

# CONSERVATION AREA AUDIT



## TRAFALGAR SQUARE

# 18



City of Westminster

This conservation area audit is accurate as of the time of publication, February 2003.

Until this audit is next revised, amendments to the statutory list made after 19 February 2003 will not be represented on the maps at Figure 7.

For up to date information about the listing status of buildings in the Trafalgar Square Conservation Area please contact the Council's South area planning team on 020 7641 2681.

This Report is based on a draft prepared by Conservation, Architecture & Planning.

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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 53 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. In addition to the basic activity of designation and the formulation of general policy, the City Council is required to undertake conservation area appraisals and to devise local policies in order to protect the unique character of each area.

Although this process was first undertaken with the various designation reports, more recent national guidance (as found in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 and the English Heritage Conservation Area Practice and Conservation Area Appraisal 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 Supplementary Planning Guidance it will incorporate the Directory for that conservation area.



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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The City Council has a statutory duty to review the character and boundaries of its conservation areas. The Audit is the third, and final stage of the appraisal process. The overall appraisal strategy is based upon the English Heritage publication Conservation Area Practice.

1.2 The first stage (Mini-guide) and second stage (Directory) documents have already been adopted. The Mini-guide provides a brief description of the area and its characteristics. The Directory provided a detailed source of factual information. This has now been incorporated as part of the Audit providing an Appendix of factual information to the main body of the report.

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 The Conservation Area Audit for Trafalgar Square was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the Cabinet Member for Customer Services on 19 February 2004. The Trafalgar Square Conservation Area was first designated in 1969 as part of the larger Government Precinct Conservation Area. It was redesignated the Trafalgar Conservation Area in 1987 and extended in 1990 and 1993. The designation reports can be found in the first part of the Directory at the back of this document.

## **2 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Saxon Period**

2.1 Trafalgar Square is located within the Saxon Settlement of Lundenwic; an important port town described by Bede as 'a mart of many peoples coming by land and sea', just outside the walls of the abandoned Roman city of London. Archaeological evidence suggests that Lundenwic was flourishing by 700 and continued to do so until the late 9th century. The area around Charing Cross (which gains its name from Cierring - a Saxon word meaning bend or turning [in the Thames]) was at the centre of this settlement, which minted its own coins and was engaged in trade with both Viking and Carolingian Europe. The Strand formed the river frontage at that time and was equipped with reinforcing timber piers.

2.2 Lundenwic was subjected to Viking raids in the late ninth century, culminating in an occupation by Viking forces in 872, prompting a re-establishment of the settlement within the protective walls of the former Roman city.

### **Medieval Period**

2.3 The northern part of the present Trafalgar Square was common land known as St Martin's Fields, which stretched from the junction of Charing Cross to St Giles-in-the-Fields and Hedge Lane (now Whitcombe Street). Towards the southern part of the field stood the old St Martin's Church, which was built during the reign of Henry II.

2.4 In 1291 the commemorative cross to Queen Eleanor was erected by Edward I at the junction of the Strand with the road to Westminster Abbey. This cross was the last of the twelve crosses marking resting places of Queen Eleanor's funeral cortege on its way to Westminster Abbey.

2.5 In 1377, during the reign of Richard II the Royal Mews were built. They occupied the greater part of what is now Trafalgar Square. The mews were built to house the Royal falconers and hawks and it was here that the poet Geoffrey Chaucer was once employed as the clerk of works.

### **Post Medieval Period**

2.6 After the dissolution of the monasteries in 1530-36, Henry VIII acquired all the lands belonging to the parish of St Martin's and the parish of St Margaret's to the south, which enabled him to lay out St James Park and build St James Palace on the site of the leper house of St James's. York Place (former residence of Wolsey) was converted into the Royal Palaces of Whitehall and three Gate Houses were subsequently erected along Whitehall to provide the necessary protection. The Mews were also undergoing alterations at this time to accommodate the King's stables, following the fire in 1534 at the original stables in Bloomsbury. See Agas map figure 1.

2.7 During this period the risk of catching the plague was high and to avoid the spread of infection to the Court, Henry VIII in 1535 ordered that the parish boundary of St Martin's should be amended to include parts of St Margaret's, thus, corpses no longer needed to pass through Whitehall (where the Royal Palaces lay on both sides of the street) to reach burial at St Margaret's Church. Henry VIII also gave the right of commoning on St Martin's field to the parishioners of St Margaret's and St Martin's Church, which continued until the reign of Elizabeth I.

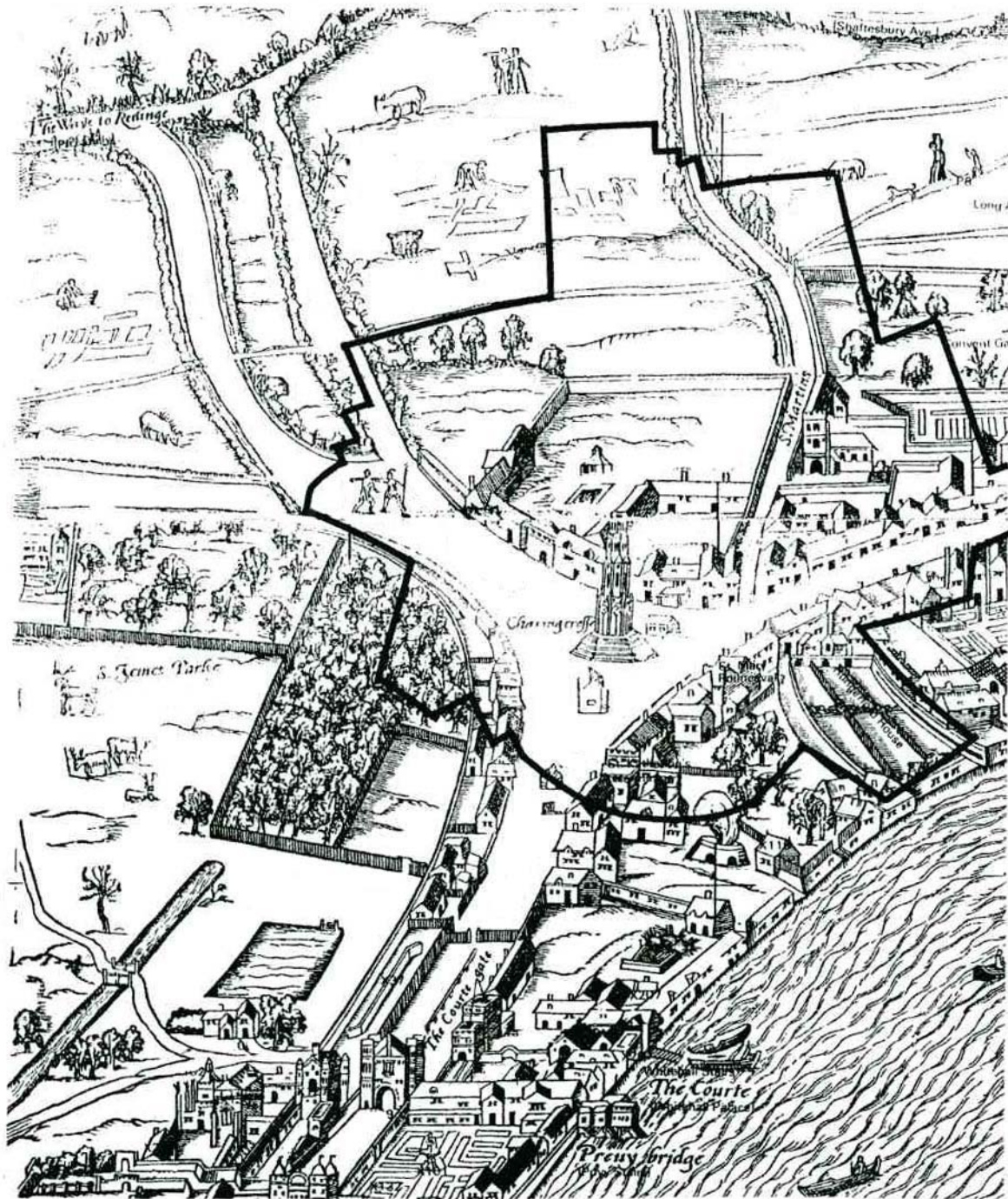
2.8 Other than the River Thames the road via Charing Cross became the most convenient route to reach Whitehall Palace. In 1554 Sir Thomas Wyatt incensed by the forthcoming marriage of Mary I to Philip of Spain marched through London and confronted Queen Mary's troops at Charing Cross.

