



GENERAL INFORMATION LEAFLET

SAVOY 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: The Savoy Conservation Area was designated in 1981.

Historical Background: The Strand developed as a link between the settlements of the City of London and Westminster/Thorney Island. By the 12th century it was a street of large houses with gardens running down to the Thames. Within the Savoy Conservation Area are the sites of the Savoy Palace, Salisbury House and Worcester House. The Savoy Palace, originally built in the 13th century for the Count of Savoy on land given by Henry III, was rebuilt many times over the centuries before the site was finally cleared in the early 19th century for the approach to Waterloo Bridge. However, the Savoy Chapel, built in 1510-16 and extensively restored in the late 19th century, survived. The original Waterloo Bridge, built by Rennie 1811-17, was replaced in 1937-42 by a bridge to the design of Gilbert Scott. Worcester House, another large medieval palace was redeveloped in the 17th or 18th century and is now the site of the Savoy Hotel, opened in 1889. Salisbury House was also redeveloped and the site occupied in 1886 by the Cecil Hotel, at the time the largest hotel in Europe. Only the frontage to the Strand remains; the remainder of the site was redeveloped in the 1930's for Shell Mex House. The most dramatic alteration to the area came in 1864-70 with the construction of the embankment wall to the Thames by Bazalgette and the creation of gardens between the wall and the original shoreline.

Listed Buildings: Cleopatra's Needle is listed Grade I ; the Savoy Theatre (recently restored after being gutted by fire) and Savoy Chapel are listed Grade II*.

The following buildings and structures are listed Grade II: Shell Mex House; Savoy Hotel; Hungerford House; Embankment Wall, stairs and lights; Memorials and statues in Victoria Embankment Gardens.

Key Features: The Savoy Conservation Area is a predominantly commercial area, dominated visually by the two modern 'palaces' of Shell Mex House and the Savoy Hotel. These buildings are, along with Brettenham House, dominant in riverside views (as part of the sequence of large riverside buildings stretching from Thames House, Millbank to Globe House, Temple Place). On the south side of the Strand, the Savoy Hotel and Cecil Chambers dominate. Victoria Embankment Gardens, laid out in the mid 19th century, provides an important green public space and contains a number of important statues and monuments including the York Water Gate. The part of the garden adjacent to Villiers Street has recently been landscaped as part of the development at Charing Cross Station. Victoria Embankment provides an important tree lined walkway affording views of the river and the South Bank.

The Embankment wall is punctuated by dolphin lamp standards and globe lanterns. There are also cast iron seats with Egyptian sphinx arms, reflecting the Egyptian theme set by Cleopatra's Needle, an ancient Egyptian obelisk given to London as a gift in

1877. A further green area is adjacent to the Savoy Chapel though this is not open to the public. Some of the best views of the Conservation Area and of the whole of the Embankment, can be seen from Waterloo Bridge.

Adjacent Conservation Areas: To the east the Strand, to the north the Strand and the Covent Garden, to the west the Adelphi and Trafalgar Square and to the south the Whitehall Conservation Areas.

Strategic Views: Not affected.

Areas of Special Archaeological Priority: The Lundenwic and Thorney Island area of special archaeological priority covers all of the Conservation Area.

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.

Planning Briefs and Design Guides: No specific guidelines.

Spaces protected by the London Squares Act 1931: None

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens:
Victoria Embankment Gardens (part), (Grade II*)

Contacts:

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