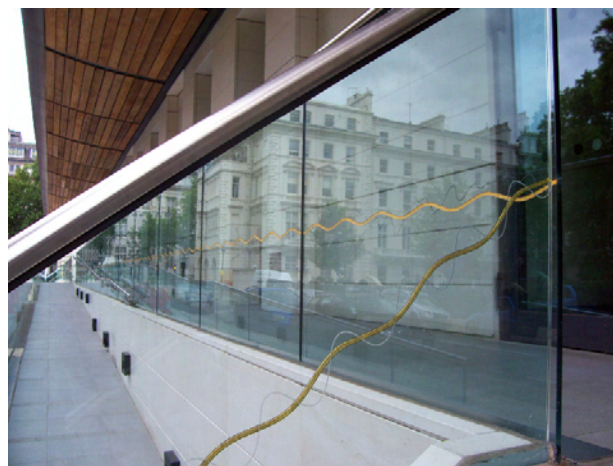


Figure 120: Velocity Wave, Imperial College Sports Centre



5.52 The second of three recent commissions in the Knightsbridge conservation area is by Eleanor Long. The design consists of etched glass panels outside the new Royal Geographical Society building on Exhibition Road. The images presented by the panels are of contours, maps and landscapes from the air. These images are light and ephemeral, easily merging into and becoming lost in reflections of Exhibition Road.

5.53 The third recent commission is the glass panels on the access ramp to the new Imperial College sports centre in Prince's Gardens. It is by Pat Kaufman and represents the velocity wave patterns of the college's different sports in gold leaf and resin, inset into the glass and lit by white LEDs.



Figure 121: The Age of Innocence

5.54 Within the Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area, the 'Age of Innocence' is a carved brick relief sculpture by Richard Kindersley (Figure 121) carved in situ.

**POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE**  
 Policy DES 7 A in the UDP encourages the provision of public art in association with all large development proposals.

## Hard Landscaping and Original Street Surfaces

5.55 Traditional surface treatments such as setts and paving can be important elements in the townscape of an area. Paving, if well-designed, maintained and in high quality materials, contributes to the character of an area, providing the backdrop to the surrounding buildings.

5.56 There are few remaining historic street surfaces on main streets and thoroughfares within the conservation areas. Modern street surfaces predominate, though often with traditional granite kerb stones.



Figure 122: Ennismore Gardens Mews' granite setts

5.57 There are a limited number of areas of York stone paving and granite kerbs, such as on Knightsbridge Green and in Montpelier Square. Where traditional paving survives, it makes a considerable contribution to the character of the area.

5.58 The hard landscaping, including paving and balustrades to the south of the Royal Albert Hall, is in high quality

York stone. The paving dates from a landscaping scheme of 2003.



Figure 123: Coal-hole cover

5.59 Historic street surfaces are best preserved within mews areas. Granite setts, both original and replacements can be found in the following mews:

- Rutland Gardens Mews
- Relton Mews
- Rutland Gate Mews
- Ennismore Mews
- Rutland Mews West
- Ennismore Gardens Mews
- Prince's Gate Mews
- Jay Mews

5.60 The traditional pattern of paving is as significant as the paving materials, with examples of both central draining (as in Relton and Jays Mews) and side draining (as in Ennismore and Ennismore Gardens Mews) gutters.

5.61 Where original setts have been retained these add considerably to the intimate character of streets.

5.62 Traditional surface treatment of forecourt areas and steps is also important to the character of the area. Steps to the Georgian and Victorian houses were generally built in stone. Some later Victorian and Edwardian buildings have decorative tiling, which may be of historic

interest. The use of modern or non-traditional materials on steps can detract from the appearance of buildings.



Figure 124: Paving to Rutland Garden Mews

5.63 There are also instances of the survival of decorative cast iron coal-hole covers, usually retained in areas of original stone paving. The covers (see Figure 123), with their range of locally specific patterns, contribute to the distinctiveness of the area. These vivid reminders of Victorian London are particularly vulnerable during resurfacing, and should be retained wherever they are found.

#### POLICY & FURTHER GUIDANCE

UDP policy DES7 E seeks to promote good quality paving materials by the Council and in private schemes.

For guidance on best practice relating to both street furniture and public realm works, the 'Westminster Way' is the Council's emerging public realm manual.



## 6. Trees, Soft Landscape & Biodiversity

6.1 Trees and green spaces are vital to the quality of urban environments in both visual and environmental terms. They contribute significantly to the character and appearance of conservation areas and the local townscape, providing a soft edge within urban landscapes as well as bringing environmental benefits. Often a single tree can provide a focal point, whilst avenues or a group of mature trees may form part of an historic planting scheme or an estate layout.

6.2 Trees and open space are important to the character of all three conservation areas. The seven private garden squares of the Knightsbridge Conservation Area make an essential contribution to its character. While most are not accessible to the public, these green squares nonetheless contribute to views across the squares and along connecting roads.

6.3 The dense foliage and high canopies of the squares, along with the concentration of the squares themselves, lend the area a lush and verdant character.

6.4 Trees in the garden squares are mainly tall forest species, with an understorey of smaller trees, bushes and shrubs. To provide privacy these squares tend to be visually impenetrable, with a dense margin of shrubs. All of the private gardens in Knightsbridge are protected by tree preservation orders.

6.5 Key species in the squares are:

- London plane
- Horse chestnut
- Alder
- Indian bean tree

The lower layers and perimeter planting includes:

- Privet
- Laurel

- Holly
- Lilac
- Hawthorn
- Camelia

6.6 Most of the squares are also covered by the London Squares Preservation Act 1931, preventing any development within their boundaries. This includes Ennismore Gardens, Montpelier Square, Prince's Gardens, Prince's Gate Gardens, Rutland Gate Gardens and Trevor Square.

6.7 The gardens also perform an important biodiversity function, providing habitat for many species, including some of Westminster's priority species such as starling, song thrush and house sparrow.



Figure 125: Ennismore Gardens

6.8 The Knightsbridge Conservation Area does not contain much public open space; almost all open spaces are given over to private communal gardens. There is, however, a strong relationship between the public space of Hyde Park and the character of the conservation area. Views from the conservation area incorporate the tall trees of the park, 'borrowing' some of that greenery for the northern part of the conservation area.

6.9 There is one important avenue of trees in the conservation area. Queen's Gate is lined on both sides with mature plane trees, forming a very striking feature

against the large-scale terraced buildings, which are tall enough, and set back far enough, to provide a good setting for even the largest trees.

6.10 Exhibition Road also has a range of tree species, mainly younger than those on Queen's Gate, which cannot yet be considered an avenue. It has the potential to accommodate a fine avenue of trees.

6.11 The mews in Knightsbridge Conservation Area also have a picturesque and green character, mainly due to moveable tubs and pots at the front of the buildings.

6.12 Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas have fewer trees, with just four street trees between them. This gives a very hard aspect to the Knightsbridge frontages of the conservation areas. The lack of trees in the conservation area is relieved to some extent by views into Hyde Park.

6.13 Planting is, however, generous along the northern boundary of these two conservation areas, where they abut the park. Along South Carriage Drive, buildings are set back from the road with large front garden areas containing a number of trees.

6.14 All trees within conservation areas are protected. This means that permission from the council must be obtained to fell or lop any of these trees.

## POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

UDP policy ENV 16 seeks to protect trees which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area.

Advice on trees and their protection is given in the City Council design guide: 'Trees and Other Planting on Development Sites.'

The Westminster Biodiversity Action Plan outlines actions for priority habitats and Species Action Plans.



## 7. Characteristic Land Uses

7.1 Land uses contribute significantly to the character and appearance of a conservation area. These not only have a direct influence on the building typology or make-up of an area but also on the nature, atmosphere and use of the public spaces and streets. Particular uses may be of historic importance and will have dictated the evolution of an area.

7.2 Today all three conservation areas have a mixed land-use character. The busy commercial thoroughfare of Knightsbridge dominates both Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green Conservation Areas. In both areas there are a range of retail, office and hotel uses, as well as some residential accommodation. Knightsbridge Conservation Area is quieter and less varied in its land-use character, having a strong residential presence and a concentration of cultural, educational and other institutional uses. The various land uses which characterise the areas are considered in turn below.

### **Residential**

7.3 Historically, Knightsbridge developed as a predominantly residential area and the Knightsbridge Conservation Area in particular still retains a large residential population; this is concentrated in the eastern half of the area.

7.4 Here, there are a variety of private residential dwellings, with mansion flats and apartment blocks to the west and mews and terraced houses of a more intimate scale concentrated to the east of the conservation area. This mix adds significantly to the character of this part of the conservation area. Of particular interest is the area around Montpelier Square, now designated as a single-family housing area in the Unitary Development Plan in order to protect family dwellings from residential conversions.

7.5 Residential uses can also be found in both Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green, in the large mansion blocks along Knightsbridge, most above retail frontages.

### **Arts, Cultural and Education**

7.6 The South Kensington area around the Royal Albert Hall in the Knightsbridge Conservation Area has a distinctive land-use character, being home to a number of cultural, public and educational buildings that date from the Great Exhibition. At the centre, the Albert Hall and Albert Memorial attract large numbers of visitors and tourists to the area. The close proximity to the museums of South Kensington also has a significant impact on the area's character.

7.7 There is also a concentration of educational facilities in this area. Imperial College, in particular, has a significant impact on the character to the south-west of the conservation area with a large number of facilities including a sports centre and halls of residence in Prince's Gardens. Other significant educational institutions in the area include the Royal College of Arts, the Royal College of Music, the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal Geographical Society.

7.8 In recognition of the significant number of educational and cultural facilities, this area is designated in the Unitary Development Plan as an Arts, Culture and Education Special Policy Area. The London Plan also identifies the South Kensington Museums area as a Strategic Cultural Complex.

### **Other Institutional or Public Buildings**

7.9 On the main thoroughfares, many of the large terraced houses have been subdivided or converted for institutional uses, often as embassies. There is a significant concentration of embassies and foreign cultural institutes along Knightsbridge, next to Albert Gate and Prince's Gate.

7.10 There are also a number of other public buildings including churches and other ecclesiastical buildings: the Deutsche Evangelische Christuskirche in Montpelier Place, the Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Ennismore Gardens, the Holy Trinity on Prince Consort Road and the Westminster Synagogue.

7.11 Finally, although not within any of the conservation areas, the Knightsbridge Barracks occupies a large plot of land and has a significant impact on the character of the area.

### **Retail**

7.12 Today, the name Knightsbridge has become synonymous with shopping. Originally the home of drapers and grocers' stores, these buildings developed into world-famous department stores like Harvey Nichols and Harrods. Knightsbridge the road, however, is conspicuously lacking in shops beyond the junction with Brompton Road (Scotch Corner); these have been eroded by developments since the Second World War. Harvey Nichols and Harrods are located on the Brompton Road and are now officially in Brompton, outside the Westminster and conservation area boundaries. Harrods originally had two warehouses in the Knightsbridge Conservation Area – in Trevor Square (formerly Arthur Street) and on Cheval Place. These have now been developed for residential use.

7.13 The main concentration of shops can be found in the Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green Conservation Areas. Within Knightsbridge Green, in particular, Nos. 2-26, 44-130 Brompton Road, 127-129 Knightsbridge and Knightsbridge Green (including the arcade) are designated as International Centre Primary shopping frontages in the Unitary Development Plan.

7.14 Smaller retail frontages with a mix of retail and food and drink uses can be found in William Street in the Albert Gate

conservation area and in South Montpelier Street and Cheval Place.

### **Other Uses**

7.15 Other uses with a significant presence in the area include a number of large hotels, most notably the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park in Albert Gate Conservation Area. Small offices can also be found scattered throughout the conservation area. Although historically there were a range of leisure facilities and associated uses, few of these now remain in the area. There are, unsurprisingly, no industrial premises in the conservation area.

7.16 Maps showing the pattern of land use in each conservation area can be found at **Figures 126 and 127**.

### **POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE**

The City Council will consider the contribution of existing and proposed uses to the character, appearance and setting of the conservation area. DES9 E is the relevant UDP policy.



Figure 126: Knightsbridge Conservation Area: Characteristic land uses

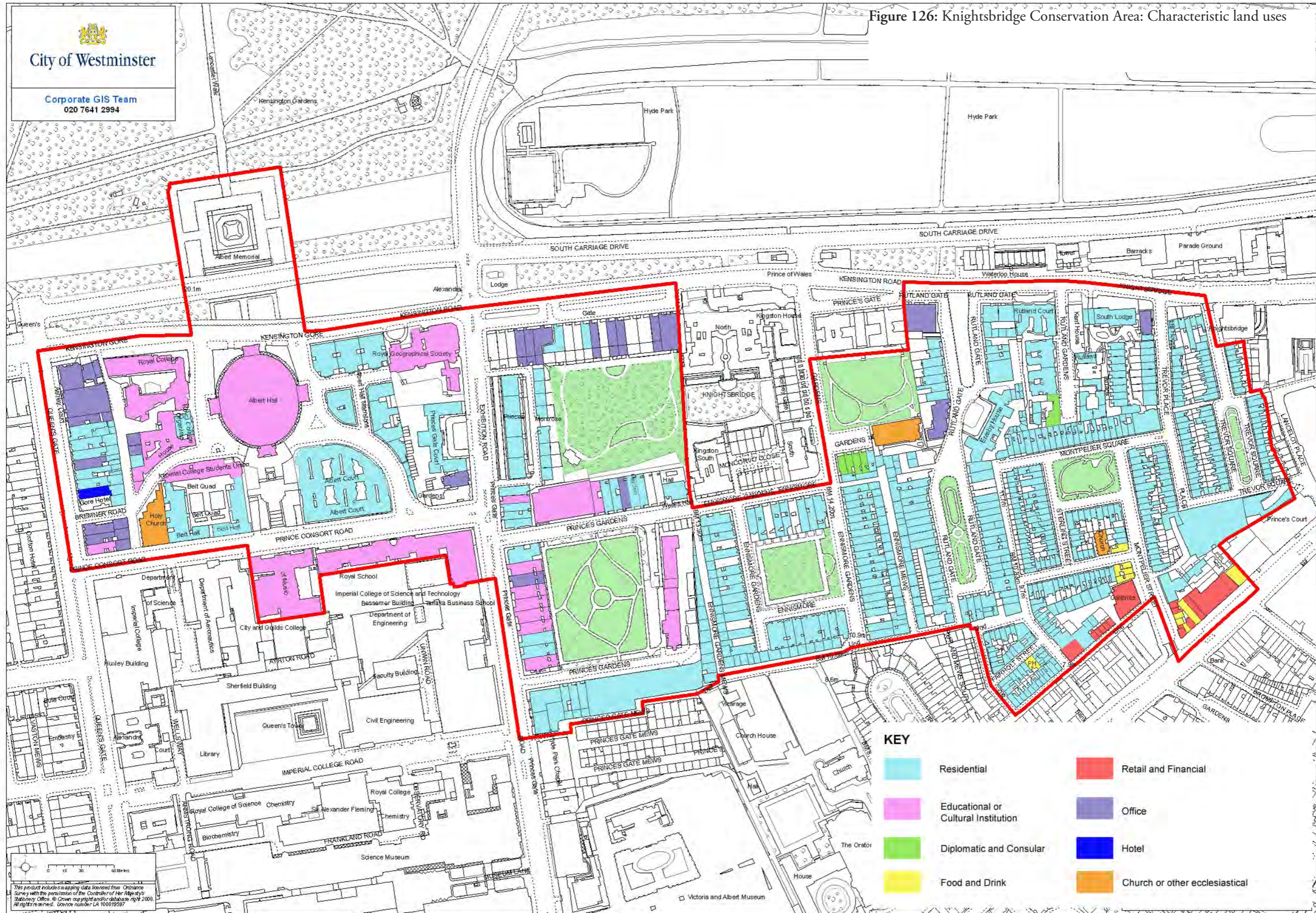
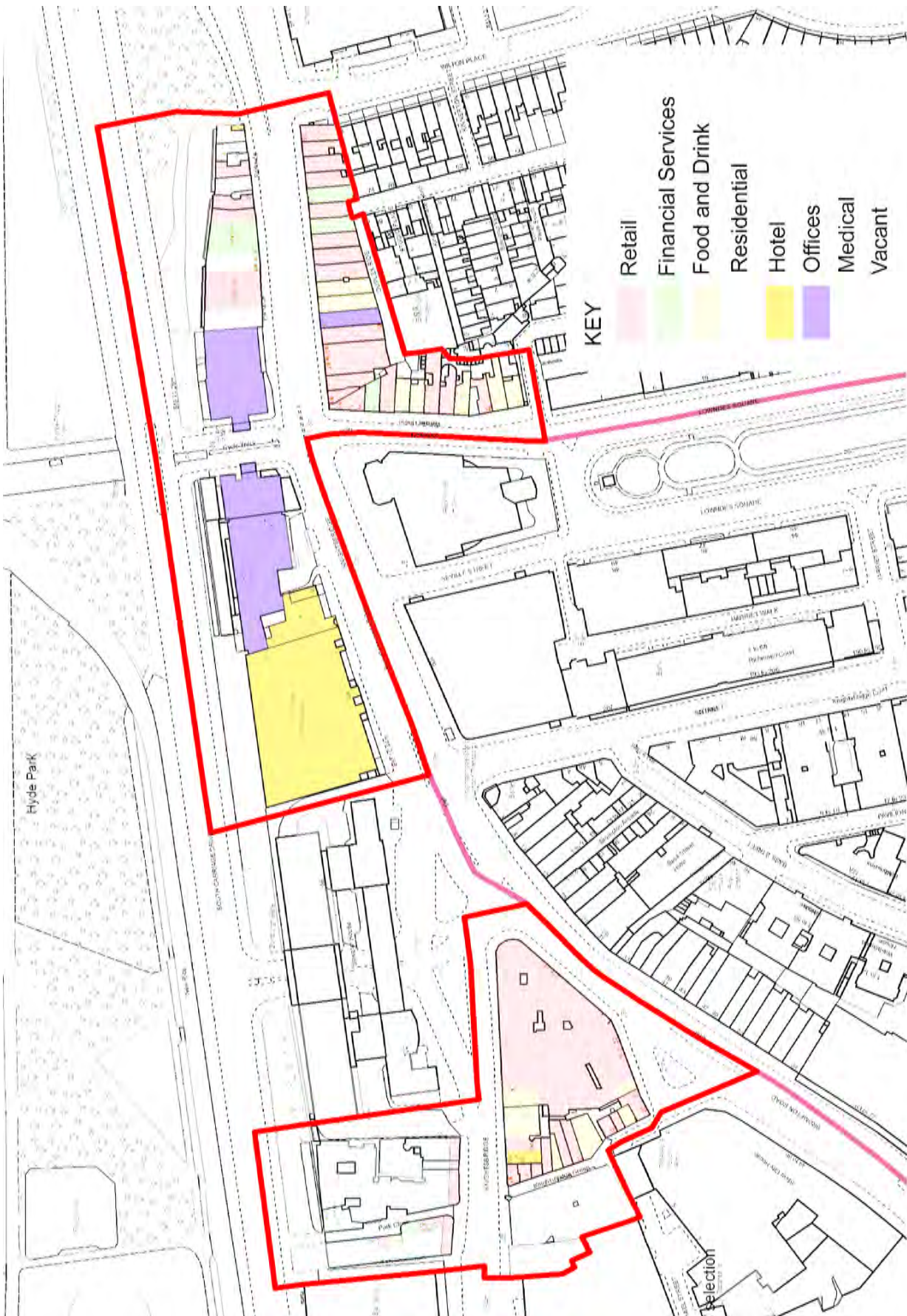