2.9 During the reign of Elizabeth I the common land at St Martin's field was leased to a man named Dawson to increase the Crown's revenue. He subsequently divided and enclosed the area, depriving the parishioners of their common rights. Following angry representations, the Queen terminated the agreement as the revenue was so small.

2.10 In the first half of the seventeenth century, the Mews buildings were used for quartering soldiers, and in 1645 over 4000 royalists who were taken as prisoners at Naseby were kept there. Charing Cross, during this century became the site of public executions which attracted large numbers of sympathetic onlookers, in order to protect the Palaces, the Government decided to move the execution site to Tyburn. In 1647 Eleanor's Cross was removed by the order of the Long Parliament and its Caen stone was used to improve the paving in Whitehall while its Dorset marble was used to make knife handles. See Morgan's map, figure 2.

2.11 During the latter half of the seventeenth century, the Mews buildings were used as habitable spaces as the courts were unable to accommodate all the courtiers. References to residents in the Mews were made in the Ratebook of 1654, which





**Figure 1**

**Agas Map of c.1553 – 1559.** The Boundary of the conservation area is superimposed on this map of Tudor London. The map shows St Martins Field to the north of the conservation area and the tiny parish of St Martins to the north east. The enclosure of the Royal Mews is directly behind the Charing Cross. The map also demonstrated that the River Thames was a predominant route to and from Whitehall



**Figure 2**

Morgan's Map, c. 1682. By the time of this map the Eleanor Cross had been removed and replaced with a statue of King Charles I at the junction of Charing Cross and Whitehall. The mews buildings had been sectioned into the Green Mews and the Mews Yard. Development has also spread, hence St Martin's Field, Long Acres and Covent Gardens are no longer open fields.



suggests that fifteen people resided in the Mews at the time. In 1675 the first equestrian statue of its kind in England was placed at Charing Cross. The statue was designed by Hubert Le Soeur in 1633 and the pedestal was carved by Joshua Marshall.

2.12 As the City developed westwards along Fleet Street and the Strand, many taverns and coffee houses which were infamous for harbouring anti-Government organisations developed around Charing Cross. For example the Blue Post in Spring Garden was the meeting place for the Jacobite rebels during the reign of William III. In 1732, George II commissioned the architect William Kent to rebuild the "Crown Stables"; a building that divided the Great Mews (the lower) from the Green Mews (the upper) in 1732. (See figures 3 and 4).

2.13 1722-1726 saw the construction of the church of St Martin-in-the-Fields on St Martin's Lane by James Gibbs. Faced in Portland Stone, the church has a giant double Corinthian columned portico with pediment below a tiered spire. This combination was to serve as a prototype for many other churches across the UK and particularly in the US. The setting of this influential church was initially the constrained St Martins Lane, but Nash's improvements to the churchyard and surrounding roads, together with the subsequent creation of Trafalgar Square have resulted in a more open aspect to all four elevations.

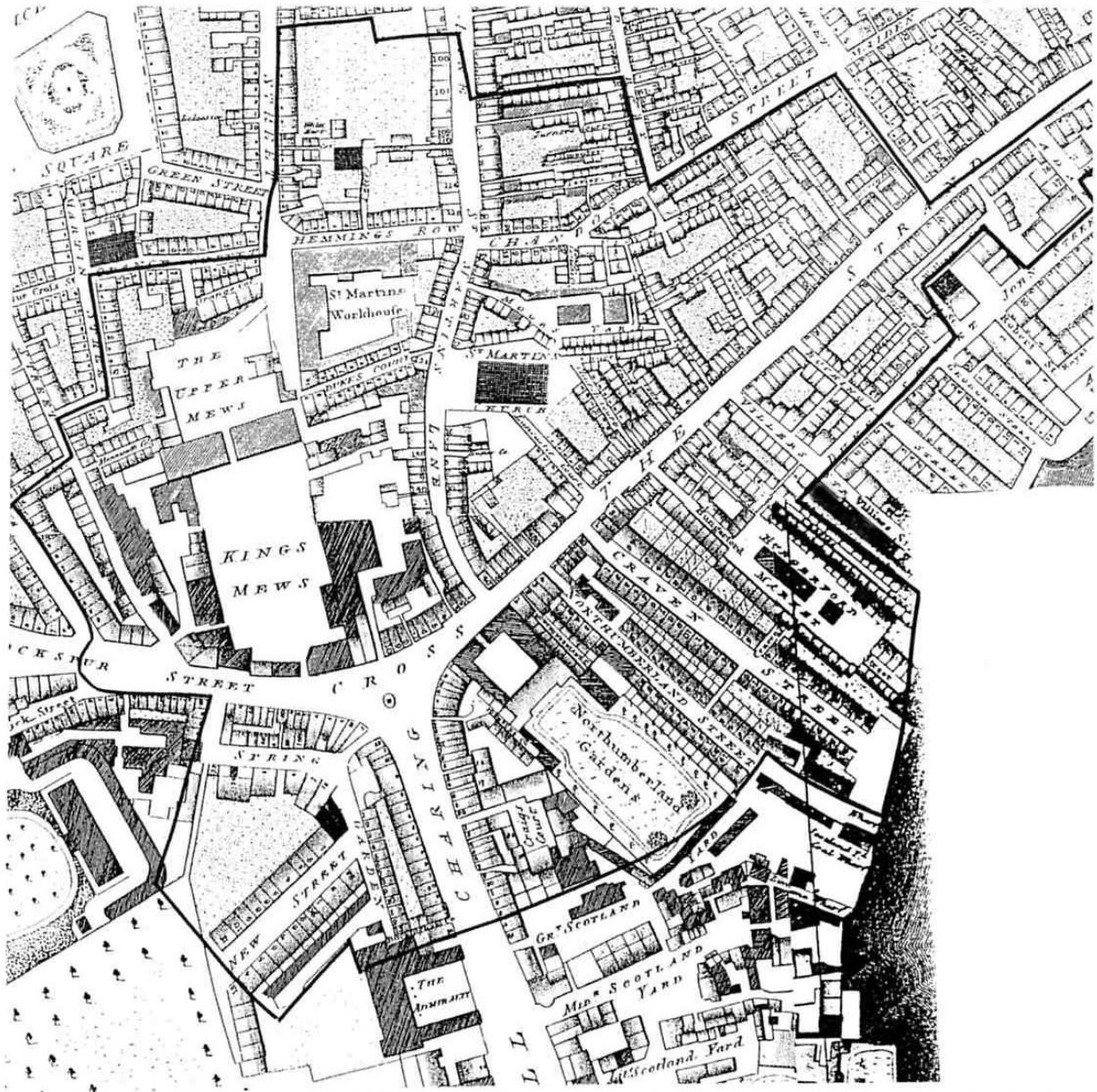
### **Nineteenth Century**

2.14 Within seventy years from the redevelopment, the Mews buildings through neglect and mismanagement, had fallen into disrepair. Many of the leases had little time to run and some parts of the area were already being used as temporary barracks. These factors influenced John Nash to include the area as one for development in his 1812 report to HM Commissioners for Woods, Forests and Land revenues.

