



GENERAL INFORMATION LEAFLET

REGENT STREET Conservation Area

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City of Westminster

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND CITY DEVELOPMENT
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING SERVICES MAY 2004

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Designation: First designated in 1973; extended in 1984 to the north side of Glasshouse Street and the corner of Coventry Street and Haymarket; boundaries rearranged in 1990 to create the Haymarket Conservation Area.

Historical Background: Regent Street is one of the most important examples of town planning in the country. It was first laid out by John Nash in the early 19th century to create a new processional route from Regent's Park in the north to Carlton House in the south (the present site of Carlton House Terrace). The route cut through a tangle of narrow streets and came to form a boundary between fashionable Mayfair and less prosperous Soho. The early 19th century buildings on Regent Street became unfashionable towards the end of the 19th century and it was decided to rebuild the street in a Beaux Arts style. The rebuilding started in 1898 and was completed in the mid-1930s. None of the original buildings survive within the Regent Street Conservation Area. More recently, the post-War street lights have been replaced by new lights based on the 1930s 'Chicago' design found at Piccadilly Circus. Many of the buildings turn the corner into side streets where the Regent Street style is continued. This is reflected in the designated boundaries of the Conservation Area.

Listed Buildings: There are 28 entries for Regent Street, and four for Piccadilly Circus, on the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. These cover almost all the buildings on Regent Street, and include items of historic street furniture and public art. The Regent Street elevation of the Piccadilly Hotel and the Criterion Building at Piccadilly Circus are listed Grade II*. The Eros fountain is listed Grade I. The rest of the listings are Grade II.

Key Features: Regent Street is remarkable for its high degree of uniformity in terms of architectural style, materials and scale. With the exception of original shopfronts, many of which have sadly been removed, the exteriors of most of the buildings have survived virtually unaltered since they were erected. Where shopfronts have survived, they are usually of high quality, reflecting the prestigious image of the Street. The character of Regent Street is dictated by its retail use at ground floor level with discreet entrances to suites of offices above. These office entrances are frequently associated with small retail units which form an important feature in the street.

The length of Regent Street from Mortimer Street to Piccadilly Circus, is designated as Prime Retail Frontage.

Adjacent Conservation Areas: Regent Street Conservation Area is surrounded on all sides by the Harley Street, East

Marylebone, Soho, Haymarket, St James's and Mayfair Conservation Areas.

Strategic Views: The entire Conservation Area from the south end of the Quadrant to Waterloo Place is affected by the Primrose Hill to the Palace of Westminster Strategic View.

Areas of Special Archaeological Priority: Not affected

Article 4 Directions: None

Regulation 7 Directions: The whole area is affected by the requirement that any advertisement for the sale or letting of land (including estate agents' boards advertising shops, houses, flats or offices) must be given consent by the City Council as local planning authority. Displaying an advertisement without having first obtained consent is a criminal offence.

Design Briefs and Guidelines: The City Council has published "A Guide to Shopfronts and Advertisements" for Regent Street which outlines the City Council's policies for the alteration of existing shopfronts or installation of new shopfronts. Most of the Conservation Area is the freehold property of the Crown Estate, and proposals have to be approved by the Crown Estate as well as Westminster City Council.

Spaces protected by the London Squares Act 1931: None

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens: Not affected.

Contacts

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