Figure 127: Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate land uses





## 8 NEGATIVE FEATURES & ENHANCEMENT

8.1 Negative features are those elements which detract from the special character of an area and therefore present an opportunity for change. They can include both small features and larger buildings and sites. Even buildings which make a positive contribution to conservation areas may have negative elements, such as poor alterations. It may be that simple maintenance works can remedy the situation or in some cases there may be an opportunity to redevelop a particular site.

8.2 In all three conservation areas there are examples of both larger developments and small-scale alterations that have had a negative impact on character. Types of alterations which have had a negative impact on the conservation areas are listed below; this is followed by a list of individual sites within each conservation area that are detrimental to their character.

### Loss of Architectural Detail

8.3 Small elements of original architectural detail are very important to the character of individual buildings and conservation areas as a whole. Loss of architectural detail has affected the character of all three conservation areas, but has had the greatest impact within the residential parts of Knightsbridge and especially in the mews, where many such changes do not require planning permission.

8.4 Throughout the conservation areas there are examples of inappropriate replacement windows using non-traditional materials such as uPVC and aluminium or changes to fenestration patterns and methods of opening.

8.5 Removal of original doors and replacement with flush doors or glazed panels and loss of original door furniture also has a detrimental effect on the character of the area.

8.6 Other subtle but distinctive elements of architectural detail are cumulatively very important to the character of the area. These include balustrades, window surrounds, chimneys, pediments, porticos, railings and stone steps. Several of the buildings on Ennismore Gardens have lost their parapet cornice detail (Figure 128).



Figure 128: Missing dentil cornice detail, Ennismore Gardens

8.7 Within Knightsbridge, front steps to townhouses were originally stone but in many cases they have been altered, using inappropriate materials. In some cases, especially in the central section of Knightsbridge Conservation Area, open porches have been enclosed, with glazed panels being inserted to the sides.



Figure 129: Alterations to door and portico in Ennismore Gardens. The middle column of the portico has been removed and new doors inserted



Figure 130: Shiny marble replacement front steps stand out in the streetscape



Figure 131: Ennismore Gardens Mews: replacement uPVC windows and doors



Figure 132: Garage door, Montpelier Walk

### Alterations to Mews

8.8 Small mews houses in particular have suffered from a range of small alterations. This is particularly noticeable at ground-floor level where metal up-and-

over doors have replaced more traditional timber coach doors. In other locations, openings have been infilled or windows have been inserted which do not relate to the original materials and detailing of the mews. Some buildings have also lost their original windows at upper-floor level, some replaced with uPVC. Other buildings have been clad using inappropriate materials or rendered with smooth cement render.

### Roof Alterations, Extensions and Terraces

8.9 There are many examples of roof extensions and alterations in all three conservation areas that have been poorly detailed and are unsympathetic to the character of the area. In Albert Gate, the height of buildings and close proximity to Hyde Park, mean such alterations have had an impact in long views (Figure 131). Improvements to poorly detailed roof extensions will be sought as part of refurbishment proposals (see management proposals).

8.10 Roof terraces which are visible from street level, such as a number in Montpelier Walk and Ennismore Mews, are undesirable as the associated railings, trellises, stairs and screens cause visual clutter at roof level. Cases where the roof terrace has been created on top of a mansard roof extension are particularly prominent.



Figure 133: Roof extension to Park Mansions, Albert Gate





Figure 134: Roof-level clutter to mews house

8.11 Roof clutter such as antennae and satellite dishes can also harm the character of the area, affecting both short and long-distance views. Such equipment should be positioned to minimise its visual impact and therefore all these items should be located away from the front facade of buildings as well as from chimneys or other locations where it may be prominent.

### Building Maintenance and Minor Works

8.12 The care and maintenance of individual properties affects the character of the area as a whole.

8.13 Whilst throughout the area buildings are generally well maintained, there are examples of buildings with peeling stucco and paintwork which detracts from the character of the area.

8.14 Stuccoed houses are traditionally painted white/off-white. When terraced stuccoed houses in uniform terraces are painted in other colours it breaks the continuity of the terrace. Using pastel colours is common in mews but not in the larger, more formal terraces and squares of Knightsbridge, where it is detrimental to their character. Traffic fumes have also had an impact on stucco buildings along Knightsbridge, notably to Nos. 1 and 2 Albert Gate.

### Shopfronts and Signage

8.15 In general shopfronts should relate to the proportions and detail of the building in

which they are set, as well as the adjoining townscape. Within all three conservation areas there are examples of commercial fronts which are of poor quality in terms of design and materials.

8.16 In Knightsbridge Conservation Area, the shopfronts along Brompton Road in particular are of variable quality, with a range of modern signage, blinds and shutters. There are also a few internally illuminated signs, as well as some bulky and poorly designed external illumination.

8.17 In the commercial areas of Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate there are also some instances of poor



Figure 135: Built-out shopfront and fixed blinds create a cluttered street scene, Brompton Road



Figure 136: No.122 Brompton Road. Poorly detailed shopfront with projecting lights, internally lit box sign and shutter box creating visual clutter



Figure 137: Within this traditional shopfront surround a poor quality modern shopfront has been inserted.



Figure 138: The Montpelier Galleries on Montpelier Street. This permanent canopy, lighting, signage etc. clutters the pavement and does not relate to the architecture of the building

quality shopfronts, particularly to the Knightsbridge and Brompton Road. Here a range of signage of variable quality has been installed, including projecting box and hanging signs.

8.18 In Knightsbridge Green, **Park Close** and **Wellington Court** signage also detracts from the elegant architectural form of the buildings. Badly sited modern lighting at shop signage height along Knightsbridge Green is unsympathetic to the area's character.

8.19 All signage should be carefully designed and sited so as not to obscure

architectural detail. These and other features such as projecting shutter boxes, plastic canopies and non-retractable Dutch blinds contribute to a cluttered appearance at street level.

### Street Furniture and Public Realm

8.20 In general, Knightsbridge has an attractive and well-maintained public realm. However, paving materials are of variable quality throughout the area, with modern concrete slabs predominating. Incremental alterations have in places created untidy results.



Figure 139: Traffic dominates views towards Albert Gate

8.21 In both Albert Gate and Knightsbridge Green the greatest detraction from the character and appearance of the conservation area results from the heavy traffic along Knightsbridge. The traffic itself – the constant noise and movement of vehicles, as well as the associated infrastructure, combine to create an area where appreciation of the quality of the built form is hampered.

8.22 The public realm in the area is utilitarian and cluttered, with a profusion of road signs, pedestrian signs, pedestrian barriers and traffic signals. This foreground clutter detracts from views of surrounding buildings.

8.23 Another result of the high volume of traffic is the deposition of grime on the facades of the buildings along Knightsbridge, obscuring their





Figure 140: Lamp columns, traffic signals, bollards, barriers and signage clutter the foreground to these attractive buildings



Figure 141: The stone dressings to Nos. 55-91 Knightsbridge would benefit from cleaning special character and architectural interest. Parkside, on the north side of Knightsbridge, has recently been cleaned, resulting in a great improvement in the appearance of the building. On the south side, no. 55-91 Knightsbridge is currently badly stained, and would benefit from a similar treatment.

8.24 While the volume of traffic on Knightsbridge is beyond the scope of a conservation area audit, the public realm of the area could be improved.

## Wires, Flues, Pipework and Burglar Alarms and Security Cameras

8.25 These minor additions to buildings can have a significant cumulative impact on the character of streets and terraces.

8.26 There are a range of burglar alarms, wires, vents and pipes fixed to the front of buildings throughout the residential parts of the conservation areas, adding to visual clutter. On some properties, original cast-iron guttering has been removed and grey plastic downpipes have been installed.

8.27 Modern plumbing requirements and other features should be positioned as unobtrusively as possible on elevations to avoid conflicting with the original clean lines of the building.

8.28 Careful siting and choice of materials and colours can significantly reduce the impact of such small-scale alterations.

## Individual Sites and Buildings

8.29 In addition to the features described above, there are a number of sites and buildings which detract from the character of the conservation areas. Negative buildings may be those which, due to their scale, height, detailed design or alterations, fail to respect their context.

These are described below:

8.30 Within **Knightsbridge Conservation Area** there are few negative buildings and the townscape is generally well maintained; nonetheless, some mews buildings have been identified as negative. Whilst they may relate to the scale of adjoining building, they have been altered to such an extent that they have been identified as detrimental. Other large buildings may be well detailed but relate poorly to their neighbours in terms of scale.

8.31 Negative buildings within the conservation area are shown at Figure 142.

Figure 142: Negative Buildings within the Knightsbridge Conservation Area



1. 14 Cheval Place



5. 243 Knightsbridge



2. 31 Cheval Place



6. Rutland Gate House,  
43-44 Rutland Gate



3. 30 Ennismore Mews



7. 8 Rutland Street



8. 11 and 12  
Rutland Mews East



4. 11 Ennismore Mews



9. 54-57 Montpelier  
Walk



8.32 **Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area** has relatively few negative features. The majority of its shop frontages are well maintained and in keeping with the original building age and design. The quality of the large residential blocks within the area has been in the most part preserved to ensure that today they exhibit the same quality of materials and detailing as when built during the late Victorian era.

8.33 The main problem areas are within the two pedestrian passages- **Knightsbridge Green** and **Park Close**- where some properties have suffered from a lack of maintenance and poor quality alterations.

8.34 The **Normandie Hotel** is currently vacant. Whilst the building itself is attractive and contributes to the conservation area, the ground floor to the Knightsbridge Green elevation is poorly maintained, with peeling paintwork to ground floors and railings. The metal

shutters to the ground floor add to the air of dereliction. The poor state of the ground floor means that the small passageway of Knightsbridge Green is unwelcoming to pedestrians.

8.35 The buildings within the **Albert Gate Conservation Area** are for the most part in good condition, and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. There are no buildings which detract from the character of the area, and only one – Hyde Park House – which is considered to have a neutral impact.

### Setting of the Conservation Areas

8.36 Buildings around the conservation areas may also have a negative impact on their settings. One building with a negative impact on the setting of the conservation area is the Sheraton Park Tower Hotel in neighbouring Kensington and Chelsea. This fifteen-storey concrete



Figure 143 and 144: (Above) ground-floor elevation of the Normandie Hotel, Knightsbridge Green and (left) Sheraton Park Tower Hotel



Figure 145: Knightsbridge Barracks, seen from the Knightsbridge Conservation Area

tower is at odds with the scale, materials and details of the surrounding buildings – which are mainly around eight storeys in red brick. Its form and poor relationship with the street frontages exacerbate its negative impact

8.37 Knightsbridge Barracks also has a detrimental impact on the setting of the conservation area and is visible from many view points.

#### POLICY AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

The City Council will take appropriate steps to ensure the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas. Schemes for the improvement and enhancement of conservation areas will be encouraged and initiated where possible. Any proposal will be judged against policies DES1 and DES9.



## 9 Management Proposals

9.1 It is expected that the effective management of the Knightsbridge, Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas can, for the most part, be met through an effective policy framework and the positive use of existing development control and enforcement powers. The analysis of the character and appearance of the conservation areas within this audit therefore identifies those elements the Council will seek to protect, as well as negative features which may present opportunities for change or enhancement.

9.2 Each section of the audit is linked to relevant policy guidance, which provides the framework for the future management of the area. Other statutory designations and existing controls in place to manage the conservation areas are listed in the Directory, at the end of this audit. This includes a list of documents, Supplementary Planning Guidance and planning briefs relevant to the management of Knightsbridge Conservation Area. In addition, the following table provides a list of proposals related specifically to those features identified as 'negative' in Section 8.

| Negative Feature  | Action   |
|---|--|
| Infill development and development affecting the setting of the conservation area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New proposals for infill development should include an analysis of the character and appearance of the conservation areas and should reflect the predominant scale and architectural detail of the area, making reference to the findings of the conservation area audit</li> <li>• Proposals for development adjacent to the conservation areas should have regard to their impact on the setting of the conservation areas, making reference to the findings of the conservation area audits and important local views identified</li> </ul>  |
| Loss of architectural detail  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage awareness of original design detail and best conservation practice through circulation of audit and design guides. Audit to be made available on the website</li> <li>• Encourage reinstatement of railings where missing in front of individual properties and to garden squares (Rutland Gardens)</li> <li>• Pursue enforcement action where possible on unauthorised works</li> <li>• Undertake audit of mews in Knightsbridge and give consideration to targeted enforcement campaign if necessary</li> <li>• Seek reinstatement of original architectural detail where possible as part of refurbishment schemes and removal of inappropriate detail such as uPVC windows</li> <li>• Give consideration to updating Supplementary Planning Guidance on mews and better publicise Article 4 Directions and Requirements affecting Knightsbridge Mews. Specific mews guidance relating to Knightsbridge will form an appendix to this audit</li> </ul> |
| Maintenance   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor situation and, if condition deteriorates, letters to be sent to owners and consideration given to the issue of Listed Building Repairs Notices or Section 215 Notices, as appropriate</li> </ul>  |

| Negative Feature  | Action   |
|---|--|
| Public realm  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote de-cluttering initiative to secure the removal of redundant or unnecessary street furniture, especially within Albert Gate Conservation Area and at the Montpelier Street/Brompton Road junction in Knightsbridge. Continue Westminster's participation in scheme of public realm improvements for Exhibition Road</li> <li>• Seek environmental improvements to Knightsbridge Green and Park Close, which at present represent dark and unwelcoming spaces. Improvements to lighting, shopfronts and surfacing would be beneficial</li> <li>• Promote reinstatement of granite setts where missing within mews (part of Jay Mews, Rutland Mews)</li> <li>• Original street furniture and surfacing identified in the audit to be retained as part of any future street works or landscaping schemes</li> <li>• Encourage appropriate management of street trees as appropriate as part of emerging 'trees strategy'</li> </ul> |
| Shopfronts & Signage  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many of the poor quality shopfronts and signage have been in place for more than four years and are therefore exempt from enforcement action. Where this is the case, improvements will be sought through the development control process as and when planning applications are received</li> <li>• Original historic shopfronts and elements of shopfronts including surrounds and detail identified in the audit should be retained/ refurbished as part of refurbishment proposals</li> <li>• Promote reinstatement of shopfronts or more open frontage to the western side of Knightsbridge Green as part of any development proposals.</li> <li>• Encourage awareness amongst shop owners of original design detail through circulation of audit and shopfront design guides. Audit to be made available on the website</li> </ul>   |
| Roof Alterations & Clutter                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All proposals for roof extensions to be considered having regard to the roof extensions map</li> <li>• Seek the removal/re-siting of unnecessary and redundant equipment and rooftop clutter as part of future development or refurbishment proposals</li> <li>• Seek improvements to poorly detailed roof extensions as part of refurbishment proposals</li> </ul>   |
| Inappropriately sited plant, wires & air-conditioning equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update and republish guidance on plant and air conditioning and make available on the Council website</li> <li>• Seek the removal/re-siting of unnecessary and redundant equipment as part of future development or refurbishment proposals</li> </ul>  |



## 10 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### **Acanthus**

A plant with thick, fleshy, scalloped leaves used on carved ornament such as CORINTHIAN and COMPOSITE CAPITALS and other mouldings.