2.15 Trafalgar Square was built on the line of communications between the Mall, Pall Mall East, St Martin's Place, the Strand, and Whitehall. Once the communication link between Pall Mall and Portland Place had been completed in the 1820's, Commissioners of HM Woods Forests and Land Revenues instructed Nash to design Plans for Trafalgar Square on the site where the King's Mews had been. Nash's original idea left open the whole area of what is now Trafalgar Square, except for a rectangular block in the centre which was set aside for the Royal Academy. The scheme dramatically opened up views of James Gibbs' St. Martin-in-the-Fields, 1722.

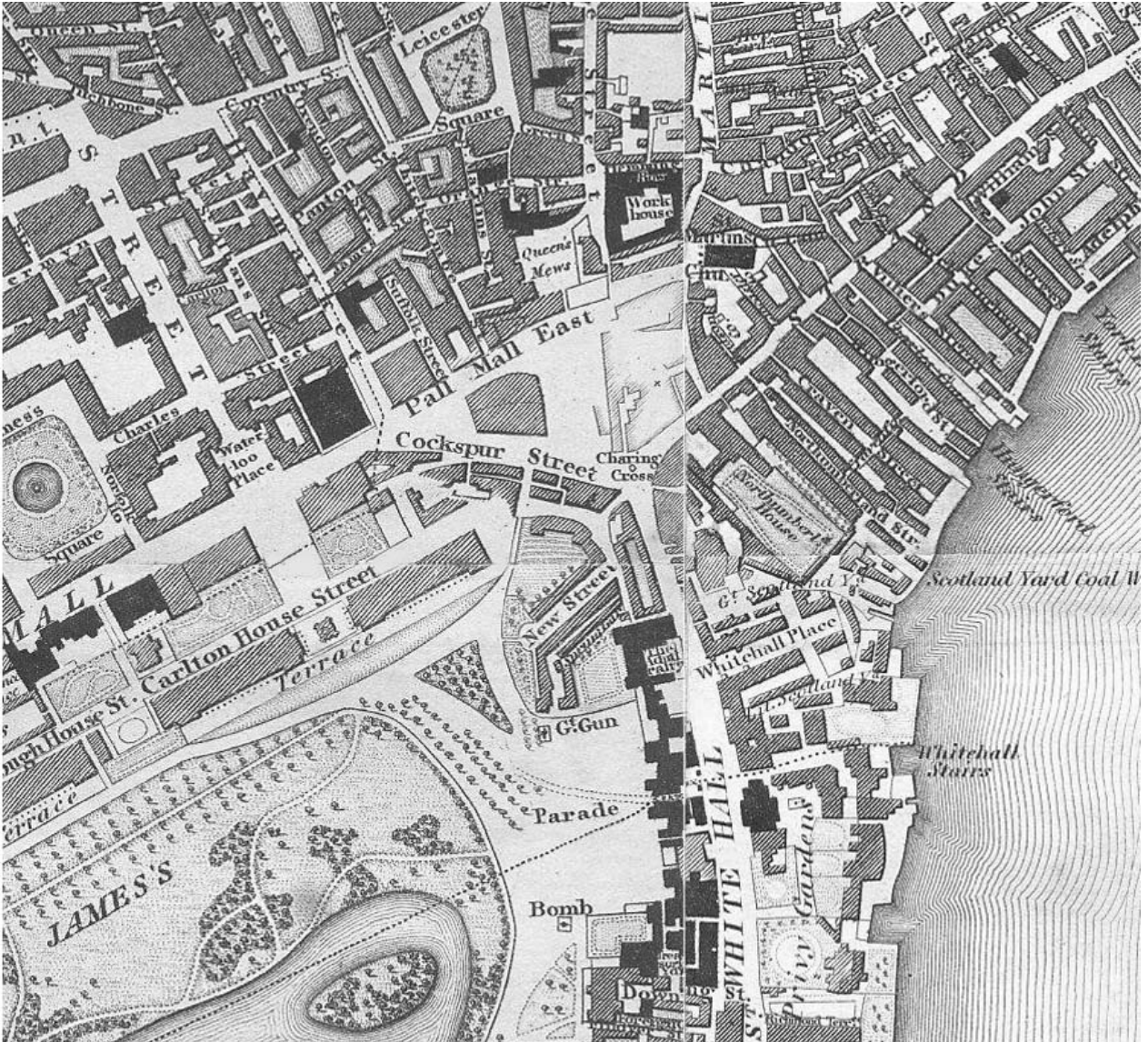
2.16 In 1824 the purchase of John Julius Angerstein's collection of pictures was authorised by Parliament, thus forming the nucleus of the National Gallery Collection. These pictures were initially exhibited in the Angerstein Gallery at 100 Pall Mall. However, as this site was required for the opening of a road from Carlton House Terrace to Pall Mall, it became necessary to erect a new gallery.

2.17 Designs for the new National Gallery which was to occupy the north side of the square as proposed by Nash, were prepared by Nash, C R Cockerell and William Wilkins. The design that was accepted by the Commission was that of William Wilkins. In his treatment of the façade, however, Wilkins had to incorporate the columns and capitals from Carlton House, which had been stored since its demolition. The works on the National Gallery commenced in 1832 and finished in 1838 and one of its first visitors was the young Queen Victoria.



**Figure 3**

**Horwood's Map of c 1792-99.** In this map the Royal Mews have been converted from the Green Mews Yard to the Upper Mews and the Kings Mews



**Figure 4**

**Greenwood's Map c.1827.** This map shows the site of Trafalgar Square shortly before its construction in the 1830's. Located on the northern side of the area is Queen's Mews, adjacent to which is a workhouse.

2.18 The original design by Wilkins contained a central feature which consisted of a Corinthian octastyle pedimented portico. The Corinthian column stands on a high podium wall with well arranged flanking steps. The main wall surface is in two stages divided by a continuous band between the windows and niches. The length of the front is relieved by a series of breaks and by a grouping of pilasters to the wings, each of which is surmounted by an octagonal cupola forming a pavilion treatment. There are a series of detached columns to the flanks screening the secondary entrances. The entity of the composition is effected by the moulded entablature and by the high balustraded parapet which surmounts the whole front of the building. The symmetrical or axial arrangement is emphasised by the centrally placed dome. In order to give the Gallery due prominence, the properties on either side of it were demolished.

2.19 The Royal Academy occupied the eastern half of the Gallery building until 1869 when it was moved to Burlington House in Piccadilly. Alterations and additions were also carried out during this period to the interior of the building by James Pennethorne.

