



GENERAL INFORMATION LEAFLET

REGENT'S PARK 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: Designated in 1969 to include Regent's Park and adjoining streets bounded by Prince Albert Road, Park Road, Allsop Place, Marylebone Road, as well as the immediate surroundings of St Marylebone Parish Church and Park Crescent which lie south of Marylebone Road.

Historical Background: Marylebone Park, later Regent's Park, was formerly part of the manor of Marylebone, held by the nunnery of Barking. In the 16th century, the land passed to the Crown and was enclosed as a deer park. During the 18th century the area was leased as farm land by the Duke of Portland, reverting to the Crown in 1811. Prior to this date, John Fordyce, Surveyor-General of His Majesty's Land Revenue, recognised the potential of the park and set up a competition for its development. Plans submitted were never used and in 1809, architects and surveyors of the Office of Woods, Forests, and Land Revenue were invited to put forward alternative proposals. Partly due to his acquaintance with the Prince Regent, John Nash's design was chosen in 1811. Nash's design included the park in a grand scheme to create a new processional route through London from Carlton House, north along Regent Street and Portland Place to Regent's Park.

Regent's Park and its buildings took seventeen years to construct. Work began in 1812 with Park Crescent, which due to financial problems, was not completed until 1822. Construction of Park Square followed between 1823-5. Development of the terraces began with Cornwall Terrace in 1821, Kent Terrace being the last in 1827. The original intention shown by Nash's plan of 1811, was for a more urban character, to create a "rus in urbe" effect. The forty villas shown on this plan were reduced to eight by 1827 and several of the terraces, the circuses and crescents were not built. One of the major losses was the Central Circus and Prince's Palace or "Guignette". By 1824, the Inner Circle was let as a nursery and later leased by the Royal Botanic Society in 1839. St. Marylebone Parish Church (Thomas Hardwick) was built to the south of Marylebone Road between 1813-19. Nash's design for Regent's Park was subsequently amended, with the addition of York Gate enclosing the church in a magnificent vista. To the east of York Gate, the Royal Academy of Music (1910) and Harley House (1904) occupy sites formerly taken up by two eighteenth century houses which were excluded from the Nash design. In 1826, a twenty-acre site on the north edge of the park was leased by the Zoological Society. Another significant alteration was made to part of the park in 1864 by William A. Nesfield's proposals for the "Avenue Gardens" in an area now known as the southern section of the Broadwalk. The few recent additions to Regent's Park include the London Central Mosque by Sir Frederick Gibberd, Sir Denys Lasdun's Royal College of Physicians and more recently three classical villas by Quinlan Terry.

Listed Buildings: There are over 300 listed buildings within the Regent's Park Conservation Area including the terraces and villas, as well as other buildings and structures such as gates, lamp posts, railings, statues, animal houses and a bridge. The terraces which encircle the park, St Marylebone Parish Church, York Gate, Grove House and the Penguin Pool in Regent's Park Zoo are all listed Grade I. There are also twenty-two Grade II* listed buildings including Nos 1-18 Kent Terrace, The Holme and St John's Lodge.

Key Features: John Nash's design still dominates the character and appearance of Regent's Park, with its stuccoed terraces, each a grand Classical composition, enclosing extensive parkland containing isolated villas and an ornamental lake. The southern entrance to the park formed by Park Crescent and Park Square, was originally intended as a circus linking the park with Portland Place across "New Road" (Marylebone Road). In the event, the north half of the circle was not built and Park Square now provides a dramatic opening to the park. The architecture of the terraces carried forward the underlying townscape concept of Nash's masterplan. Though differing in style, they have a corresponding uniformity of design, consisting of a centre and wings, with porticos, piazzas, and pediments,

adorned with columns of various orders. Regent's Park itself is over 400 acres in extent, and nearly circular in form. It is crossed from north to south by a straight road, bordered with trees, known as the Broadwalk, and is traversed in every direction by paths. Around the park runs a drive nearly two miles long (Outer Circle); with an inner drive (Inner Circle) near its centre. The ornamental boating lake, with three diverging inlets and picturesque islands lies in the midst of the park, edged by some villas and terraces, from which it receives added beauty. During the Victorian period, the character of Regent's Park changed from that of a private residential estate to its current appearance as a public park with incidental private dwellings. Today, the remaining villas, the Zoological Gardens, Queen Mary's and Nesfield's Gardens and the ornamental lake all add to the unique character and appearance of Regent's Park.

Adjacent Conservation Areas: Regent's Park Conservation Area is bounded by St. John's Wood Conservation Area to the north, Dorset Square Conservation Area to the west and Harley Street Conservation Area to the south. To the east the Conservation Area is bounded by the Primrose Hill and Regent's Park Conservation Areas designated by the London Borough of Camden.

Strategic Views: The Primrose Hill to Palace of Westminster strategic view cuts through the Conservation Area from north to south.

Areas of Special Archaeological Priority: Not affected

Article 4 Directions: None

Regulation 7 Directions: None

Planning Briefs and Design Guidelines: None specific to this area.

Spaces protected by the London Squares Act 1931: None

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens: Regent's Park (Grade I). The Park is also designated as Metropolitan Open Land.

Contacts:

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