### **Accretions**

A gradual build-up of small additions and layers.

### **Aedicule**

The framing of a door, window, or other opening with two columns, PIERS or PILASTERS supporting a GABLE, LINTEL, plaque or an ENTABLATURE and PEDIMENT.

### **Architraves**

The lowest of the three main parts of an ENTABLATURE or the moulded frame surrounding a door or window.

### **Art Deco**

From the Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes, 1925. An early 20th century movement in the decorative arts, architecture and fashion. Considered to be an opulent, eclectic style, influenced by a variety of sources. Characterised by use of materials such as steel and the use of bold forms, sweeping curves, CHEVRON patterns and sunburst motifs.

### **Art Nouveau**

Meaning 'New Art'. A movement that emerged at the end of the 19th century, which advocated the use of highly stylised nature as the source of inspiration. Correspondingly organic forms, curved lines, especially floral or vegetal.

### **Arts & Crafts**

A major English aesthetic movement, at its height between 1880 and 1910. Inspired by the writings of John Ruskin, a reformist movement searching for authentic and meaningful styles as a reaction to the machine-made production of the Industrial Revolution. Its best known practitioner was William Morris, who founded the SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS.

### **Balconettes**

A small projecting balcony from a wall, enclosed by railings or BALUSTRADE, more

decorative than functional.

### **Baroque**

An architectural style of the 17th and 18th centuries characterised by dramatic and exuberant decoration, using expansive curvaceous forms, large-scale and complex compositions. Used in palaces, churches and national buildings as a means of creating emotional involvement and a dramatic impression.

### **Bay**

A vertical division of the exterior of a building marked by fenestration, an order, buttresses, roof compartments etc.

### **Bay Window**

An angular or curved projecting window.

### **Beaux Arts**

Translated as 'Fine Arts'. A classical architectural style taught at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris 1885-1920. Depended on sculptural decoration along conservative modern lines, using French and Italian BAROQUE and Rococo formulas with an impressionistic finish.

### **Bottle Balustrade**

A assemblage of bottle-shaped moulded shafts in stone supporting the COPING of a PARAPET or the handrail of a staircase.

### **Butterfly Roof**

A roof formed by two gables that dip in the middle, resembling butterfly's wings. The roofs were particularly popular in Britain during the 19th century as they have no top ridges and were usually concealed on the front façade by a parapet. The roof gave the illusion of a flat roof, an essential part of CLASSICAL architecture, but accommodated Britain's wet climate.

### **Buttress**

A mass of masonry or brickwork projecting from or built against a wall to give additional strength.

### **Canopy**

A projection or hood over a door, window etc.

### **Canted**

Architectural term describing part, or segment, of a façade which is at an angle of less than

90° to another part of the same façade.

### **Cantilevered**

A horizontal projection (e.g. a step, balcony, canopy or beam) supported by a downward force. Without external bracing and appears to be self-supporting, cantilever construction allows for long structures without external bracing.

### **Capital**

The head or crowning feature of a column.

### **Cartouche**

An ornamental panel in the form of a scroll or sheet of paper with curling edges, usually bearing an inscription and sometimes ornately framed.

### **Casement Windows**

A metal or timber window with side hinged leaves, opening outwards or inwards.

### **Cast Iron**

An iron-based alloy containing more than 2% carbon. The molten iron is poured into a sand cast or mould rather than hammered into shape by a blacksmith. This allows for regular and uniform patterns and a high degree of detail to be represented. The finished product is chunkier, though more brittle, than WROUGHT IRON.

### **Chevron**

A type of moulding forming a zigzag pattern.

### **Chimney Stack**

Masonry or brickwork containing several flues, projecting above the roof and terminating in chimney pots.

### **Classical**

A revival or return to the principles of Greek or Roman architecture and an attempt to return to the rule of artistic law and order. Begun in Britain c.1616 and continued in successive waves up to 1930s.

### **Coade Stone**

An artificial cast stone with a mottled surface, invented in the late 18th century and used up to the early 19th century for all types of ornamentation.

### **Coal Hole Cover**

A circular, metal or wooden plate covering a hole in the pavement where domestic coal deliveries were dropped into a vaulted bunker beneath the pavement.

### **Colonnade**

A row of columns carrying an ENTABLATURE or arches.

### **Composite**

A mixed order combining the scroll-like ornament of the IONIC order with the leaves (ACANTHUS) of the CORINTHIAN order.

### **Console**

An ornamental bracket with a curved profile and usually of greater height than projection.

### **Coping**

A capping or covering to a wall, either flat or sloping to throw off water.

### **Corbel**

A projecting block, usually of stone, supporting a beam or other horizontal member.

### **Corinthian**

One of the CLASSICAL orders, which is an enriched development of the IONIC CAPITAL. Featuring stylised ACANTHUS leaves, which sometimes appear blown sideways. Unlike the DORIC and IONIC column capitals, a Corinthian capital has no neck beneath it, just a moulded ring or banding. The Corinthian column is almost always fluted.

### **Cornice**

In classical architecture, the top projecting section of an ENTABLATURE. Also any projecting ornamental moulding along the top of a building, wall, arch etc., finishing or crowning it.

### **Cresting**

An ornamental ironwork finish along the top of a screen, wall or roof.

### **Cupola**

A dome, especially a small dome on a circular or polygonal base crowning a roof or turret.

### **Curtain Wall**

A non-load-bearing wall, which can be applied in front of a framed structure. Manufactured from a variety of materials such as aluminium,



steel and glass; with sections to include windows and spaces between.

**Dentil**

Meaning 'tooth'. A small square decorative block used in series in CORNICES.

**Doric**

One of the CLASSICAL orders. Doric columns historically stood directly onto the flat pavement without a base; fluted and topped by a smooth CAPITAL that carried an ENTABLATURE.

**Dormer Window**

A window placed vertically in a sloping roof and with a roof of its own. Name comes from French 'to sleep'.

**Dressings**

Stone worked to a finished face, whether smooth or moulded, and used around an angle, window or any feature.

**Eaves**

The under part of a sloping roof overhanging a wall.

**Edwardian**

Edwardian period refers to the reign of King Edward VII, 1901–1910, although is sometimes extended to include the period up to the start of the First World War in 1914.

**English Bond**

A method of laying bricks so that alternate courses or layers on the face of the wall are composed of headers (end) or stretchers (long edge) only.

**Entablature**

The upper part of an order consisting of ARCHITRAVE, FRIEZE and CORNICE.

**Faience**

A type of glazing used on ceramics.

**Fanlight**

A window, often semicircular, over a door, in Georgian and Regency buildings, with radiating glazing bars suggesting a fan. Or any window over a door to let light into the room or corridor beyond.

**Fascia**

The wide board over a shopfront, usually carrying its name.

**Fenestration**

The arrangement of windows in a building's façade.

**Festoon**

A carved ornament in the form of a garland of fruit and flowers, tied with ribbons and suspended at both ends.

**Finial**

A vertical mounted spike, sometimes with formal ornament, used on railings and on tops of buildings.

**Flemish Bond**

A method of laying bricks so that alternate headers (end) and stretchers (long edge) appear in each course on the face of the wall.

**Fluting**

Shallow, concave grooves running vertically on the shaft of a column or PILASTER.

**Frieze**

A decorative band running between the ARCHITRAVE and CORNICE.

**Gable**

The upper portion of a wall at the end of a PITCHED ROOF. Can have straight sides or be shaped or crowned with a PEDIMENT, known as a Dutch Gable.

**Gauged brick**

Brick moulded, rubbed or cut to an exact size and shape, for arches or ornamental work.

**Gault brick**

Brick made from Gault Clay – an uncommon clay which, when fired, produces light, almost buff, blue brick.

**Georgian**

The period in British history between 1714 and 1830 - the accession of George I and death of George IV. Includes the Regency Period, defined by the Regency of George IV as Prince of Wales during the madness of his father George III.

**Gothic**

A style of European architecture, particularly associated with cathedrals and churches, that began in 12th century France. The style emphasises verticality, with expanses of glass, pointed spires, flying BUTTRESSES, ribbed vaults, pointed arches and sculptural detail.

The style focused on letting more light enter buildings than was possible with older styles. A series of Gothic revivals began in mid-18th century England and continued into the 20th century, largely for ecclesiastical and university buildings.

**Grille**

A fretted metal band, often in shopfronts, to allow for the flow of air.

**Hipped Roof**

A roof with sloped instead of vertical ends.

**Ionic**

One of the CLASSICAL orders. The Ionic column is characterised by paired scrolls that are laid on the moulded cap of the column.

**Italianate**

Describes the style of villas which developed in England as a result of the Picturesque Movement of the 1840s. A rebellion against the CLASSICAL styles of architecture. The style includes lavish exterior ornamentation such as extended CORNICE mouldings, QUOINS, PORTICOS and floral designs.

**Keystone**

The central stone of an arch, sometimes carved.

**Lightwell**

A shaft built in to the ground to let light into a building's interior at basement level, allowing below-ground rooms windows and natural light.

**Loggia**

A gallery open on one or more sides, sometimes pillared.

**Mansard Roof**

Takes its name from the French architect, Francois Mansart. Normally comprise a steep pitched roof with a shallower secondary pitch above and partially hidden behind a PARAPET wall. The design allows extra accommodation at roof level.

**Mansion Block**

A type of high-density housing used in the Victorian era. Exteriors were often red brick with elaborate stone decoration.

**Mews**

A block or row of stables with living accommodation above, and subservient to

grander buildings with which they were paired and serviced.

**Mezzanine**

A low storey between two higher ones.

**Modernism**

A cultural movement that emerged in France before 1914 involving rejection of 'traditional' forms of art and architecture and a celebration of progress. The most commonly used materials are glass for the façade, steel for exterior support, and concrete for the floors and interior supports. Floor plans were functional and logical and the style became most evident in the design of skyscrapers.

**Modillion**

A small bracket or CONSOLE of which a series is used to support the upper part of a CORNICE.

**Mullions**

A vertical post or upright dividing a window or other opening.

**Negative Building**

A building that detracts from the character or appearance of a conservation area.

**Oriel Window**

A window which juts out from the main wall of a building but does not reach the ground. Often supported by CORBELS or brackets.

**Parapet**

A low wall, placed to protect from a sudden drop – often on roofs.

**Pediment**

A CLASSICAL architectural element consisting of a triangular section or GABLE found above the ENTABLATURE, resting on columns or a framing structure.

**Pentellic Marble**

A pure white, fine-grain marble quarried from the Pentili mountain range in Greece.

**Pier**

A solid masonry support or the solid mass between doors and other openings in buildings.

**Pilaster**

A shallow PIER or rectangular column



projecting only slightly from a wall and, in CLASSICAL architecture, conforming with one of the orders.

**Pitched Roof**

A roof consisting of two sloping halves that form a peak in the middle where they meet.

**Polychromy**

Term used to describe multiple colours in one entity, especially used during VICTORIAN era. Used to highlight certain features or façades.

**Portcullis**

A GRILLE or gate historically used to fortify the entrances to medieval castles. It appears frequently as an emblem in heraldry.

**Portico**

A roofed space, open or partly enclosed, forming the entrance and centre-piece of the façade of a building, often with detached or attached columns and a PEDIMENT.

**Portland Stone**

A light coloured limestone from the Jurassic period quarried on the Isle of Portland, Dorset.

**Queen Anne**

A revival style popularised in the 1870s by Norman Shaw. Used broad historic precedents, combining fine brickwork, TERRACOTTA panels, limestone detailing, ORIEL windows and corner towers, asymmetrical fronts and picturesque massing.

**Quoins**

Dressed stones at the corners of buildings, usually laid so their faces are alternately large and small. From the French word coin meaning corner.

**Romanesque**

The dominant style of the 11th and 12th centuries until the emergence of GOTHIC. Characterised by clear easily comprehended schemes. Adopted as a revival style in the 19th century.

**Rustication**

Masonry cut in massive blocks separated from each other by deep joints. Used in lower parts of exterior walls. Effect often imitated using STUCCO renders.

**Sash Window**

A window formed with sliding glazed frames

running vertically.

**Soffit**

The exposed underside of any overhead component of a building.

**Stallriser**

A key element in a traditional shopfront, usually wood, which protects the lower part of the shopfront and encloses the shop window and entrance.

**Stucco**

Plasterwork or an exterior render, often finished to imitate fine stonework.

**Terracotta**

Fired but unglazed clay with a distinctively orange/red colour.

**Terrace**

A row of attached houses designed as a unit.

**Triglyphs**

Blocks separating the square spaces in a DORIC FRIEZE.

**Tripartite Windows**

A window formed of three elements.

**Turrets**

A small and slender curved tower.

**Tuscan**

One of the CLASSICAL orders. A stocky simplified version of the DORIC order. The column has a simpler base and was unfluted, while CAPITAL and ENTABLATURE are without adornments.

**Unlisted Building of Merit**

An unlisted building of local architectural or historic interest, which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area. Assessment of the contribution of buildings to a conservation area is made using English Heritage Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals (Appendix 2). Once a building is identified as an unlisted building of merit there will be a general presumption against its demolition.

**Venetian Windows**

A window with three openings, the central one arched and wider than the others.

**Victorian**

Period often defined as the years of Queen Victoria's reign, 1837-1901, though the Reform Act of 1832 is often taken as the start of this new cultural era.

**Wrought Iron**

Made by iron being heated and plied by a blacksmith using a hammer and anvil. Predates the existence of CAST IRON and enjoyed a renaissance during the revival periods of the late 19th century. Wrought iron is not as brittle as cast and seldom breaks.

**Stock Brick**

The most commonly used type of building brick found in London. Their distinctive colour and soft appearance comes from the yellow clay they are made from, found in Kent. In the London atmosphere they weather down to a greyish black colour.

**York Stone**

A natural stone used traditionally in for paving, laid in large slabs or 'flags'.



# 11: Design Guidance for Mews

## RELTON MEWS, LONDON SW7

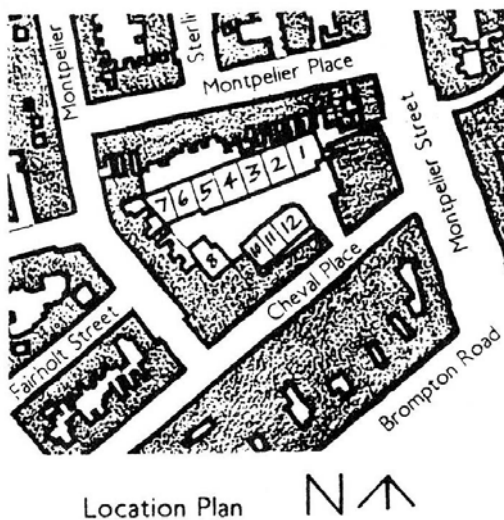
### Guidelines for Alterations

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 Relton Mews is an unusual and charming triangular close situated in the former artisans' quarter of the Knightsbridge Conservation Area. The quarter is a coherent area of smaller scale artisans house and mews properties enclosed by the larger formal properties of Montpelier Square, Rutland Gate, Brompton Road and Brompton Square.