2.20 The suggestion that a national monument should be erected in honour of Nelson and in commemoration of the Battle of Trafalgar was discussed in Parliament in 1818, but it was not until 1838 that a Nelson Memorial Committee was formed for the collection of voluntary subscriptions, and a competition was held for the design of the monument. William Railton's design was finally selected, through the height of the column was subsequently reduced, and having been approved by H M Commissioners for Woods and Forests and by the Lords of the Treasury, a site in Trafalgar Square was granted by the Government. Work commenced on the concrete foundations in 1839. The fluted column (145 feet high) of the Corinthian order, is of granite brought from Froggin Tor, Devonshire, while the capital was cast from old guns in the Woolwich Arsenal foundry. The statue, which is of Craigleith stone, was sculpted by Edward Hodges Baily and was raised in November, 1843. The four bronze bas-relief panels to the square pedestal depict the Battle of St Vincent, the Battle of the Nile, the Bombardment of Copenhagen and the death of Nelson. They were cast from guns captured at these battles, and at Trafalgar, and were the work respectively of the artists, M L Watson, W F Woodington, J E Carew. The lions guarding the four corners, were placed in position in January 1867. The lions, represent dignity and strength. They were all from the same model by Sir Edwin Landseer, R A, and were cast in bronze by Baron Marochetti.

2.21 The area of the square was cleared soon after the passing of the Charing Cross Act in 1826, but although it formed an open space from 1830 onwards it was unnamed until 1835; even so the name appears to have arisen prior to and independently of the erection of Nelson's Column. William Wilkins died before any decision was reached on his plan for the formal lay-out of the Square, and the matter was referred to Charles Barry. In 1840 a select committee considered Barry's proposal which included the formation of a terrace in front of the National Gallery, and the levelling and paving of the area and Square. Barry opposed the erection of Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square on the grounds that it would dwarf the gallery, and so spoil the effect which his terrace was designed to achieve, namely the improvement of the elevation of Wilkin's building. Work had, however, already begun on the foundations of the column, and Barry was forced to set aside his objections. The lay-out of the square was not completed until circa 1850. The fountains and their basins, which did not form part of Barry's original design occupy a large part of the area. See O.S. Map 1869 figure 5.

2.22 By the end of the nineteenth century the last of the remaining river palaces was Northumberland House (1605), home of the Duke of Northumberland. Northumberland House had a dramatic frontage of 13 bays and three storeys facing up St Martins Lane. Faced with stone the front elevation had towers at each end with cupolas and a striking oriel to the central bay, crowned with a large sculpted lion. The lion has now been installed at Syon House in Isleworth. Following the creation of the Victoria Embankment in 1874 Bazalgette laid out a new route from the river to Trafalgar Square, running through Northumberland house. Attempts to purchase the site were initially opposed by the Duke of Northumberland but the building was damaged by fire in 1868 and five years later the house and several other nearby properties were sold for around £500,000. The creation of this new route involved the demolition of Northumberland House, and the laying out of a short, broad avenue in the mould of the new boulevards constructed in Paris in the 1850s and 1860s. The 30m wide roadway and plantings of Northumberland Avenue were completed by the Metropolitan Board of Works in 1876 and the buildings along its length were erected during the 1880s.

### **Twentieth Century**

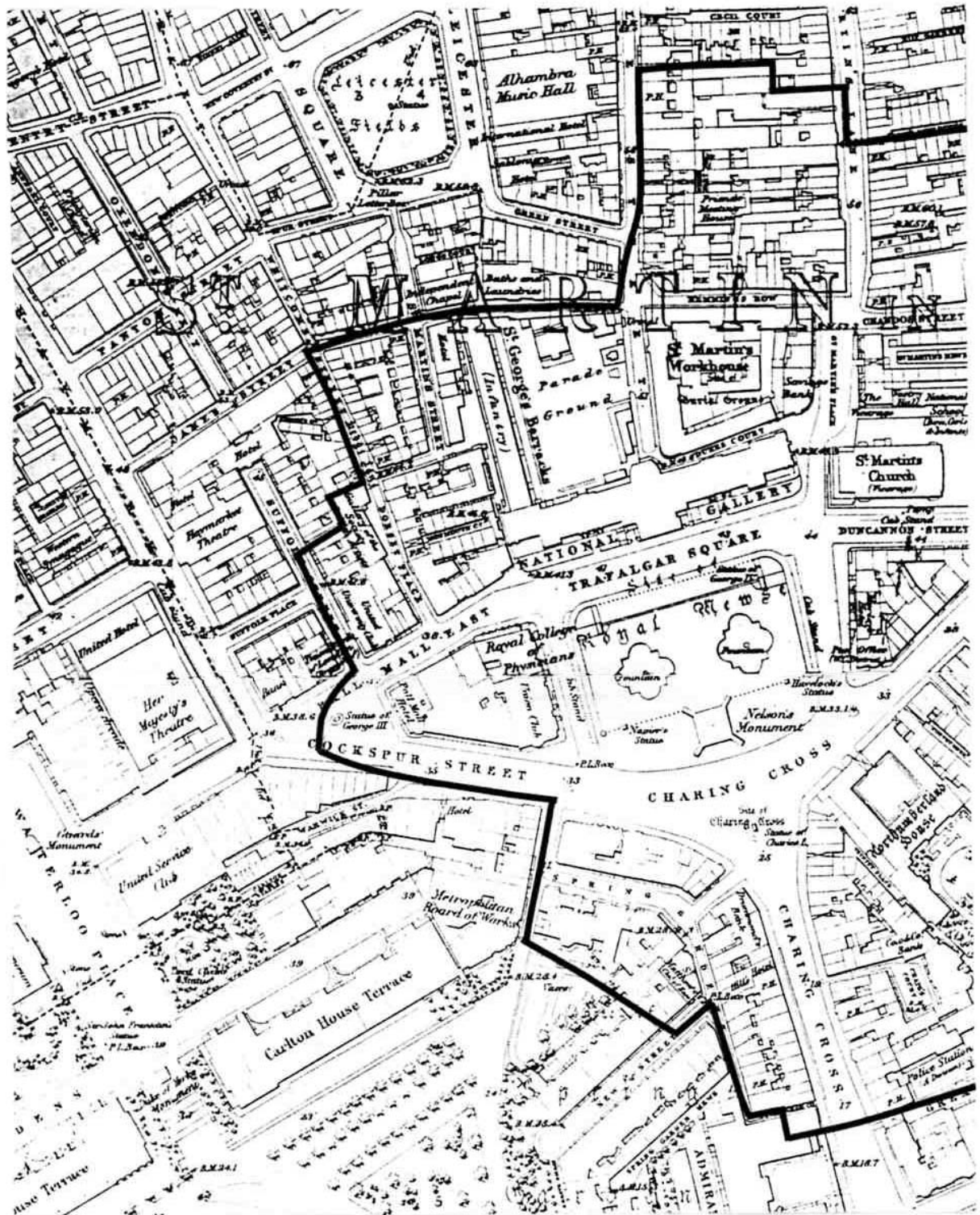
2.23 The triumphal Admiralty Arch was constructed from 1906-11 to a design by Sir Aston Webb. Incorporating office accommodation to each side and the official residence of the First Sea Lord, the arch forms a formal entrance to the royal processional route down the Mall and also cleverly disguises the change of axis from the Mall to the square. Admiralty Arch also forms a part of the national monument to Queen Victoria.

2.24 Throughout its history Trafalgar Square was seen as a place where demonstrations and meetings were held, this carried on through the twentieth century. In the years after the war Nelson's Column was cleaned and the 1939 fountains by Lutyens were remodelled to include the mermen (Charles Wheeler) and mermaids (W McMillan). Further works of landscaping were undertaken to the Square by Donald Insall and a lighting scheme designed by Lighting Design Partnership and Donald Insall Associates was finished in 1995.