1.2 The City Council recognises the special character of this well preserved late nineteenth century mews. In 1980 guidelines were first published to prevent any alterations which would harm the architectural form and character of the buildings and mews as a whole.

1.3 These guidelines were first reviewed and revised in 1990 and updated again as part of the production of the conservation area audit in 2009. These revised guidelines are intended to help continue to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the mews.



#### 2. Planning Permission

Planning permission is required from the City Council for almost all alterations to the exterior of the properties including alterations to window and door openings, the addition of canopies and balconies and the painting of the brickwork, metalwork or joinery, apart from the repainting of exterior joinery or metalwork for normal maintenance purposes. The City Council has additional controls (through the use of a Direction under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988) over what works require planning permission in the mews because it is considered that the special character of the mews is largely derived from the original and uniform appearance of the majority of the properties, and even minor alterations (e.g. to window and door openings or the painting of decorative brickwork) would have a harmful and discordant effect on the mews as a whole.

### 3. Guidelines for Alterations

#### 3.1 Extensions at roof level

3.1.1 Two of the important characteristics of the mews are the unusual hipped slate roofs and prominent chimney stacks and pots. These features should be retained.

3.1.2 Alterations to these roofs will not be acceptable other than the installation of dormer windows in the flanking slopes. Such dormers exist on numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7. Further of alterations or extensions to these properties are unlikely to be acceptable. For example, dormer windows or roof terraces at the front or rear of these buildings would spoil the appearance of the roofs and may also lead to overlooking of and loss of privacy to neighbouring houses. (Figs 1 and 2)

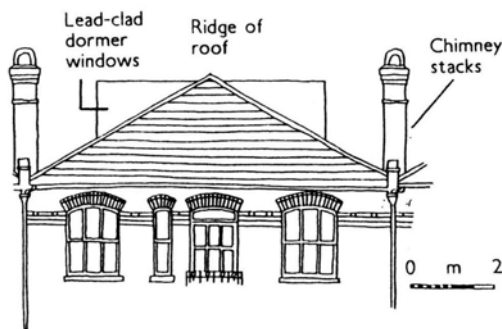


Fig. 1  
Front elevation  
to mews with  
dormer windows  
in the existing  
hipped roof.

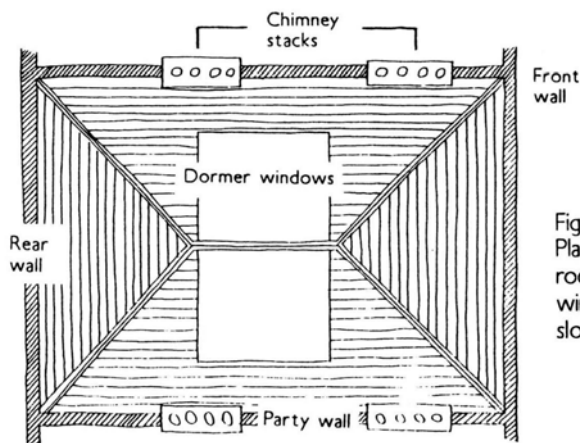


Fig. 2  
Plan of hipped  
roof with dormer  
windows in flanking  
slopes.

3.1.3 Number 5 is the only property in the mews to have a mansard roof, for which planning permission was granted before the original 1980 guidelines were published. This has had a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the mews. Similar extensions on other properties will not be acceptable.

3.1.4 Numbers 8 and 11 have been extended in the past through the addition of a sheer storey. Numbers 12 and 13 are taller buildings of a slightly different character, whilst having similar details to other buildings in the mews. Further alterations to the roofs of numbers 8, 11, 12 and 13 are unlikely to be acceptable.

3.1.5 Number 10 has its original roof form. There is a strong presumption in favour of retaining it in its present form. However, any proposal to add sensitively designed dormer windows, of modest and appropriate size, will be considered on its merits.





View of numbers 10, 11 and 12 (from right to left)

### 3.2 Alterations to the front façade

3.2.1 Brickwork. The decorative brickwork used on most front facades is a very important part of the character of the mews. Painting or rendering of the front facades would have an adverse impact on the mews and will not be acceptable. If re-pointing is required then it should match the detail and colour the existing pointing and should be flush with the brickwork.

3.2.2 First floor level. The original window openings, and many original timber sash windows, remain intact on most properties. These should be retained and repaired where necessary. Enlarging or altering these openings and windows will not be acceptable, as this would alter the consistent pattern of the facades. The height of the opening is closely related to the pattern of the decorative brickwork. The courses of red brick define the top and bottom of the window openings. This relationship should not be altered. (Fig. 4)

3.2.3 On a number of properties the central opening has been enlarged to create a 'hayloft' door. Permission is likely to be granted for similar alterations to the remaining properties in the mews, provided the design follows those shown below i.e. a part glazed door, with the lower panels solid. A simple metal or timber balustrade, with minimal projection from the façade, should be provided. All external metalwork, including rainwater pipes and balconettes, should be painted and maintained in black. Joinery should be painted and maintained in white. (Figs. 4 and 5)

3.2.4 There is more variety in the treatment of the ground floor frontages. Most of the properties have the original arched openings and these should be retained. Usually there is a central entrance, a sash window to the right and a larger opening to the left. The entrance door should either be a four panelled door or a butt-beaded timber door. The door should be set behind 115mm reveals and not fully recessed as has occurred on a few properties. (Figs 5 and 6)

3.2.5 Where garages exist the City Council will normally expect these to be retained to provide off-street parking. Planning permission will be required to convert the garages to residential use. If permission is to be granted then white painted timber joinery, echoing

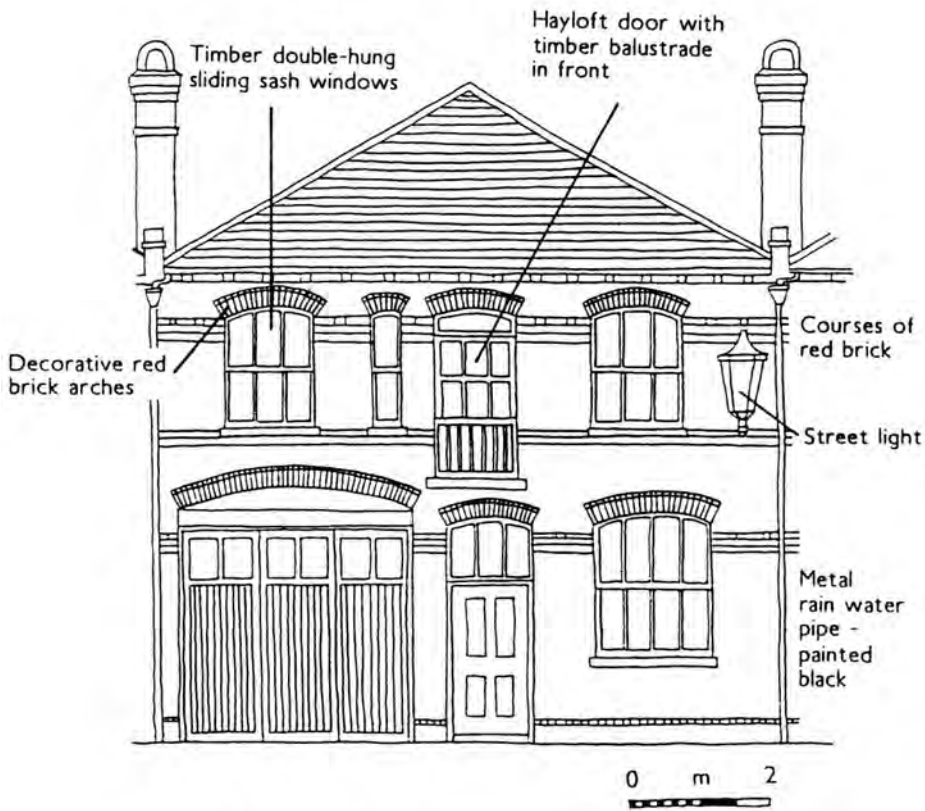


Fig.4 Typical front elevation to Relton Mews

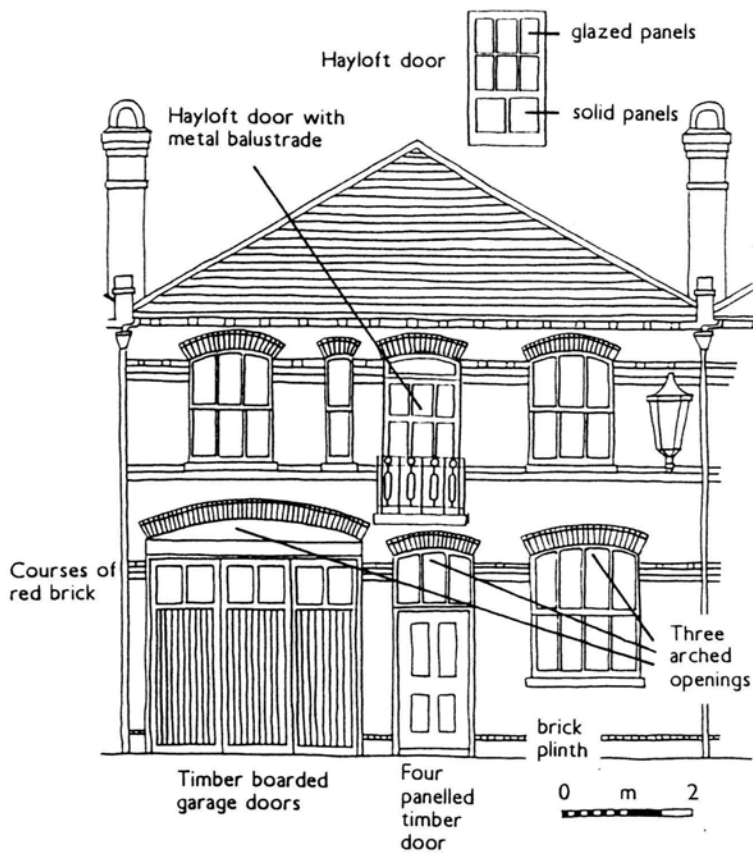


Fig. 5 Front elevation to Relton Mews showing garage retained.



the style of the original stable doors should be used. There is scope for a variety of design solutions but these should be sympathetic to the character of the mews. Each design will be considered on its own merit. (Fig. 6)

3.2.6 The appearance of these buildings can be spoiled by the addition of inappropriate features for example projecting canopies over entrance doors would be alien features in the mews and are not acceptable. Meter boxes should not be positioned on the front façade as these will have a detrimental affect on the appearance of the mews.

3.2.7 If external signs are required then these should be designed to match the existing street signs which are bracketed off a number of properties. These take the form of a hexagonal shaped lantern, painted black. Any wiring should be located within the building, not exposed on the façade.

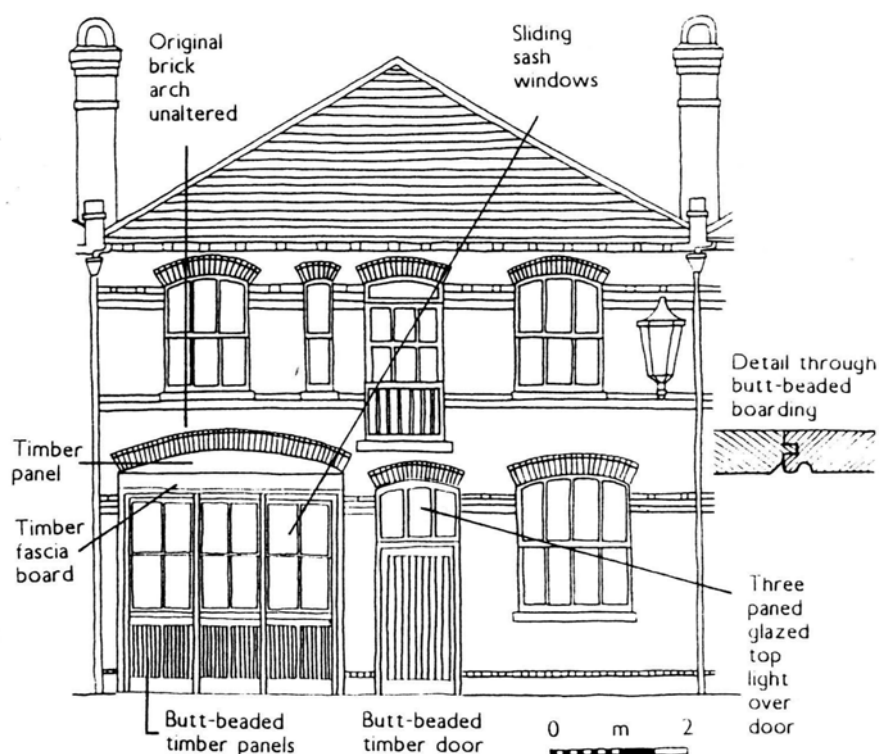


Fig. 6 Front elevation to Relton Mews showing garage converted to residential use.

### 3.3 Alterations to the rear walls of numbers 1 to 7

3.3.1 The rear wall of this terrace is largely unaffected by modern alterations, such as the insertion of new windows. Alterations to the wall would be likely to have an adverse affect on its architectural integrity and appearance. Furthermore, new windows in this wall may give rise to overlooking of neighbouring properties. Proposals to alter the rear wall are unlikely to be considered favourably.

### 3.4 Satellite dishes and other telecommunications equipment

3.4.1 Planning permission will not normally be granted for satellite dishes or other telecommunications equipment to be fixed to the front facades of properties in the mews.

They should be sited as discretely as possible, to the rear of the properties.

Approved by the Town Planning (Application) Sub-Committee on 16 January 1992



# Ennismore Gardens Mews: A Guide to Alterations

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Ennismore Gardens Mews lies in a quiet enclave of Knightsbridge to the north of Holy Trinity Church, Brompton Road. Although none of the properties are listed, they form an attractive group of buildings, retaining many of their distinctive original features.

1.2 The City Council recognises the special character of this late 19th century mews and in 1978 first published a Design Policy for the mews. This outlined the important features which should be retained and aimed to prevent any alterations which would harm the architectural form and character of the buildings and mews.

1.3 This Design Policy helped the City Council to resist applications for inappropriate development and encourage the retention of original features. There have, however, been a number of alterations, which did not necessarily require consent from the City Council but which are not in keeping with the original character, to the detriment of the appearance of the mews as a whole.

1.4 As part of the conservation area audit, the Design Policy has been reviewed and reprinted in these guidelines to raise awareness of the City Council's policies regarding alterations to the exterior of properties and to give advice on how alterations might be carried out in ways that preserve as many of the original features as possible. It is hoped that they will help to encourage sensitive change where appropriate and in a way which respects the historic architectural traditions which give the mews its distinctive attractiveness.

## 2. PLANNING PERMISSION AND CONSERVATION AREA CONSENT

2.1 Planning permission will normally be required, amongst other things, for any enlargement of the roof involving alterations and additions, either at the front or the rear, including the insertion of windows or altering the shape in any way. It will also be required for extensions and additions to a property, over a certain size. The size limit in individual cases depends on where the extension is to be located and what alterations have been made to the property and advice should be sought from the City Council in each case.

2.2 Conservation area consent is required for demolition or substantial demolition of mews properties. Before granting consent the City Council will need to see the proposed replacement design and agree that it is in keeping with the character of the mews.

2.3 Even if planning permission or conservation area consent are not required, property owners are encouraged to take into account the general principles outlined here, to help retain the special character of this attractive mews.

### 3. GUIDELINES FOR ALTERATIONS TO PROPERTIES

#### 3.1 Extensions and Alterations at Roof Level

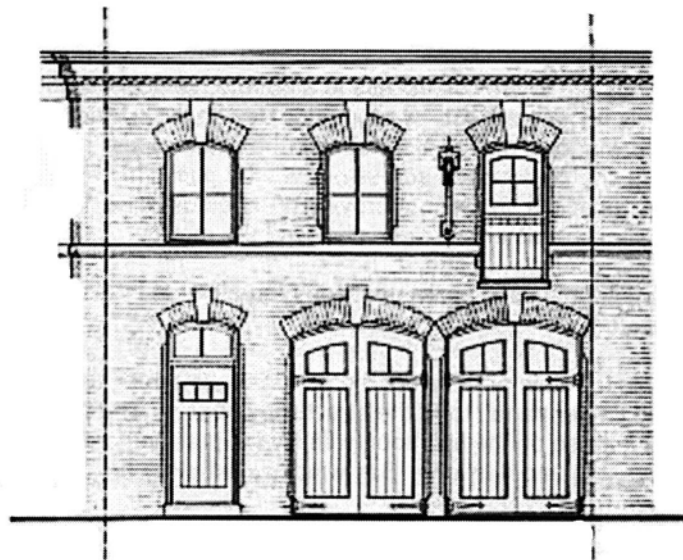
The City Council has consistently maintained a policy of refusing applications for roof extensions or alterations which might be visible from the street. As a result all the properties in Ennismore Gardens Mews retain their original parapet line behind which the roofs are not visible from street level. This consistency of line makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the Mews which the City Council will continue to protect by refusing applications for roof alterations visible from the street.