2.25 Much of the historic fabric remains as it was when Trafalgar Square was completed. Some modern redevelopments have taken place, most notably the Sainsbury Wing, National Gallery and the rebuilding of the Grand Buildings based upon the original design. The use of stone has ensured a relative consistency in the character of the properties defining the Square itself.

2.26 The Trafalgar Square conservation area has recently undergone major works to improve the pedestrian environment, particularly to the northern side of Trafalgar Square. A new central staircase and wheel chair lifts permit access between the National Gallery and the Square.





**Figure 5**

**Ordnance Survey Map 1869.** This map shows Trafalgar Square on the site of the Mews Buildings. The Mall and Admiralty Arch have yet to be constructed.



### **3 CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA**

#### **GENERAL**

3.1 Trafalgar Square, known as such since 1830, is one of the world's great urban spaces. It has been and remains today the setting for events and celebrations that have shaped history. It was laid out as the major executed feature of Nash's Metropolitan West Strand Improvements of 1824-26; today's formal design by Sir Charles Barry in 1840. Monumental stone buildings in a classical style surround this grand open space, with Nelson's Column as its focal point.

3.2 Large buildings of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, many of them listed, form the main features but remain subservient to openness the Square and its converging street pattern. There are important pockets of earlier domestic buildings in Craven Street, Whitcomb Street and Craig's Court. Smaller Scale commercial development can be found to the north along Charing Cross Road, St Martin's Lane and Chandos Place, and to the south along Whitehall. Twentieth century buildings are of varying quality and generally found along the Strand. There are notable additions to the area such as the Sainsbury wing of the National Gallery and the roof extension to the National Portrait Gallery.

3.3 It is necessary to look at specific components of the built fabric of the conservation area in order to gain a full understanding of the character and appearance of the area. This will range from an analysis of views of metropolitan or local importance to the identification of local townscape qualities such as notable shopfronts. Individually and collectively these factors will define the unique character of an area and should be considered fully in the determination of any application.

3.4 The Unitary Development Plan provides the policy basis for the determination of applications and the relevant policy or policies are referred to where appropriate.

#### **HIERARCHY OF STREETS AND SPACES**

3.5 The hierarchy of the street pattern and its interrelationship with the open space network will define the overall framework of an area. Within this the importance of the grain of development in terms of plot patterns and building lines will establish the pattern of the built form. All of these factors will affect the character of an area dictating the scale of development and the level of enclosure.

3.6 For the purposes of the conservation area audits the council has defined 3 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 (see figure 6):

Primary routes and spaces

Secondary routes and spaces

Intimate routes or spaces

3.7 The major primary space in the conservation area is Trafalgar Square. Its grand design, landmark column and impressive surrounding stone buildings enclosing the space add to its monumentality. At the convergence of some of London's main

thoroughfares it links The Mall with both Whitehall and the Strand providing the Royal Ceremonial Route from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey and Parliament, and to St Paul's and the City of London respectively. To the west Pall Mall East and Cockspur Street lead into Pall Mall, to the north St Martin's Place leads up to Charing Cross Road, to the east Duncannon Street runs into the Strand and Northumberland Avenue links with the Embankment to the south. Northumberland Avenue now provides a pedestrian route from the south bank via the Golden Jubilee footbridges to Trafalgar Square. This provides a strong framework to the area. Villiers Street is considered to be a primary route due to the high level of pedestrian flow linking Embankment London Underground Station and the Southbank with the west end. (The Charing Cross Station and Hotel buildings are of a considerably larger scale to the 19<sup>th</sup> century terraced eastern frontage situated in the Adelphi Conservation Area).

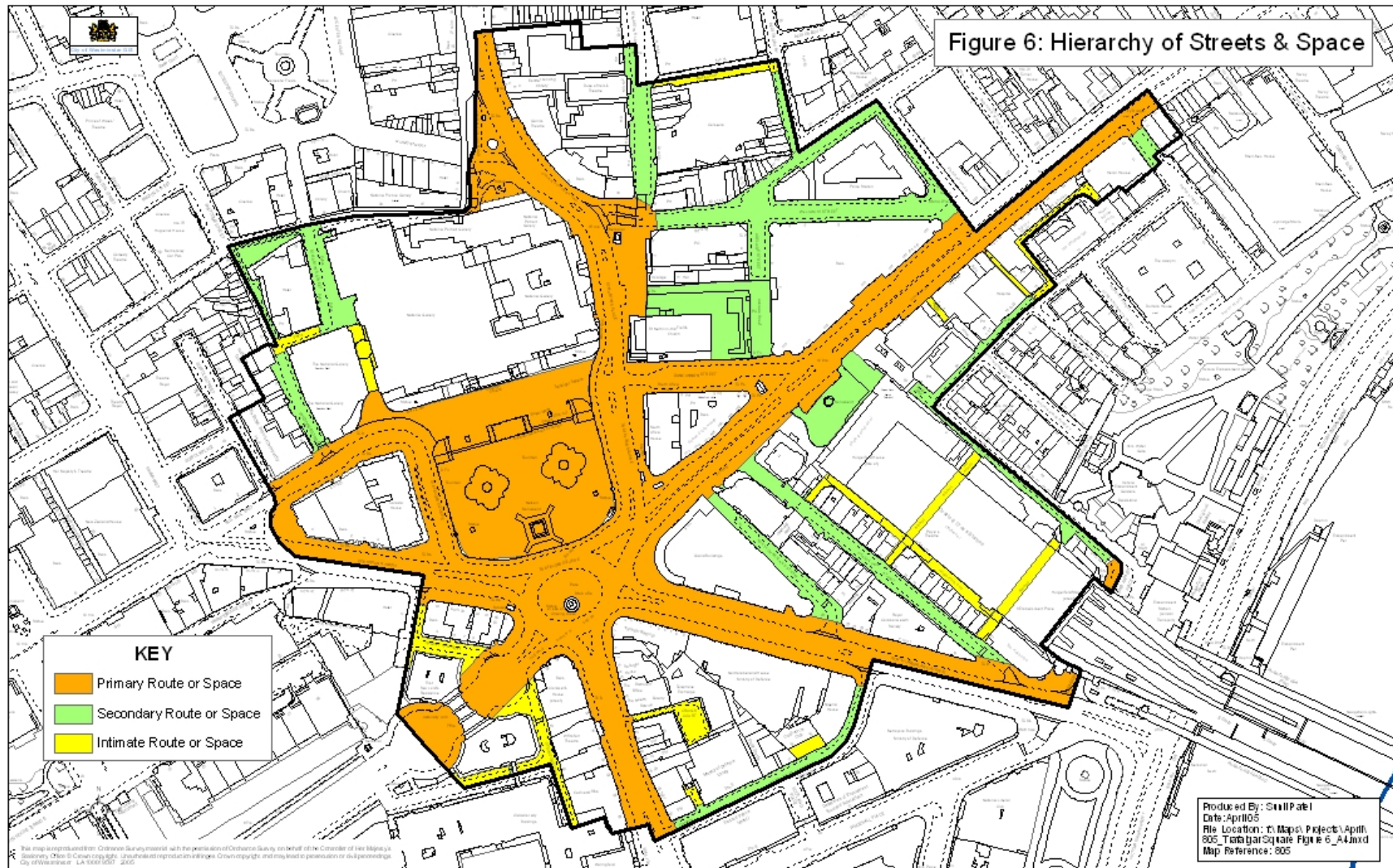
3.8 Secondary Spaces include the forecourt of Charing Cross Station Hotel and the Churchyard to St. Martin-in-the-Fields, both with strong boundary treatments enclosing the space. St Martins Place to the north of Trafalgar Square and the open area at the southern end of Charing Cross Road are important in defining the setting of the surrounding buildings particularly the National Portrait Gallery and help minimise the impact of traffic. They continue a feeling of openness to the north of Trafalgar Square following the pinch point of the Church and western corner of the National Gallery.

3.9 Secondary routes include St Martin's Lane, Great Scotland Yard, Agar Street, Northumberland Street and Orange Street. These generally have frontages of a mixed scale and provide links between the framework of primary routes. Craven Street has a noticeably finer grain of terraced properties, as can be seen in Chandos Place, western end of William IV Street and Whitcomb Street. These frontages and routes are reminiscent of the scale of development and network of streets in the area before the intervention of Trafalgar Square. The pedestrianised southern half of Adelaide Street provides a route from Charing Cross Station to the north.

3.10 Intimate routes and spaces include Craig's Court, (location of the 1692 Harrington House), Craven Passage and the alleys and passages to the south east of the Strand such as George Court, Hungerford Lane, the route through the Buckingham Arcade, York Place and Durham House Street which provides access to the Royal Society of Arts from the Strand. To the north is Mays Court and the tightly enclosed Brydges Place running between the Coliseum and the finer grain development to the south. Spring Gardens provide a route of a more intimate scale along each side of Admiralty Arch. Enclosed intimate spaces include the Arches running below Charing Cross Station concourse, one a service entry the other open to the public with retail and commercial units. The numerous colonnades also provide more intimate spaces along the primary routes as with Terry Farrell's Embankment Place, Grand Buildings and Nos. 5 –11 Strand.

3.11 Building lines are firmly established and generally follow the street pattern consolidated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with few setbacks from the back edge of footway. Notable exceptions include the National Gallery, Charing Cross Hotel, the Church of St Martin in the Fields and the Civil Service Club in Great Scotland Yard where boundary treatments provide a strong street edge. Many of the buildings in the area set back behind basement areas with railings or parapets. These include Canada House and South Africa House. This provides a hard urban edge throughout most of the area.

Figure 6: Hierarchy of Streets & Space



Dominant patterns should be respected and where historic patterns remain these should be protected and reflected in any proposed schemes. Policies DES1 A 2, 5, 6, 7 and DES 12 should be consulted.

## **ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS OF BUILDINGS**

### **Overview**

3.12 The development of Trafalgar Square and the West Strand improvements led to much rebuilding in the area. This required architecture of a monumental style and scale to define the built edges. The resultant schemes remain today an impressive collection of buildings and structures finished in stone providing a formal townscape. The surrounding fabric retains numerous buildings from the earlier phases of development as well as a mixed scale of later additions. These show a greater variety in architectural styles and palette of materials including brick, stucco and terracotta. Most properties remain relatively unaltered retaining their original fenestration and other features.

3.13 The overall height of development generally reaches 4 or 5 storeys. Some of the grander buildings such as the National Gallery reach this height despite having fewer floors due their elevated position or monumental scale and design. Buildings to the south of Trafalgar Square reach 6 storeys, some with mansards but their impact is lessened by the drop in topography towards the south. Taller buildings can be seen along the Strand and tend to be those developed in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; these should be seen as exceptions. The smaller scale terraced properties tend to be 3 or 4 storeys providing a generally consistent skyline. There are instances of taller properties with elaborately designed roofs or gables, or groups of properties with consistent parapet lines, and the resultant varied skyline is an important townscape feature.

### **Trafalgar Square**

3.14 Trafalgar Square is defined by a collection of stone faced buildings (Portland stone predominates) of a grand scale, many of a monumental design and of national importance. Nelson's Column at the heart of the conservation area is an internationally known landmark of London. Key works can be seen from accomplished architects, each employing a distinct and rich vocabulary, such as the highly influential St Martin in the Fields Parish Church by James Gibbs.

### North

3.15 Forming an impressive and commanding backdrop to the northern side of the Square is the National Gallery designed by William Wilkins, 1832-38. In a classical Graeco-Roman style it has a central portico and a lead covered cupola over a stone drum, providing an impressive backdrop to the Square. To the west the monumental frontage is continued in a modern idiom by the Sainsbury wing extension designed by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown finished in 1991.

3.16 St Martin-in-the-Fields closes views to the northwest and is by James Gibbs (1722-26). Of Portland stone it is an influential design combining a Vitruvian temple with steeple, incorporating Baroque detail. To the north, forming part of Nash's isolation of the Church, is a group of stucco properties of 1827-30 all probably built to the designs of John Nash. These are Nos. 1-4 St Martin in the Fields Secondary School (by G Ledwell Taylor) and adjoining Vestry Hall and Vicarage.

3.17 Adjoining the National Gallery to the north is the National Portrait Gallery, 1890-95 by Ewan Christian and J K Colling, built of Portland Stone in a free Italian Renaissance design. The Duveen Wing was added to the west end in 1933 by the Office of Works and the recent roof extension and internal works by Dixon-Jones have improved facilities for the visitor. This building gives an impressive frontage to St Martin's Place completing the group with the Church and related buildings (as well as the development to the north, see St Martin's Lane and environs below).

#### East and west

3.18 South Africa House and Canada House define the eastern and western sides of the Square respectively. South Africa House (1931-33) by Sir Herbert Baker and Alexander Thomson Scott is in a classical style with arts and crafts inspired carved details of indigenous beasts and symbols of South Africa. Of steel frame construction it is faced with Portland stone. The same façade treatment, though less ornately detailed, is used to complete the block with impressive frontages to the Strand and Duncannon Street which reinforce the dominance of the South Africa House.

3.19 The building fronting the Square to the west was built as the Royal College of Physicians and the Union Club by Sir Robert Smirke (1824-27). Of a refined Greek revival style in Bath Stone, it has columned frontispieces to Trafalgar Square and the south as well as a portico to the north. The siting of this building was programmed in Nash's Metropolitan Improvements of 1824-26. It was converted by Septimus Warwick c1923 to form Canada House, with an extension to the west including a giant Ionic portico to Cockspur Street. Completing the western end of this block is No. 1 Cockspur Street built as headquarter offices in 1903-06 by H Tanner junior, in an interesting neo-Mannerist design the steel frame is clad with Portland stone.

3.20 To the north is the former United University Club, Nos. 3-5 Pall Mall East, (1906-07) by Sir Reginald Blomfield. This early example of the architects refined Beaux Arts classicism is in Portland Stone. This completes the formal frontage up to the recent west wing extension to the National Gallery. Whitcombe Street runs north between these two with a small group of terraced back premises (c1820-23) to Nash's Suffolk Street development. In stock brick with sparse fenestration (apart from 1970's alterations) they are an important remnant of the scale and character of the earlier development.

#### South

3.21 Continuing the impressive scale to the southern side are the commercial buildings along the routes converging at Charing Cross. No. 1 Trafalgar Square, the Grand Hotel, was constructed in 1879. The building however suffered from structural problems and, was rebuilt in a style to match the original with a bath stone façade. It has a dominant elevation to the Square and continues its impressive facade down Northumberland Avenue.