The original chimney stacks and pots are an important and attractive feature of the roofscape should be retained wherever possible or rebuilt to match the original design where they do not exist or are beyond repair.

Water tanks and any other plant should be contained within the building envelope. Planning permission may be refused where these are considered to have a detrimental effect on the conservation area.

#### 3.2 Alterations to the First Floor Facades

The first floor facades of the mews show consistency of line and form as the majority of the original features have been retained. The most important features are shown in Figure 1 (below) and include the projecting brick dentil cornice, original gauged brick arched window openings with sash windows, enlarged central keystone, the prominent string course and original unloading doors. These details should be retained or reinstated where missing or altered.



**Figure 1: One type of Ennismore Gardens Mews building in its original appearance.**

Just under half of the properties retain all of their original first floor window openings. The majority of the remainder retain at least one of the original openings. The principal alterations that have occurred are the insertion of French doors or casement windows and projecting metal balconies to structural openings, originally serving as loading doors. These alterations are generally considered inappropriate and have had a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the mews.



When considering making further alterations to window openings where the original form has been altered, property owners are asked to consider reinstatement of the original detail.

The original 2-over-2 timber double-hung sliding sash windows and any remaining original loading doors should be retained wherever possible or replaced in detail to match the originals. Changes to glazing bar patterns, casement type or other non-traditional design and materials should be avoided. uPVC windows are not considered appropriate.

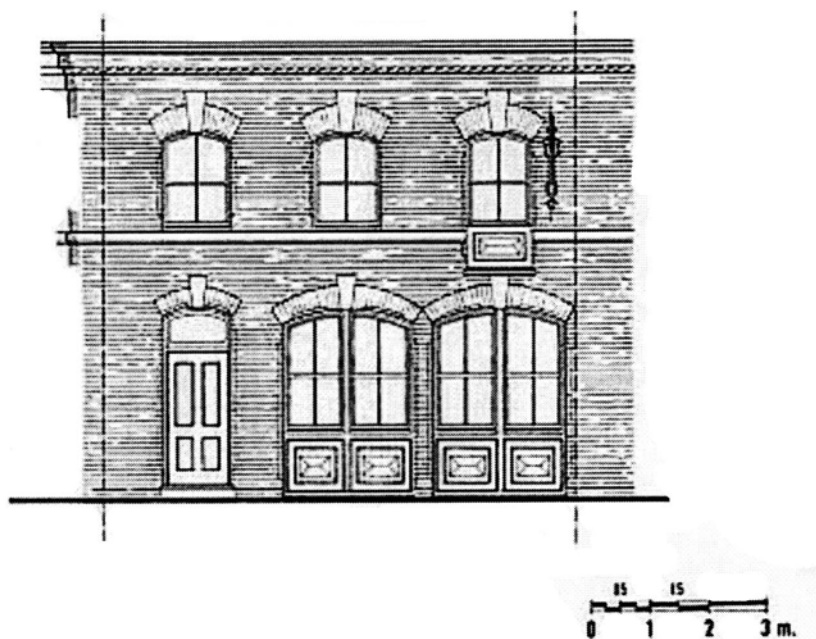
### 3.3 Alterations to the Ground Floor Facades

Originally the ground floor facades contained two or three large gauged brick arched openings with a prominent keystone and vertically divided timber doors providing an entrance to the stables. A separate arched doorway opening as provided, usually to one side.

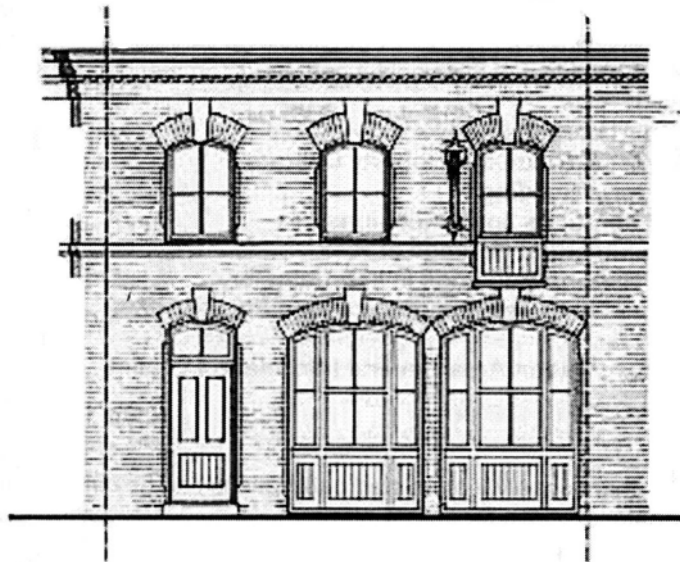
Although these large arched openings are a distinctive feature of the mews, only a very small number of properties have retained them all. Over half of the houses, however, retain at least one of the large brick arches and every effort should be made to preserve these that remain and to reinstate them where they have been removed.

Where the openings are to provide access to a garage, vertically timber-boarded doors should be installed where the originals no longer exist. A suggested design is shown in Figure 1, (below) in this Guide. Suitably designed windows maybe inserted into the timber doors as shown. Metal 'up and over' or sliding shutter type doors should not open across or over the public highway. Existing garage space should be retained wherever possible, in order to provide off-street parking: in addition, the coach-type doors will help preserve the original character and appearance of the mews.

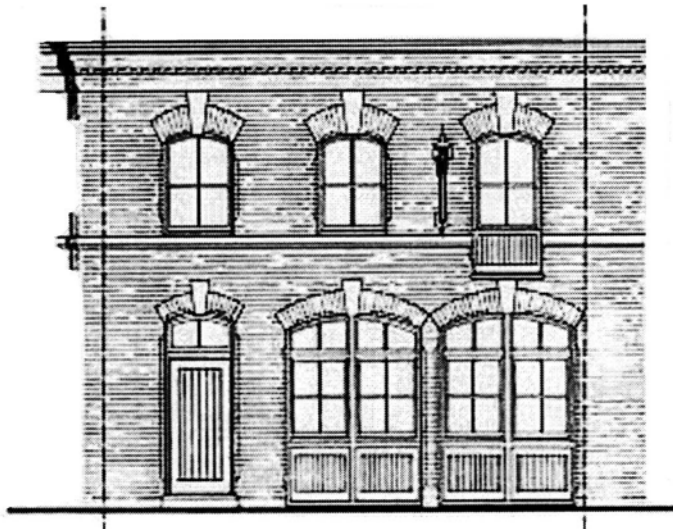
Where the ground floor is used as living accommodation the original arched structural openings should be retained or reinstated.



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**

**Figure 2, 3 and 4: Examples of alterations to original openings, which may be given consent by the Council.**

If it is not desirable to retain or reinstate the actual coach doors, then there could be replaced with a suitably designed timber panel, to fill the structural opening. The panel can contain traditional sash windows matching those on the first floor, with timber panelled or timber boarded aprons below (see examples, Figures 2, 3 and 4). Bay windows, whether projecting or recessed are not considered in keeping with the character of the mews.

The original doors and structural openings have been altered or lost completely in all but a few cases. Consideration should be given to reinstating the original door with a simple vertical, butt-beaded, timber-boarded front door and a glazed panel above. Alternatively, four-panelled solid timber doors are also appropriate. Multi-panelled neo-Georgian type doors are considered to be out of character with the mews.

The addition of projecting front door steps or brick planting boxes on the mews surface are also considered intrusive features that disturb the original straight building line. Planning permission and consent under the Highways Act is required for this type of features and



neither is likely to be forthcoming.

### **3.4 Other Additions to the Facades**

Other additions to the façades, such as wooden shutters, canopies or porches are not traditional mews features and contribute to visual clutter and are therefore unlikely to be acceptable. The carriage lamp type lighting brackets are considered to be in keeping with the character of the mews and this pattern should be followed if householders wish to add lights to their properties, provided that such features are of authentic design rather than approximate modern interpretations.

### **3.5 Satellite Dishes and other Telecommunications Equipment**

Planning permission will not be granted for satellite dishes or other telecommunication equipment to be fixed to the front facades of properties or on party wall upstands. Such equipment should be located in

positions where the visual impact on the mews is minimised, such as to the rear of the property behind the parapet.

## **4. CONTACTS AND FURTHER ADVICE**

See Directory.

## 12 DIRECTORY OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AND INFORMATION

- I Designation and Extension Reports
- II Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest
- III Other Designations
- IV Publications and Sources of Further Information
- V Further Reading
- VI Westminster City Council Contacts



## I DESIGNATION AND EXTENSION REPORTS

The Knightsbridge Conservation Area was designated in February 1968 and extended in 1978. The area is defined by three distinct developments of individual character bounded by Hyde Park in the north and the City boundary with Kensington and Chelsea in the west and south. Extracts from the following reports can be found on the following pages: Designation reports dated 9 November 1967, 4 January 1968, 9 February 1978 and 29 June 1978.

Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas were designated in 1989. Extracts from committee reports dated 28 June 1988 and 31 January 1989 are attached

## CITY OF WESTMINSTER

A.234.67

TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE - 9 NOVEMBER 1967

CONSERVATION AREAS: KNIGHTSBRIDGE STUDY

REPORT BY THE CITY ARCHITECT AND PLANNING OFFICER

### Eastern Part of the Area

The plan of London from an actual survey in 1832 clearly shows the almost rural nature of the Knightsbridge area at this period. The eastern tip of the area is developed and Trevor Square (1813), part of Montpelier Square and Montpelier Place (1830/40) are laid out, as in Brompton Square. The remainder of the area consists of a few large mansions fronting onto Knightsbridge, some large houses and cottages adjacent to country lanes.

Today the original buildings in this area are relatively unspoilt and the brick and stucco houses of very human scale get around leafy squares inter-connected by short streets and pedestrian ways of similar scale and character make the area an extremely attractive place in which to live. Trevor Square is, however, considerably harmed by the intrusion of the large and ugly Harrods Repository, but it is hoped in the event of redevelopment a more suitable form and mass can be achieved.

To the south of Montpelier Square the small scale residential streets have not got the same amount of architectural character and townscape value as the remainder of the area but are, nevertheless, considered worthy of inclusion in a conservation area. The scale of the development and the fact that it is screened from two major roads on its north and south boundaries by more modern development of a larger scale gives the feeling of a village or backwater in the heart of a city.

It is considered that the approach roads to Trevor Road from Knightsbridge are an important part of the composition of the area and that Trevor Place and Trevor Street should be included in with this complex. Similarly, the part of Montpelier Street, which still retains many buildings of this period, should also be included as part of the overall complex.

### Central Part of the Area

The next major development took place during the mid nineteenth century. Many terraces and squares were laid out, consisting of large sale stucco houses, detailed in a classical manner, of which Princes Gate, Rutland Gate, Queens Gate and a part of Ennismore Gardens are typical examples.

In spite of certain unsympathetic piecemeal developments (notably Eresby House) this area still retains an overall feeling of dignity and grandeur resulting from the scale and formal layout of this architecture. The sense of enclosure is also present to a great extent as here again the squares are laid out in the form of 'cul-de-sac' off the Kensington Road.

Of the original buildings fronting onto the Kensington Road only one complete terrace remains (14-31 Princes Gate), the remainder having been demolished to make way for modern apartment blocks facing the park. In this complex All Saints Church, Ennismore Gardens, built in early Christian or Italian-Romanesque style (1846-1849) is also an important feature.

Further west the Imperial College has an overall comprehensive development scheme which is at the moment being carried out around the gardens of Princes Garden Square. Whilst the existing layout form is being retained the buildings are obviously of a 20<sup>th</sup> century character. As this is part of a major comprehensive



redevelopment scheme this area has been excluded from the proposed conservation area.

Nos. 14-31 Princes Gate is, as has already been stated, the one remaining mid nineteenth century terrace fronting onto Kensington Road and because of its isolation it has been excluded from the conservation area. During the normal process of development control this building will, of course, be treated as one of architectural and historic interest.

#### Western Part of the Area

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century a further change in the sale and character of the area took place by the erection of the Albert Hall (1867-71) - (Captain Fawke), the Royal Geographical Society building (1874) - (Norman Shaw) and the Albert Hall Mansions (1879) - (Norman Shaw). This group of buildings also includes others which are important architecturally including the Royal College of Organists (1875) - (Lieutenant Cole), the Royal College of Music (1883) - (Sir A Blomfield) and the Royal College of Mines and Technology - (Ashton Webb).

This group of buildings, designed symmetrically around the axis of the Prince Consort Memorial/Royal Albert Hall, is absolutely unique in London and whilst opinions may vary on the architectural appearance of many of the buildings, it is a group which is worthy of preservation.

The new Royal College of Art is a fine modern building and although the treatment of the buildings flanking the Albert Hall is not altogether successful in civic design terms, in the main it is well conceived in relation to this formal group.

The terrace of houses fronting onto Queens Gate is, of course, part of the original street terrace architecture. Although it is now somewhat isolated by the new college buildings further south, nevertheless, whatever its future it must be considered an important site in relation both to Queens Gate and to the Albert Hall complex and should be included within the conservation area boundary.

#### General

It is not possible in this report to give a detailed appreciation of every street and major building in the area. The study was, however, based on the criteria already agreed and maps have been prepared which indicate the various grades of architectural and/or civic design value placed on each street and terrace.

#### Recommendations

1. That the areas outlined on Map No. CD/2/COII be approved as suitable for designation as conservation areas, subject to consultation.
2. That the Greater London Council be consulted.
3. That the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea be consulted as an adjoining planning authority.
4. That the Knightsbridge Society be consulted as being an interested organisation.
5. That the Imperial College authorities be consulted.
6. That the Minister of Housing and Local Government be informed that the area contains many buildings worthy of inclusion in the statutory Supplementary Lists of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest and that he be requested to consider this area in connection with the review of these lists.

F G WEST  
ARCHITECT AND PLANNING OFFICER

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE - 4 JANUARY 1968

CIVIC AMENITIES ACT 1967

KNIGHTSBRIDGE AND BELGRAVIA AREAS - DESIGNATION OF CONSERVATION AREAS

JOINT REPORT BY THE CITY ARCHITECT AND PLANNING OFFICER AND THE CITY SOLICITOR

1. Areas for Designation

Knightsbridge - Map No. CD/CS/Z/0008

Belgravia - Map No. CD/CS/Y/0007

On 9 November 1967, the Committee considered these two areas and authorised consultation with interested authorities and other appropriate organisations.

2. Knightsbridge

As regards this area, the Greater London Council, the Civic Trust, Knightsbridge Association, the Victorian Society, the Georgian Group and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea were consulted, and their observations are as follows:

Civic Trust

‘Area seems to be most appropriate’.

Knightsbridge Association

The Secretary is referring the matter to his Committee but meanwhile he expresses the hope that Kensington and Chelsea will include the west side of Rutland Street and Rutland Mews in order to connect out proposals with an area being proposed by that authority.

No replies have been received from other organisations or from Kensington and Chelsea.

On further consideration, it is suggested that Nos. 14-31 Princes Gate, a mid Victorian terrace adjoining the Albert Hall complex be included in the conservation area.

3. Belgravia

As regards this area, the Greater London Council, the Civic Trust, the Grosvenor Estate, the Victorian Society, the Georgian Group and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea were consulted and their observations are as follows:

Civic Trust

‘Area seems to be most appropriate’.

Grosvenor Estate

A letter from the Surveyor to the Estate states that the matter has been referred to the Estate’s advisers, and no doubt the Estate will have some representations to make in due course.

These are the only replies received so far.



#### 4. Detailed Policies

The Committee will be aware that once these areas have been designated it will be necessary to formulate detailed policies to safeguard the future of each area. Further reports will, therefore, be submitted on these areas in due course.

#### Recommendation

That, subject to formal consultation with the Greater London Council, the City Council be recommended to designate the areas shown edged in thick black lines on Map Nos. GD/CS/Z/0008 and CD/CS/Y/0007 as conservation areas under Section 1 of the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and that officers be authorised to take all necessary action in connection with such designation.

#### Decision

#### Belgravia and Knightsbridge Areas

- i. Report received and recommendation approved subject to the boundary on the western side of the proposed Belgravia Conservation Area being amended to follow the City boundary along Lowndes Street between West Halkin Street and Chesham Place.
- ii. The City Architect and Planning Officer authorised to continue discussions with the Grosvenor Estate to explain the implications of a conservation area.
- iii. The Committee decided not to adopt the suggestions of the Georgian Group to include the south-east side of Ebury Street in the Belgravia Conservation Area.
- iv. See report to Council.

S J RUTTY  
CITY SOLICITOR

F G WEST  
CITY ARCHITECT AND PLANNING OFFICER

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE - 9 FEBRUARY 1978

KNIGHTSBRIDGE CONSERVATION AREA

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

1. Introduction

The conservation area was designated in February 1968 and declared to be of outstanding architectural or historic interest in August 1976. At that time the Historic Buildings Council advised the Secretary of State for the Environment to request a review of the boundaries of the area, suggesting some extensions including the area between the two separate parts of the conservation area.

1.1 A detailed study of the conservation area has been carried out on the lines of the one undertaken in the Soho area. Committee will recall that the buildings were graded in the following way:

A Listed buildings.

B Buildings which should be listed and preserved.

C Buildings which make such a contribution to the character of the area that their preservation is desirable.

D Buildings which have some claim to reservation and which therefore should be retained until a suitable replacement is approved.

E Buildings which have a negative quality, and/or those the replacement of which should be encouraged.

1.2 The map attached to this report shows the boundary of the designated area, the areas suggested by the Secretary of State for reappraisal and those alterations to the boundaries recommended in this report.

1.3 Photographs of each area and individual buildings will be displayed in Committee, together with a map illustrating the suggested grading of the buildings of character.

2. The Study

2.1 Area A - Rutland Gate. At the time of designation, Rutland Gate and the gardens were included but due to development proposals and to the townscape imbalance at the entrance to the cul-de-sac, the properties forming this entrance were omitted.

2.1.1 In more recent years, Nos. 1-7 Rutland Gate, a block of mid Victorian Classical Stucco terraced houses, have been the subject of a Building Preservation Notice, emergency repairs have been carried out and a Repairs Notice has been served, (but not enforced). The main facades of the houses are now being restored as part of a conversion scheme.

2.1.2 At the same time negotiations with applicants for possible redevelopments of the poor pre-war brick property of the opposite side of the entrance to Rutland Gate have taken place and officers have advised that any redevelopment should be aimed at redressing the present townscape imbalance.

2.1.3 The Department of Environment has suggested the inclusion of Nos. 1-7 within the designated area, but, for the reasons set out above, it is suggested that Nos. 2-8 and 8a are also included.

(Photograph A)

2.2 Area B - Rutland Gardens



2.2.1 Although the properties in this area are later large scale, brick and stucco, Victorian and Edwardian properties, they fit in well with the character of the adjacent listed 1-7 Rutland Gate and, together with those properties, maintain a meaningful stretch of older townscape along Knightsbridge. As a group within a cul-de-sac they have considerable character in their own right and the attractiveness of the group is enhanced by the very pleasing two storey, brick, classical style mews property at the southern end. Whilst none of the larger blocks is of listable quality, it is considered that they are worthy of preservation and adaptation if necessary. The introduction of a new building within the cul-de-sac could spoil its rather unique character. The mews block is a simple but very well ordered building and it is considered that this could be listed.

(Photograph B)

2.3 Area C - The southern end of Montpelier Street and Nos. 156-106 Brompton Road

2.3.1 This area, adjacent to part of Brompton Road is still basically a local shopping centre containing small shops, food stores, a patisserie, hairdressers, a wine bar and two public houses.

2.3.2 In general terms, many of the properties are similar to buildings within the designated area, although none is included within the Statutory List. In townscape terms the street and the two flanking blocks on the Brompton Road form a most suitable and attractive entrance to the conservation area and, in extent and character, one which is meaningful in the wider context of Brompton Road. The visual link with the conservation area and the individuality of the group within the general townscape of Brompton Road is emphasised, and made more pleasing, by the raised footway and the fine mature trees on the Brompton Road frontage. Designation of this stretch of the Brompton road and the lower end of Montpelier Street would protect its present character and afford a future opportunity of enhancing what is already a rather unique amenity. The Department of the Environment has also suggested that this area be reappraised.

2.3.3 Part of the western flanking group of the Brompton road lies within the area of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and is threatened by a proposal for an unsuitable dominant development. The Royal Borough has been informed that the City Council, for the reasons given above, considers that the existing buildings should be retained.

2.3.4 Of the 38 buildings in the total area including the part within the boundary of Kensington and Chelsea, it is suggested that 22 of them come within category C. In addition, it is suggested that Nos. 2-8 Montpelier Street are of listable quality. These are modest four storey brick properties of the early C19 period with traditional shop fronts. Permission has been granted for a redevelopment scheme at Nos. 106-110 Brompton Road, but this has been designed to fit into the townscape of the group.

(Photograph C)

2.4 Area D - Chevel Place, south side

2.4.1 Chevel Place is a narrow 'mews' street containing a variety of buildings and activities which are very much part of the overall Knightsbridge village concept. The northern side is designated, but the southern part falls within the Royal Borough at the rear of the Brompton Road properties already mentioned in area 'C'. However, it is considered that Cheval Place forms an integral part of the conservation area and that both sides should be so designated.

2.4.2 There are no listed buildings within the street and it is considered that none is worthy of listing. However, it is suggested that 13 properties (including Relton Mew) falls within the C category. In 1975 an application for the redevelopment of the mews, which was very sensitively designed, but subsequently withdrawn, received much adverse comment from the Knightsbridge Association and the local community who considered that the properties should be renovated and adapted. On reappraising the area, it is suggested that this approach should now be adopted.

## 2. Area E - Princes Gardens and Princes Gate area

2.5.1 It is known that the historic Buildings Council and the Department for the Environment prefer a continuous boundary around a designated area, with no undesignated 'holes' or wedges of land. Therefore they have requested the City Council to reconsider the area which separates the Albert Hall complex from the 'Hamlet' of Knightsbridge.

2.5.2 In layout, in the character of the inter-related open spaces, the area is obviously related to the latter. It contains one very fine listed mid-Victorian classical stuccoed terrace on the west side of Princes Gardens and eight similar terraced houses on the north side which are also listed. It is also considered that Nos. 44-48 Princes Gate, a terrace of similar mid-Victorian houses should be added to the statutory list.

2.5.3 When the Knightsbridge Conservation Area was designated this particular area was omitted in order to facilitate the completion of the overall plan for Imperial College. Since then, as Committee are aware, attitudes have changed, and it would now appear to be consistent to designate the area in order to include the excellent gardens, the listed buildings and to reinforce the importance the City Council places on the area and therefore on the type and quality of any future developments.

2.5.4 During the reappraisal, it was noted that the early C20 Portland stone classical building on the south side of Prince Consort Road (the Royal Society of Mines) which is listed (Grade II) was not included in the original designation. Although the building is not in keeping with the red brick character of the immediate area, it is a strong building of character and one which relates well to the eastern part of the conservation area when viewed from Princes Gardens. It would seem logical to include it within the designated area.

## 2.6 Area F - Designated Conservation Area (east)

2.6.1 This is the Hamlet of Knightsbridge area containing Trevor Square, Montpelier Square, Ennismore Gardens, Rutland Gate and many minor streets and mews of similar character.

2.6.2 The detailed study indicates that:

156 are listed  
118 are of Grade B standard  
112 are of Grade C standard  
32 are of Grade D standard  
27 are of Grade E standard

## 2.7 Grade G - Designated Conservation Area (west)

2.7.1 This is the red brick area centred on the Royal Albert Hall

2.7.2 The detailed study indicates that:

40 are listed  
14 are of Grade C standard  
9 are of Grade D standard  
2 are of Grade E standard

It is considered that the Royal College of Music, a red brick Victorian turreted building with a high mansard roof, sited on the axis of the Albert Hall should be recommended for listing. Also, mainly for its Victorian red brick character and its value within the Albert Hall group, it is suggested that the DoE be asked to consider the possible inclusion of the adjacent block of flats known as Albert Court.

## 3. Recommendations



3.1 That the Knightsbridge Association, Imperial College, the Victorian Society, The Georgian Group, the Civic Trust, the Greater London Council and the Westminster Society be consulted on the proposed extensions to the Knightsbridge Conservation Area as shown on Map No. A, and on the proposed listing as grading of buildings of character as shown on Map No. B.

3.2 That the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea be consulted and requested to consider the possibility of designating Nos. 1-11 Montpelier Street and 132-156 Brompton Road as conservation area.

J M HIRSH  
DIRECTOR OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

# CITY OF WESTMINSTER

TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE - 29 JUNE 1978

## REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

### Knightsbridge Conservation Area

Proposed extension to the designated area.

Proposed additions to the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 The Knightsbridge Conservation Area was designated in April 1968. In 1976 the Department of the Environment, on the advice of the Historic Buildings Council, declared it to be of 'outstanding' interest - thus enabling applications for grants towards the cost of improvements to be made to the Historic Buildings Council.

1.2 On the 9 February 1978 the Town Planning Committee considered a report on proposed extensions to the designated area. This report was prompted by the Department of the Environment who, when declaring the existing area to be of outstanding interest, suggested possible extensions.

1.3 A plan of the designated area and the proposed extension is appended to this report.

1.4 At the same time the buildings within the area were studied in detail with a view to requesting additions to the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. In addition, all the buildings were categorised in the following way:

Buildings which make such a contribution to the character of the area that their preservation is desirable. (In these cases consent to demolish a building within a conservation area would be withheld.)

Buildings which have some claim to preservation and which should be retained until a suitable replacement is approved.

1.5 The Committee approved the report - for consultation with the Knightsbridge Association, Imperial College, Victorian Society, Georgian Group, Civic Trust, Greater London Council and the Westminster Society.

1.6 As one of the recommendations for an extension to the southern boundary included an area within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, that authority has been requested to consider the possibility of designating Nos. 1-11 Montpelier Street and 132-156 Brompton Road (Part - Area C on attached map).

1.7 The Department of the Environment has also been consulted on the effect the proposed extensions might have on the conservation areas 'outstanding' status.

#### 2. Consultations

##### 2.1 Knightsbridge Association

The Association agree the proposed extensions and the suggested additions to the Statutory List. They have also written to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the Department of the Environment pressing for the inclusion of this part of area C which lies within the boundary of Kensington and Chelsea. They also requested that Nos. 140-148 Brompton Road be added to the Statutory List and objecting strongly about the insensitive six storey proposed for the redevelopment of these properties which has now been given outline planning permission by Kensington and Chelsea. Committee will recall that the



City Council sent very adverse comments on its proposal when consulted. The application is now with the Greater London Council for Decision.

## 2.2 Imperial College

Endorse the view that Princes's Gardens should be preserved but do not consider that Nos. 46-48 9 (on the south side of the square - south west corner) should be listed. The College consider that as there are only remnants of the original terrace, sandwiched between modern buildings, they should be allowed to redevelop the site in the future in a manner commensurate with the adjoining buildings. The College also seek assurances that the inclusion of the Royal College of Mines (a Grade II listed building) within the conservation area will not preclude any internal alterations to the building which may be necessary to maintain its prime function as an internationally famous engineering college and research centre.

## 2.3 Victorian Society

Fully support all the recommendations proposed for altering the boundary and also the suggested additions to the Statutory List.

## 2.4 Georgian Group

Has no comments to make.

## 2.5 Civic Trust

No longer make comments on the designation of conservation areas but wish to have relevant information for their records.

## 2.6 Greater London Council

The subject had not been reported to the Historic Buildings Committee but it is understood that the officers will be reporting in support of all the proposals. They also draw attention to the problem of area C and the outline permission for the new development.

## 2.7 Westminster Society

Welcome the proposals for the extensions to the designated area but have not commented on the detail as it is within the area of the Knightsbridge Association.

## 2.8 Department of the Environment

The Secretary of State 'accepts that if the Knightsbridge Conservation Area were to be extended as proposed... it would continue to be of outstanding architectural or historic interest under the provisions of Section 10 of the Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act 1972.

## 2.9 Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

The Borough Planning Control officer has written to say that the City Council's request for the designation of that part of area C which is within their boundary will be reported to their Town Planning Committee on 6 June. However, the officer has stated that, in the light of the recent outline permission for the redevelopment of 140-148 Brompton Road and 11-19 Chapel Place, when his Committee were of the opinion that these properties were not of conservation standard, the area to be recommended for designation will be confined to Nos. 1-11a Montpelier Street and the corner property on the street - No. 132 Brompton Road. The officer also states that the properties on their side of Cheval Place are mainly of the light industrial character which, although distinctive, do not merit inclusion in a conservation area. In any event, as this side of the road is

adjacent to Westminster's conservation area any development will be subject to strict control. The outline permission is subject to Greater London Council Direction. A verbal report of the decision of Kensington and Chelsea will be given at Committee.

### 3. Comment

3.1 In general the proposed extensions and the suggested additions of buildings to the Statutory List have been welcomed.

3.2 In addition to the comments already reported, the Victorian Society and the Knightsbridge Association have made some comments about listing. The buildings they mention however are already listed and now with the Department of the Environment for consideration.

3.3 Imperial College can be informed that the inclusion of the Royal College of Mines within the conservation area is not relevant to the interior of the building. The interior is however already affected by the Grade II listing of the building and proposals to alter the interior in a material way must in any even be the subject of a listed building application.

3.4 The proposed listing of Nos. 46-48 Princes's Gardens, to which Imperial College object, is supported by the Knightsbridge Association and the Victorian Society. They were suggested for listing as they are of the same period and style as the adjacent terrace on the west side of the square and, in townscape terms, give some cohesion to this corner of the square. However, the completion of the southern terrace in a manner commensurate with the adjacent buildings I.e. Imperial College and Nos. 59-63 Exhibition Road could also result in an equally acceptable townscape solution. In cases where only a small part of a terrace remains the Department of the Environment may take this fact into consideration when considering the intrinsic merit of the individual buildings.

3.5 The possible designation of Nos. 1-11a Montpelier Street and No. 132 Brompton Road is welcomed.

### 4. Recommendation

4.1 That the extension to the boundary of the Knightsbridge Conservation Area. Shown in a broken line on the attached plan A be designated.

4.2 That the Secretary of State for the Environment be asked to add the buildings shown in green on the plan B to the Statutory List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest.  
(Map to be displayed in Committee.)

4.3 That the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea be asked to designate the area shown on the dotted line on the plan A as a conservation area.

J M HIRSH  
DIRECTOR OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

STATUS : FOR GENERAL RELEASE  
COMMITTEE : PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
DATE , : 28 JUNE 1988.  
REPORT OF : DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION  
SUBJECT : PROPOSED KNIGHTSBRIDGE GREEN AND  
ALBERT GATE CONSERVATION AREAS  
BACKGROUND PAPERS : LIST ATTACHED . ;

1. SUMMARY

Recent survey work has shown areas of particular architectural and historic interest which are presently undesignated. This report sets out the background to and recommendations, for these areas.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the designation of the Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas as indicated on Figure 1 (to be displayed at Committee) be approved for consultation purposes and that consultations be carried out with the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission, Victorian Society, Georgian Group, Knightsbridge Association and other such consultees as the Committee directs.
- 2.2 That the results of consultation be assessed and reported back to committee. 3.

BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Paragraph 13.50(ii) of the approved District Plan sets out the City Council's policy of reviewing its Conservation Areas and their boundaries periodically. The City Council has a statutory duty to carry out such reviews.
- 3.2 The two adjacent existing Conservation Areas of Knightsbridge and Belgravia embrace areas of essentially consistent architectural and townscape interest. Whilst the two study areas are close to the boundaries of these established Conservation Areas, it is considered that their intrinsic historical and architectural nature merits separate designation.

4. PROPOSED DESIGNATION

- 4.1 General character of the Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate area.