3.22 Trafalgar Buildings on Northumberland Avenue were built as a grand hotel by F & H Francis (1881-82). They are of stone construction with a quadrant return to Whitehall providing a strong feature on the corner with dormered mansard and two French square dome pavilion roofs. Northumberland House also built as a hotel, is of Portland stone in a similar style by Issacs and Florence, 1882-87. Completing this group on the corner with Great Scotland Yard is Nigeria house, 1876-79 by John Gibson with a later extension to the return by Waterhouse, again in an Italinatè Style and of Portland Stone.

3.23 Further east along Northumberland Avenue is an impressive group of buildings continuing the overall scale, style and materials. Nos. 22-25, a former bank of a more modest scale, is a well detailed stone building with interesting skyline and Moorish details to the lower storey rear addition. Nos. 17-21, the former Royal Commonwealth Society, is a fine stone fronted building in a classical style by Herbert Barker (1934-36). The channel ground floor has arched windows, there are simple pediments to the first floor windows and the parapet is finished with bottle balustrading. The canopy with balcony above to central entrance has good carved figurative brackets and it retains the original steel frame windows. There is an unfortunate 3 storey roof extension and a modern brick extension to the rear. Whilst the latter follows the style of Craven House it is over dominant in Craven Street due to its height. Completing the group is Craven House with a stucco front and well detailed corner. There are polished granite pilasters to the tall ground floor and good architrave and cornice details to the upper floors. The return elevation to Craven Street is of brick. At the south eastern end of Craven Street, looking towards Victoria Embankment is the Playhouse Theatre (1881-82) by F H Fowler. It is in a restrained classical design in painted stone forming a good frontage to Northumberland Avenue. The scale and design of the buildings on Northumberland Avenue both contribute to the Parisian boulevard character of the street, one of the few examples in Westminster and one of the most important features of the area.

3.24 At the junction of Whitehall and the Mall is Nos. 49 & 50, by George Aitchison (c. 1885). Built as a bank in a late Italianate neo-Palladian style it is of Portland stone with slate roof. Drummonds, the owner, refused to have it remodelled to be in keeping with Bloomfield's No. 57 as part of Aston Webb's Victoria Memorial-Mall scheme. At the junction of the Mall and Cockspur Street No. 57 by Sir Reginald Bloomfield (1914-15), is of Portland Stone with a curved corner composition. No 62-65 is a stone fronted building with well detailed façade and clock tower built for Canadian Pacifico. Completing the group to the west is No. 66, built as the union Bank by F W Porter (1871). Of Portland stone and polished red granite in an Italianate style, it has a decorative copper clad mansard roof.

3.25 Set back behind the above is the impressive Admiralty Arch (1906-11) forming the formal entrance into the Mall. Designed by Sir Aston Webb in a classical mannerist style it is constructed of Portland Stone and an important enclosing feature to the south western corner of the Square.

### **Surrounding areas**

3.26 The conservation area extends to the north, east and south to include a number of areas of distinct character.

### **Strand, Craven Street & environs.**

3.27 The western end of the Strand leading from Trafalgar Square continues a similar scale of development and includes Charing Cross Station. The Charing Cross Railway Hotel is a rich eclectic composition in brick and is an early example of the extensive use of artificial stone (1863-64 by E M Barry). The redevelopment above the station concourse by Terry Farrell and Partners has become a landmark along the River Thames. Despite the monumental scale of the building bold modelling at the lower levels, including balconies and pedestrian walkways, and the varied use of cladding, help introduce a human scale to the façade. Retail units provide an active edge along Villiers Street which continues through into the arches.

3.28 The northern side consists of the triangular island block of shops and offices built in 1830-32 as part of Nash's West Strand Improvements it is of a Graeco-Roman design in stucco, rebuilt for Coutts Bank by Fredrick Gibberd & Partners in the 1970's with a new set back entrance replacing the Strand centrepiece. The east wing to the former Charing Cross hospital in Agar Street, 1831-34 by Decimus Burton is finished in stucco with restrained Grecian detail. The former western block (1831) with similar detailing is a strong feature at the junction of Chandos Place and William IV Street and was probably executed by William Hibert. These were also built as part of Nash's West Strand Improvements. They are linked to complete the block by a late 19<sup>th</sup> century extension of the same style. Facing the former Coutts building across Adelaide Street is the 1958-1962 GPO building by Sir Howard Robertson with Fitzroy Robertson and Partners. This fine stone faced building also has frontages to William IV Street and St Martin's Lane.

3.29 There have been several redevelopment schemes along the southern side of the Strand providing a mixture of architectural styles though lacking the richness and level of detail seen elsewhere in the conservation area. Nos. 51-55 for Halifax Building Society is a more notable example by Val Myers in 1933. Adjoining this is a commercial development from the 1950's of brown brick with much Adams style detailing in stone to the upper floors.

3.30 To the south of the Strand, on George Court, is a Georgian Style brick built public house (1957) and a early 20<sup>th</sup> century red brick mansion block with some stone detailing facing John Adam Street. At the western end of this street is Charing Cross Chambers, now linked to the Hotel via a high level covered bridge. Of a similar pallet of materials it is of a much more modest design typical of the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and complimentary to the age of development along the northern side of Villiers street (outside the conservation area).

3.31 The terraced houses in Craven Street and Craven Passage were built as part of the Craven family's development of their Brewhouse estate laid out for them by Filcroft. The properties mostly date from c1730 with alterations c.1792-1800. Of brown brick they generally have red brick window dressings and 1<sup>st</sup> floor cast iron balconies with geometric patterns, some have channelled stucco ground floors. They form an important homogenous group of a finer grain than the surrounding development, set back from the street behind shallow lightwells. Stepped due to the topography of the street they have a strong parapet line. Nos. 2 & 3 Craven Passage were refaced in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and have a late 19<sup>th</sup> century pub front. The street includes a modern flat development in brown brick.

3.32 Nearby in Northumberland Street are a pleasant pair of redbrick terraced houses with terracotta decoration and a listed public house, the Sherlock Homes in brown brick with good pub front.

### **St Martin's Lane, St Martin's Place & environs**

3.33 To the north of the Conservation Area the intervention of Trafalgar Square abuts the earlier fabric between Leicester Square and Covent Garden. The southern end of Charing Cross Road and St Martin's Lane contain a more varied scale of development. Larger scale redevelopments, including the theatres and the former Westminster City Hall (1890-91), have been accommodated, but finer grain terraced development remains completing these blocks.



3.34 On Charing Cross Road the Garrick Theatre, 1889 by C J Phillips has a painted stucco front in an eclectic classical design including a bath stone screen wall. The Coliseum on St Martin's Lane is home to the English National Opera, 1902-04 by Frank Matcham. It is an ambitious design in exuberant free Baroque with channelled terracotta facings. The decorative tower with large metal and glass globe is a dominant feature. This is one of Matcham's finest achievements and little altered apart from the painting of the exterior (No 36 is now a shop with offices above). The Duke of York's theatre in St Martin's Lane, 1891-92 by Walter Emden, is of a late classical design in painted brick with stucco dressings

3.35 The main stone fronted property in this area, defining the northern edge of St Martins Place with its formal frontage, is the former Westminster City Council Offices and bank building. Of Portland stone by Robert Walker (1890) and extended by A W Murray in 1902 it follows the curve of the street in a free classical design.

3.36 The finer grain terraces provide a richness due to the width of the frontages, but also the variety of traditional materials and detailing. They all follow traditional proportions and facade rhythms providing an overall unity to the groups. Those at the northern end of Charing Cross Road are late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century and of a greater scale than the others with more modelling, as is the case with the taller commercial property No 40-42 William IV Street with stone banding detail. Other examples are of a smaller scale and found in St Martins Lane, Chandos Place, Bedfordbury and William IV Street. Some are listed, such as those described below, but all contribute to the townscape of the area.