The character that prevails is much as it was at the turn of the century, in spite of Bowater House, Caltex House and the Sheraton Park Hotel. It is an architecture of strong red brick with stone or faience dressings extending down the Brompton Road to Harrods and along Knightsbridge, reappearing with the Royal Albert Hall as the principal architectural feature between Princes Gate and Queen's Gate on Kensington Gore, including Norman Shaw's Albert Mansions (1881). Into this essentially red-brick character a number of white stuccoed buildings intrude, principally at Albert Gate, but the red-brick late-Victorian character remains predominant. The proposed Conservation Areas therefore contain buildings conforming to a townscape theme which runs beyond the areas in question to parts of the Knightsbridge Conservation Area, as well as buildings in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Much post-war redevelopment in this area has failed to respect the established late-Victorian character and scale, and has visually disrupted the continuity of the main townscape theme running through the area. Although enough of the original Victorian Knightsbridge remains intact to merit designation, further inappropriate developments could seriously damage the delicate balance now existing.

### Knightsbridge Green Area

Knightsbridge Green is a compact and homogeneous cluster of buildings which, although small in area, exerts a predominant influence on the character of the surrounding area by virtue of its position at the junction of Knightsbridge and Brompton Road. Most prominent in visual terms is Park Mansions, the Victorian building at Scotch Corner which has remained intact, including the Knightsbridge Arcade built between 1897 and 1900 to designs by G D Martin and recently restored. Adjoining Park Mansions is the Normandie Hotel (built in 1912) which embodies some Arts and Crafts movement details in its facade, such as the black granite entrance. The Mansions on the Park side of Knightsbridge pick up the prevailing red-brick theme on the North side and thereby continue a visual link with the Hyde Park Hotel to the east.

With the arcade running through Park Mansions and the pedestrian routes of Knightsbridge Green and Park Close (a narrow passage-way leading from Knightsbridge through to the Park, and marked by some fine iron-work), the area contains a network of intimate public routes and spaces which contrasts with the broad and busy character of Knightsbridge and Brompton Road.

### Albert Gate Area

The Albert Gate study area includes a number of Grade II listed buildings, although architecturally it is less homogeneous than the Knightsbridge Green area. Here, the red-brick Victorian and Edwardian theme running east-west along Knightsbridge is interrupted by the Italian classical architecture of white stuccoed palazzi forming the Albert Gate. This composition, which is more closely associated with Belgravia. This composition designed by Thomas Cubitt in the 1840s to conceal the Westbourne stream and create a grandiose new way to the part from the south (Lowndes Square), forms the focus of the proposed Conservation Area. The two buildings on either side of the Gate (the eastern one occupied by the French embassy since the 19th century) are both listed Grade II.



Apart from Albert Gate, the most important feature dominating the surroundings is the grandiose and highly ornate Victorian architecture of the Hyde Park Hotel, erected in 1888. To the east of Albert Gate the prevailing; red-brick character is resumed with the Parkside development built in 1908 which with the listed block opposite (nos. 55-91 Knightsbridge) confirms the eastern gateway to red-brick Knightsbridge.

## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS ^ ‘ .

- 5.1 Experience of other Conservation Area designations suggests that these relatively small designations are unlikely to result in significant addition to the workload of the Development Division.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The proposed Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas seek to preserve the character and quality of an area which has long been a focus of commercial activity with stores and hotels attracting national and international customers.

Knightsbridge is an historic throughfare which still reflects the confidence of the High Victorian and Edwardian eras. It is much frequented by tourists. A definite late Victorian character predominates which deserves designation to ensure that these valuable qualities will be preserved and enhanced and not harmed by inappropriate developments, pressure for which has arisen since the area is within the CAZ.

Local Government (Access to Information<sup>^</sup>) Act 1985

Background Papers 1.

District Plan.

649:dcv-95/wli-kni/0

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

STATUS : FOR GENERAL RELEASE

COMMITTEE : PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

DATE : 31 JANUARY 1989

REPORT OF : DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

SUBJECT : RESULTS OF CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED  
KNIGHTSBRIDGE GREEN AND ALBERT GATE  
CONSERVATION AREAS

WARD : KNIGHTSBRIDGE

BACKGROUND PAPERS : LIST ATTACHED

1. SUMMARY

Consultation on the proposed Conservation Areas of Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate is now complete following Committee approval of 28 June 1988. This report presents the response from consultees, and seeks approval for the Conservation Area designations.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the areas shown in figure 1 be designated as the Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas under the provisions of Section 277 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 and the authorisation be given to give notice of the designation in the London Gazette and at least one local newspaper circulating in the area, to the Secretary of State for the Environment, English Heritage and the adjoining Borough (Kensington and Chelsea) and to take such other steps as may be necessary to implement the designation.

3. BACKGROUND

The two adjacent existing Conservation Areas of Knightsbridge and Belgravia embrace areas of essentially consistent architectural and townscape interest. Whilst the two study areas are close to the boundaries of these established Conservation Areas, it is considered that their intrinsic historical and architectural nature merits separate designation.

4. RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

4.1 A schedule of consultees is attached.

4.2 The Westminster Society replied orally and welcomed the recommendation. The Victorian Society and Civic Trust replied orally and had no observations.

Knightsbridge Association - have replied stating that they are “delighted” with the proposed new Conservation Area.

They have nevertheless asked whether the car park between 163-173 Knightsbridge should be included in the proposed designation. After investigation, the site in question is not considered worthy of inclusion as it does not form part of the architectural and townscape continuity of the proposed Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area. If redevelopment were considered in association with the adjacent site (195/197 Knightsbridge) then this would be considered with the normal close scrutiny afforded to a site close to a Royal Park and a Conservation Area.

- 4.3 Ropemakers Estate - are the owners of Park Mansions, Knightsbridge and through their Solicitors, Linklaters and Paines, requested an extended period of consultation.
- 4.4 In response to this, additional consultations were undertaken on 29 November and replies invited within 21 days (see additional schedule of consultees). To date in addition to the Knightsbridge Association response two further letters have been received. Any late representations will be reported orally to committee.
- 4.5 Messila House Limited

Management Company of properties at 163/173 Knightsbridge.

Messila House applauds the Council’s proposals for the Conservation Area but are surprised that the two empty sites of the demolished 171 and 173 Knightsbridge has been found worthy of inclusion. On the other hand the company feels that Nos. 195 to 199 Knightsbridge should have been included if the criteria for inclusion is the prospect of redevelopment.

In their opinion there can be no merit in including the sites of Nos. 171/173 Knightsbridge in the conservation area and therefore wish to object to the designation in so far as it affects their clients properties at these addresses.

- 4.6 Debenham, Tewson and Chinnocks (via Linklaters and Paines)

On behalf of the Ropemakers Estate, property owners within the proposed Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area . The comments relate specifically to that part of the proposed conservation area lying to the south of Knightsbridge incorporating Knightsbridge Green and Park Mansions commonly known as Scotch Corner.

With regard to the designation, the agent of the Ropemakers Estate is of the opinion that it is not sufficient for the City Council to identify the area as having a particular character or quality but must consider what is so special about the area to justify designation.

They feel that Knightsbridge Green is of little landscape merit and believe the group of buildings known as Scotch Corner to be of no special architectural or historic interest. Furthermore they qualify their opinion by maintaining that the principal building on the site is typical of many similar Victorian mansion blocks located throughout Central London.



It is suggested that if the City Council remains of the opinion that the area merits designation then it should defer further designations and extensions until such time as resources are available to produce policy documents relating to existing Conservation Areas, as set out in para. 10.39 of the District Plan, August 1988.

In conclusion, the designation of the Conservation Area in this location is considered inappropriate by the agents though they would welcome further discussions with the City Council.

#### 4.7 Comments on response to additional consultation

It is considered that there is some merit in the view that it is important to include the sites of 171/173 Knightsbridge, as these sites and their future development will form an intrinsic part of the adjacent group of buildings. In response to Messila's comment regarding 195-199 Knightsbridge, inclusion of this building has not been considered necessary, as this does not contribute to the character of the proposed area. Even in the case of demolition, the effect of the possible redevelopment of this site on the Victorian character of the conservation area would not be as direct as that of Nos. 171/173 Knightsbridge.

In reply to the comments from Debenham Tewson and Chinnocks it is considered that the area is of special interest. The proposed Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area is a relationship of late Victorian buildings of good townscape quality and visual interest. Although not listed the buildings are nevertheless worthy of protection. There is strong support from local groups for the designation proposals which will ensure that future development is sympathetic and sensitive to the environmental quality of the area.

With regard to the agents comments regarding the curtailment of further conservation area designations pending the production of existing conservation area policy documents, this does not by itself justify delay. Failure to complete the designation now could lead to demolition and unsympathetic alterations to buildings contrary to the Council's environmental objectives.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

The proposed Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas seek to preserve the character and quality of an area which has long been a focus of commercial activity with stores and hotels attracting national and international visitors.

The consultation exercises which have been undertaken indicate a favourable response from the six consultees, with only one against the designation proposals and another with reservations about the area of designation.

It is recommended that authority should be given to proceed and complete the designation of the Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas, involving statutory advertisement and notification to the Secretary of State for the Environment and English Heritage and the adjoining Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Background Papers

1. *Consultation reply from Knightsbridge Association 28.9.88.*
2. *Consultation reply from Debenham Tewson & Chinnocks.*
3. *Consultation reply from Messila House Ltd.*
4. *City Plan (Chapter 10).*
5. *Planning and Development Committee Report 28.6.88. Proposed Knightsbridge Green and Albert Gate Conservation Areas.*

## SCHEDULE OF CONSULTEES

1. The Westminster Society  
Mr R P MacMahon MA  
Flat 6, 83 Vincent Square  
London SW1P 2PF
2. Historic Buildings & Monuments Commission  
Chesham House, Second Floor  
30 Warwick Street  
London W1R6AB
3. Department of the Environment  
Royal Parks, Palaces & Central Services Mrs Nilima Jaitley Room Cl 1/09, 2 Marsham Street  
London SW1
4. Knightsbridge Association  
Hon. Sec. Mrs Seymour Newton 3 Cheval Place London SW7
5. Victorian Society  
1 Priory Gardens  
London W4
6. Georgian Group  
37 Spital Square  
London E1 6DY
7. The Civic Trust  
17 Carlton House Terrace London SW2
8. The Chairman  
Royal Fine Art Commission 7 St James's Square London SW1Y4JU
9. The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea  
The Director of Planning & Transportation  
Town Hall  
Horton Street  
London W8 7NX
10. Councillor Dr Michael Dutt, MD, MRCP 4 Ennismore Gardens London SW7 1NL
11. Councillor Anthony Prendergast, CBE, FRSA Flat C, 52 Warwick Square London SW1V2AJ

CONSULTED ON 28.11.88



## ADDITIONAL CONSULTEES

1. Ropemaker Properties Ltd  
c/o Linklaters and Paines  
Barrington House  
59-67 Gresham Street  
London EC2V 7JA
2. The Central Manager  
BP Detergents International Mercury House 195 Knightsbridge London SW7 1RD
3. The Sales Manager  
Prudential Property Services 2 Gale Street London SW3 2QU
4. Mr Paul McLafferty  
Land Management Department Second Floor Jones Lang Wotton 22 Hanover Square London SW1
5. Messila House Limited  
51 South Audley Street  
London W1Y6AA

## II SCHEDULE OF LISTED BUILDINGS

### Knightsbridge Conservation Area

At the time of preparation there were 153 statutory listings including approximately 400 listed buildings in Knightsbridge. Of this number three were Grade I, three Grade II\* and 394 Grade II. Of the Grade II buildings 93 were items of street furniture.

ENNISMORE GARDENS SW7: Russian Orthodox Patriarchal Church of The Assumption of All Saints (II\*), Nos. 1-9 (consec.) (II), Lamp standard (L.S.) outside (o/s) No. 3 on pavement opposite (II), L.S. o/s No. 6 (II), L.S. o/s No. 9 (II), L.S. o/s No. 8 on pavement opposite (II), L.S. o/s No. 10 (II), L.S. o/s No. 12a (II), L.S. o/s No. 14, on opposite pavement (II), L.S. o/s No. 18 (II), Nos. 10-25 (consec.) (II), Pair of gate piers on west of central garden (II), L.S. o/s No. 22 (II), L.S. o/s No. 25 (II), L.S. o/s No. 30 on pavement opposite (II), L.S. o/s No. 33, L.S. o/s No. 34 (II), Mews arch adjoining No. 37 (2), L.S. o/s No. 39 (II) L.S. outside No. 40 on opposite pavement, L.S. o/s No. 44 (II), Pair of gate piers on east side of central garden (II), Nos. 27 to 34 (consec.) (II), Corner pier in SW corner of central garden (II), Pair of gate piers on south side of central garden (II), Corner pier in SE corner of central garden (II), L.S. o/s No. 47 on opposite side of pavement (II), L.S. o/s No. 49 (II), L.S. o/s No. 51 on the opposite pavement (II) L.S. o/s No. 50 on the opposite pavement (II), L.S. o/s No. 59 on the opposite pavement (II), L.S. o/s No. 54 (II), L.S. o/s No. 59 (II), Nos. 39 to 59 (consec.) (II), Nos. 60 to 65 (consec.) (II), L.S. o/s No. 61 (II), L.S. o/s on pavement opposite No. 61 (II), L.S. o/s No. 65 on opposite pavement, L.S. o/s No. 65 (II), Corner pier in NW corner of central garden (II), Corner pier in NE corner of central garden (II)

EXHIBITION ROAD SW7 (See also Princes Gate): No. 27 including 1 Lowther Gardens (II)

#### KENSINGTON GORE SW7

Queen Alexander's House (II), No. 25 (II), Albert Memorial (1), Royal Albert Hall (1), Albert Hall Mansions Nos. 31 to 48 (consec.) (II), Albert Hall Mansions Nos. 49 to 82 (consec.) (II), L.S. to NW of Royal Albert Hall (II), L.S. on pavement o/s entrance to Royal Albert Hall (II), L.S. on pavement to SE of Royal College of Organists (II), L.S. o/s Imperial College Union (II), L.S. to SW of south door to Royal Albert Hall (II) Royal College of Organists (II), No. 1 Royal Geographical Society (II\*), Albert Hall Mansions Nos. 1 to 30 (consec.) (II), L.S. to NW of Albert Hall Mansions of Nos. 31 to 48 (II), L.S. to west of Albert Hall Mansions Nos. 1 to 30 (II), L.S. to south of Albert Hall Mansions Nos. 49 to 82 (II), L.S. to SW of Albert Hall Mansions No. 49 to 82 (II), L.S. to south of Albert Hall Mansions Nos. 31 to 48 (II), L.S. to SW of Albert Hall Mansions Nos. 31 to 48 (II), L.S. to SE of entrance to Royal Albert Hall (II), L.S. to north of Albert Court (II), L.S. to NW of Albert Hall (II), L.S. to west of Albert Court

#### MONTPELIER PLACE SW7

Nos. 6 to 17 (consec.) (II), L.S. o/s No. 9 (II)

#### MONTPELIER SQUARE SW7

L.S. o/s No. 12 (II), L.S. o/s No. 16 (II), L.S. o/s No. 21 (II), L.S. o/s No. 25 (II), L.S. o/s No. 34 (II), L.S. o/s No. 38 (II), L.S. o/s No. 34 (II), L.S. o/s No. 38 (II), L.S. o/s No. 39 (II), Nos. 36 to 43 (consec.) (II), L.S. by entrance to No. 1 (II), L.S. o/s No. 2 (II), L.S. o/s No. 4 (II), Nos. 17 to 25 (consec.) (II), No. 26 (II), Nos. 27 to 35 (consec.) (II), Nos. 1 to 7 (consec.) (II), Nos. 8 to 16 (consec.) (II), No. 17A (II)

#### MONTPELIER STREET SW7

Tea Clipper Public House (II), Nos. 13 to 17 (odd) (II), mNos. 21 to 27 (odd) (II), Nos. 20 to 38 (even) (II), No. 40 (II), No. 44 (II)

#### PRINCE'S GATE SW7

Nos. 14 to 25 (consec.) (II), Nos. 26 to 31 (consec.) (II), Nos. 44 to 48 (consec.) (II), Nos. 49 to 58 (consec.) (II)

#### PRINCE'S GARDENS SW7

Nos. 8 to 15 (consec.) (II), Weeks Hall Imperial College (II)

#### PRINCE CONSORT ROAD SW7

Royal College of Music (II), Steps and balustrades to south part of Memorial of the 1851 Exhibition (II), K6 telephone kiosk o/s Royal College of Music (II), Royal School of Mines Imperial College (II), Royal College of Music (II), Memorial of the 1851 Exhibition (II), Albert Court (II), Church of Holy Trinity (I)

#### QUEEN'S GATE SW7

No. 170 (II\*), Nos. 186 to 188 (consec.) (II), No. 196 (II), Nos. 197 to 200 (consec.) (II), Statute of Lord Napier centre of road at Kensington Road junction (II)

#### RUTLAND GARDENS SW7

Rutland Garden Mews (II)

#### RUTLAND GATE SW7

Nos. 1 to 7 (odd) (II), L.S. to NW corner of No. 7 (II), L.S. to SW of No. 7 (II), Nos. 45, 46, 47 (II), L.S. o/s No. 47 (II), L.S. o/s No. 23 (II), L.S. o/s No. 26 (II), L.S. o/s No. 27 (II), L.S. o/s No. 37 (II), L.S. o/s No. 42 (II), Nos. 48 to 65 (consec.) (II), Nos. 23, 25, 27 to 42 (consec.) (II), L.S. o/s No. 53 (II), L.S. o/s No. 58 (II), L.S. o/s No. 59 (II), L.S. o/s No. 62 (II)

#### STERLING STREET SW7

Nos. 1 to 6 (II), No. 8 (II), L.S. o/s No. 4 (II), L.S. o/s on opposite pavement

#### TREVOR STREET SW7

Nos. 1 to 8 (consec.) (II), Nos. 9 to 16 (consec.) (II), L.S. o/s No. 1 (II), L.S. o/s No. 12 (II)

#### TREVOR SQUARE SW7

L.S. o/s No. 12 (II), L.S. to south of No. 16 (II), L.S. to SE of No. 16 (II), L.S. to SE of No. 23 (II), L.S. o/s No. 27 (II), L.S. o/s No. 31 (II), L.S. by entrance to No. 37 (II), L.S. o/s No. 38 (II), Nos. 23 to 37 (consec.) (II), No. 38 (II), L.S. o/s No. 3 (II), L.S. o/s No. 7 (II), Nos. 4 to 16 (consec.) (II), No. 1 (II), Nos. 2 and 3 (II)

### **Albert Gate Conservation Area**

There are 14 entries in the statutory list within the Albert Gate Conservation Area, all of which are Grade II. These are listed below.

#### ALBERT GATE

French Embassy No. 1, No. 2 Albert Gate, The Albert Gate,

#### KNIGHTSBRIDGE

Nos. 55-91, Nos. 62-64

#### WILLIAM STREET

William Street House, Nos 4-12 (consec.)

### **Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area**

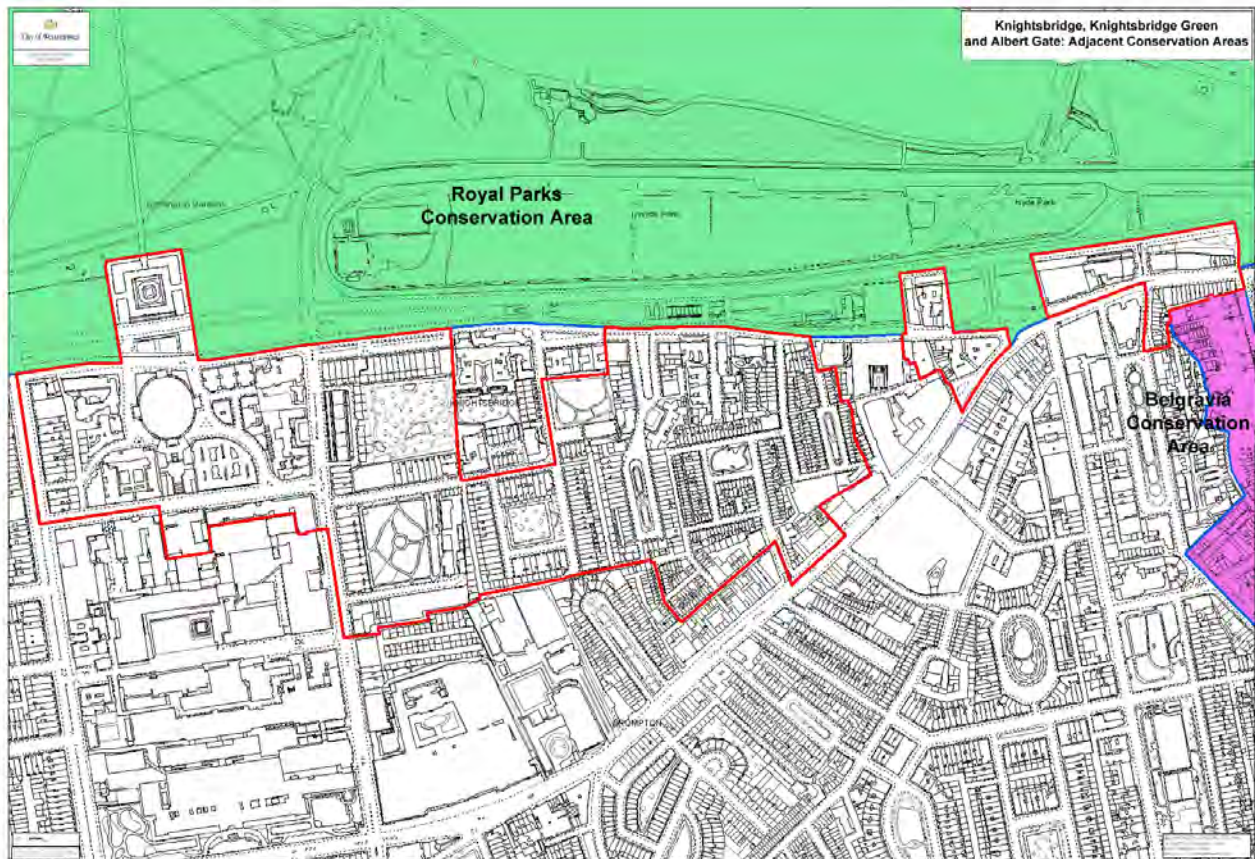
KNIGHTSBRIDGE Paxton's Head Public House, No.153



### III OTHER DESIGNATIONS

#### Adjacent Conservation Areas

To the north of all three conservation areas is the Royal Parks Conservation Area. Belgravia Conservation Area is to the south-east of the Albert Gate Conservation Area. Adjacent Conservation Areas are shown on the map below. Conservation Areas in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea bound the area to the west and south.



#### Archaeological Priority Areas

There are no Archaeological Priority Areas affecting any of the conservation areas.

#### Regulation 7 Directions

There are no Regulation 7 Directions affecting any of the conservation areas.

#### Article 4 Directions

Relton Mews Article 4 Direction covers all external alterations within this mews, (see mews guidance in Appendix 11). The area covered by the Article 4 Direction is set out in the direction, which is reproduced overleaf.

CITY OF WESTMINSTER  
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING GENERAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER 1988

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Westminster ("the Council") being the local planning authority within the meaning of Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988 is satisfied that it is expedient that development of the descriptions set out in the Schedule to this Direction should not be carried out on land described in the same Schedule, in Relton Mews, SW7 in the City of Westminster ("the land") and shown edged red on the annexed plan, unless permission is granted for the development on application made under the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988.

NOW THEREFORE the Council under the powers conferred on it by Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988 ('the Order') hereby directs that the permission granted by Article 3 of the Order shall not apply to development on the land of the descriptions set out in the Schedule hereto.

The Direction is made in pursuance of the provisions of paragraph 1 (a) of the said Article 4 and in the light of paragraphs (4) and (5) of Article 5 of the Order, and shall remain in force until **26 May** 1993 (being six months from the date of its taking effect), unless in the meantime it is disallowed or approved by the Secretary of State.

THE SCHEDULE

1. With regard to number 4 Relton Mews, and in respect of its enlargement, improvement or other alterations, being development comprised within Class A, referred to in Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Order.
2. With regards to numbers 1, 4, 8, 11, 12 and 13 Relton Mews, and in respect of the repainting or painting of the exterior, being development comprised within Class C, referred to in Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the Order.

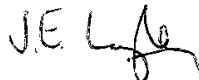
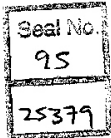
The Secretary of State for the Environment hereby approves the foregoing direction.



Signed by authority  
of the Secretary of  
State

\*An Assistant Secretary  
in the Department of  
the Environment

21 January 1993



ASSISTANT SECRETARY & CLERK

Direction signed and sealed  
26 November 1992.

W5ER(OTA/2511)251192

## London Squares

Protected Squares include the enclosures to the rear of **14-25 Prince's Gate** and to the rear of **1-7 Prince's Gate**. The Act was introduced to provide for the preservation of certain squares, gardens and enclosures of London, the existence of which was considered to be of great benefit to amenity. The provisions of the Act are to ensure the use of the squares only as ornamental garden pleasure grounds or grounds for play, rest or recreation and to prevent any building or other structures or erection on or over any protected square except such as may be necessary or convenient for or in connection with the use and maintenance of the squares for the authorised purposes.

## Registered Parks and Gardens

**Kensington Gardens**, in so far as it falls within the conservation area, is on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, Grade I. The register was compiled by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England to identify and safeguard gardens and parks which by reason of their historic layout, features and architectural ornaments make them of special historic interest. Although no statutory controls follow from the inclusion of a site on the register the effect of proposed development on a registered park or garden or its setting is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.



## IV PUBLICATIONS AND SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

### **Westminster Publications, Policies and Design Guides**

Unitary Development Plan

Westminster's Planning Policies are set out in the adopted City of Westminster Unitary Development Plan January 2007. This can also be viewed on the Internet at: [www.westminster.gov.uk](http://www.westminster.gov.uk)

### **Design Guides and Publications**

Other Westminster City Council publications, produced by the Department of Planning and City Development are listed below. These are available from One Stop Services (see addresses under 'contact details') or can be viewed on the Westminster City Council website.

1. Conservation Areas: A Guide for Property Owners
2. Development and Demolition in Conservation Areas
3. Inclusive Design and Access
4. Design Matters in Westminster – Supplementary Planning Guidance on Creating Good City Architecture
5. A Planning Guide for Food and Drink Premises
6. Guidelines for the Placing of Tables and Chairs on the Highway
7. Boardwatch- A Guide to the Design and Display of Estate Agents Boards
8. Shopfronts, Blinds and Signs
9. Advertisement Design Guidelines
10. Design Guidelines for Shopfront Security
11. Railings on Domestic Buildings in Westminster
12. Roofs: A Guide to Alterations and Extensions on Domestic Buildings
13. Conservatories: A Guide to Design and Planning Procedures
14. Satellite Dishes: A Guide to Installation, Siting and Design
15. A Guide to the Siting of Security Cameras and Other Security Equipment
16. Public CCTV Systems – Guidance for Design and Privacy
17. Designing Out Crime in Westminster
18. Façade Cleaning - The Removal of Soiling and Paint from Brick and Stone Facades
19. Stucco: A Guide to its Care and Maintenance
20. Lighting Up the City - A Good Practice Guide for the illumination of Buildings and Monuments

21. Statues and Monuments in Westminster
22. Trees and Other Planting on Development Sites
23. A Brief Guide to Planning Enforcement
24. Repairs and Alterations to Listed Buildings
25. The Listing of Historic Buildings: A Guide for Owners and Occupiers.
26. Mews: A Guide to Alterations
27. Metropolitan Views in Westminster.

## Sourcing Professional Advice and Building Materials for Historic Building Works

For lists of specialist historic buildings consultants, building contractors and specialist suppliers of building materials, the Building Conservation Directory can be viewed on-line at: [www.buildingconservation.com](http://www.buildingconservation.com)

## Further Reading

- 1 Bradley, S and Pevsner N. *The Buildings of England. London 3: Northwest and London 6: Westminster.* Yale University Press 2003
- 2 Survey of London Volume 45: *Knightsbridge* (2000) and Volume 38: *The Museums Area of South Kensington and Westminster*

## Local History

For information on all aspects of local history contact:

City of Westminster Archive Centre  
10 St. Ann's Street  
London SW1P 2XR

General Enquiries: Tel: (020) 7641 5180

# WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL CONTACTS LIST

## General Planning Information

To find out if a property is listed or in a conservation area or is affected by a Regulation 7 or Article 4 Direction and to obtain copies of design guidance or planning application forms or to report a breach of planning control:

Tel: (020) 7641 2513

Fax: (020) 7641 2515

E-mail: [PlanningInformation@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:PlanningInformation@westminster.gov.uk)

Or write to:

South Area Planning Team  
Development Planning Services  
Department of Planning and City Development  
Westminster City Council  
City Hall, 64 Victoria Street  
London SW1E 6QP

## One Stop Services

Where you can view or purchase the Council's Unitary Development Plan and other documents giving advice on access and design matters. The address is:

62 Victoria Street, SW1 (Open 8.30am - 7pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; 9am - 1pm Saturday)

## Trees

For advice on trees, planting, works to trees and tree care and Tree Preservation Orders, tree planting programmes and greening policies:

Tree Section  
Environment and Leisure Department  
Westminster City Council  
City Hall, 64 Victoria Street  
London SW1E 6QP Tel: (020) 7641 2618 or Fax: (020) 7641 2959

## Further Information

For contacts regarding other frequently used services refer to the City Council's booklet: 'A-Z Guide, Your Guide to Council Services' available from One Stop Services, Libraries and Council Information Points or by contacting: Tel: (020) 7641 8088 or Fax: (020) 7641 2958



## Translation Service

If English is not your first language and you do not have a relative or friend who can translate this document for you, we can arrange to send you a translation. Please write to the address below, giving your name, address and first language.

### Spanish

Puede que el inglés no sea su lengua materna y si no tiene un amigo o familiar que pueda traducirselo, nosotros podemos enviarle una traducción. Por favor escriba a la dirección que a continuación figura indicando su nombre, dirección y su lengua materna.

### French

Si l'anglais n'est pas votre langue principale et si vous n'avez pas un ami ou un membre de votre famille qui puisse le traduire pour vous, nous pourrions vous en faire parvenir une traduction. Écrivez à l'adresse ci-dessous en donnant votre nom, adresse, et première langue.

### Portuguese

Talvez Inglês não seja a sua primeira língua, e caso você não tenha um amigo ou parente que possa traduzi-lo para você, nos podemos tomar providências para que uma tradução lhe seja enviada. Favor escrever para o endereço abaixo, dando o seu nome, endereço e a sua primeira língua.

### Chinese

如果英語不是你的母語，而且你沒有親戚或朋友能為你翻譯這份文件，我們可以安排寄給你一份翻譯。請寫信到以下的地址，告訴我們你的姓名，地址和母語。

### Bengali

যদি ইংরেজী আপনার প্রথম ভাষা না হয় এবং আপনার কোনো আত্মীয় বা বন্ধু না থাকে, যিনি আপনার জন্য এই ডকুমেন্ট অনুবাদ করতে পারেন, তাহলে আপনাকে আমরা একটি অনুবাদ পাঠাতে পারি। অনুগ্রহ করে নিচের ঠিকানায় লিখুন, আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও প্রথম ভাষা উল্লেখ করুন।

### Arabic

إذا لم تكن الانكليزية هي لغتك الأصلية، ولا يوجد لديك من أقارب أو أصدقاء ممن يستطيع مساعدتك في ترجمة هذه الوثيقة، فمن الممكن أن نرتب لك مترجماً. يرجى الكتابة إلى العنوان أدناه مع ذكر اسمك وعنوانك ولغتك الأصلية.

### Urdu

اگر انگریزی آپ کی پہلی زبان نہیں ہے، اور آپ کا کوئی ایسا رشتہ دار یا دوست نہیں ہے کہ جو اس دستاویز کا ترجمہ آپ کے لئے کر سکے، تو ہم آپ کے لئے ترجمہ بھوانے کا انتظام کر سکتے ہیں، برائے سہربانی، اپنا نام، پتہ، اور پہلی زبان جو آپ بولتے ہیں، نیچے دئے گئے پتہ پر لکھیں۔

### Farsi

چنانچه انگلیسی زبان اصلی شما نیست و فامیل و دوستی نیز ندارید تا این سند را برایتان ترجمه کند، میتوان ترجمه آن را برایتان ارسال کنیم. برای این کار لطفاً با ذکر نام، آدرس و زبان مادری با آدرس زیر مکاتبه کنید.

### Serbo Croat

Ako engleski nije vaš maternji jezik i nemate rođaka ili prijatelja koji bi mogli da vam prevedu ovaj tekst, mi vam možemo poslati prevod. Molimo vas da napišete pismo na dole pomenutu adresu i da u njemu navedete vaše ime, adresu i maternji jezik.

Conservation Area Audit  
Department of Planning and City  
Development  
Westminster City Council  
64 Victoria Street  
London SW1E 6QP

The City Council also makes available many documents in Braille, on tape and in large print. If you require any of the information contained in these documents in one of these alternative formats please contact: (020) 7641 8088.