3.37 No 31 St Martin's Lane is said to date from c1635 but has been rebuilt and altered since, of stock brick with stone and stucco dressings. Nos. 51 & 52 Chandos Place is a Public House c1860 of yellow stock brick with stone dressings with stucco curved return towards Bedfordbury. It has a timber pub front and crowning cornice with egg and dart enrichment. No. 44 Chandos Place is a bold narrow fronted commercial development with a stucco front with monumental neo-classical detail. Nos. 45 & 46 Chandos Place are terraced office premises built over a covered way, possibly by Frank Matcham as part of Coliseum theatre. Painted terracotta over a granite faced ground floor it is in an eclectic Flemish Renaissance style with a strap work panelled gable.

### **Whitehall & Great Scotland Yard**

3.38 Along the principal route of Whitehall the frontages provide a break between the formality of Trafalgar Square and the government buildings along Whitehall to the south. The eastern side retaining a finer grain, the variety of styles and material provides a rich townscape. Behind this is the intimate space of Craigs court with Harrington House a town mansion c1692 in brown brick with stone and red brick dressings. The western side complements the variety of architectural styles and materials with generally broader frontages from late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century schemes. Some of these buildings are described below.

3.39 The Office and shop development at No. 3 Whitehall (c. 1890-1900) is of an ornate design in Portland Stone and polished granite. Completing this group are two other well detailed commercial stone buildings. Nos 7-13 is an eclectic design with channelled ground floor and much modelling to the facade and skyline including half columns in contrasting stone. Adjoining this is Nos. 15, an asymmetrical composition



from the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Of a tudoresque style with stylised strap work to the gables it has a contemporary appearance due to the large fenestration and simple detailing to the ground floor pilasters.

3.40 At the beginning of the next group No. 25 built as chambers, offices and shops, has a one window wide Portland stone facade to Whitehall and brick elevations to side and rear. This is the result of mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and c 1900 alterations to 18<sup>th</sup> century houses. No 37 & 39, (1898) is a public house by Treadwell and Martin with a stone facade in late Flemish-Gothic Free Style. It has elaborate gable detail and Oak 'half-timbered' pub front with carved spandrels. Whitehall House (Nos. 41 & 43) is an office and chambers development by Treadwell and Martin (1904). In a Jacobethan Free Style it shows much modelling with a crowning octagonal louvered lantern with coppered spirelet and weathervane. The remaining properties interspersed within this frontage are mainly of stock brick retaining traditional features. A narrow fronted stone building and a narrow fronted redbrick building provide further richness within the group.

3.41 On the western side of Whitehall, is the Whitehall Theatre (1929-30) by Edward A Stone. With Portland stone facades to the symmetrical front with bronze windows, and rear, it is an early example of the move away from the more traditional architectural vocabulary of the West End theatres. To the north is a stone fronted building with well proportioned facade but of an unfortunate height, standing above its neighbours with a large flank wall visible from Trafalgar Square. No. 16, a former bank now converted into a public house, has a good stone fronted ground floor and well detailed redbrick facade above with decorative window surrounds and good decorative gabled dormers to the pitched roof. Completing this group is a redbrick commercial development c1950's, which is considered to be uncharacteristically high in this group and in relation to The Admiralty to the south which it adjoins. However the stone finished ground floor provides a sympathetic neighbour to the Admiralty Screen.

3.42 Great Scotland Yard contains a mixture of building from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the listed late 18<sup>th</sup> century stock brick terraced house. The Civil service Club, Nos 13-15, is of red brick with good detailing and a mansard roof, with the end bays set forward; the whole property set back behind a forecourt with good boundary detail. Most of the frontage is taken up by the Police Central London Recruiting Depot and Police Station, built of brown brick with stone band details the main building has projecting end bays with rounded gables. There is a dormered mansard set above the bold corbelled cornice to the eaves.

Any proposal should take into account the character of its context. Policies , DES1 A 3 and 4 and DES3 should be consulted on the Principles of Development and DES5 A and B should be consulted on alterations and extensions

DES4B should be referred to for scholarly replicas within terraces of unified townscape and/or DES4A in terms of respecting adjoining buildings in areas of varied townscape.

### **Unlisted buildings of merit**

3.43 The vast majority of the buildings are in keeping with the character of the conservation area or the respective sub-areas within, most contributing in a positive manner. Those properties or developments which are considered to harm the character of the conservation area are identified in the section 'Negative Buildings' below

3.44 There are numerous buildings or groups of buildings that are not listed but are considered to be of special merit. These are buildings which may be considered for listing at a future date and are of local significance. They are defined in the Audits as unlisted buildings of merit.

3.45 This may be due to their townscape or group value, their contribution to the overall character of the area, their inherent architectural qualities or historic association. By definition these properties are of particular value to the character and appearance of the conservation area and their demolition or unsympathetic alteration without full and proper justification will be resisted. Buildings identified as unlisted buildings of merit are listed below and can be seen in figure 7.

**Bedfordbury**

Nos. 1, 2, 3 & 4

**Chandos Place**

No. 43

No 47, 48, 49 & 50

Connecting block of listed Police Station Buildings (Including William IV Street)

**Charing Cross Road**

Nos. 4-6, 8-10, 12-16 & 18-20

**Cockspur Street**

Nos. 2-4 (including Nos. 13-17 Pall Mall East)

**George Court**

No. 2

**Great Scotland Yard**

Nos. 3-5 Central London Recruiting Depot

No. 11 Police Station

Nos. 13-15 Civil Service Club

**John Adam Street**

No 16

No 34 (whole block including Nos.9-11 Villiers Street)

**Northumberland Avenue**

No. 16

Nos.17-21 (Northumberland Avenue frontage only)

Nos. 22-25

**Northumberland Street**

Nos. 8 & 9

**Pall Mall East**

National Gallery Extensions

Nos. 13-17 (including Nos. 2-4 Cockspur Street)

**St Martin's Lane**

Nos. 29 & 30

Nos. 37, 38, 39 & 40

No. 112

Edith Cavell Monument

**Strand**

Golden Cross House (including Duncannon Street frontage)

**Trafalgar Square**

Nos. 52-55

Grand Buildings (including Strand and Northumberland Avenue frontages)

**Whitcomb Street**

No. 15

**Whitehall**

No. 12

Nos. 14-16

Nos. 7-13

No. 15

Nos. 27-31, 33 & 35

Nos. 45-51

No. 53

**William IV Street**

Nos. 38, 39, 40-42

Connecting block of listed Police Station Buildings (Including Chandos Street)

GPO Building

Policy DES9 2 states that permission will not normally be given for proposals which involve the demolition or partial 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. This requirement may be balanced against the City Council's other policy objectives, for example the provision of affordable housing or small office accommodation.

Figure 7: Listed and Unlisted Buildings of Merit, Landmarks and Negative Features



## **Landmark buildings**

3.46 Within the conservation area there are buildings which are considered to be of landmark quality. This can be as a result of numerous factors including their siting and detailed design. They contribute significantly to the character and townscape of the area being focal points or key elements in views.

3.47 As one of the main open spaces in London and at the convergence of numerous planned routes there are numerous landmarks within the conservation area. Most are around Trafalgar Square itself and each play an important role in defining the spatial character of the space. Many of the buildings within the conservation area are notable, those identified and listed below are considered the most dominant within the townscape. Landmark buildings are shown in figure 7 and include:

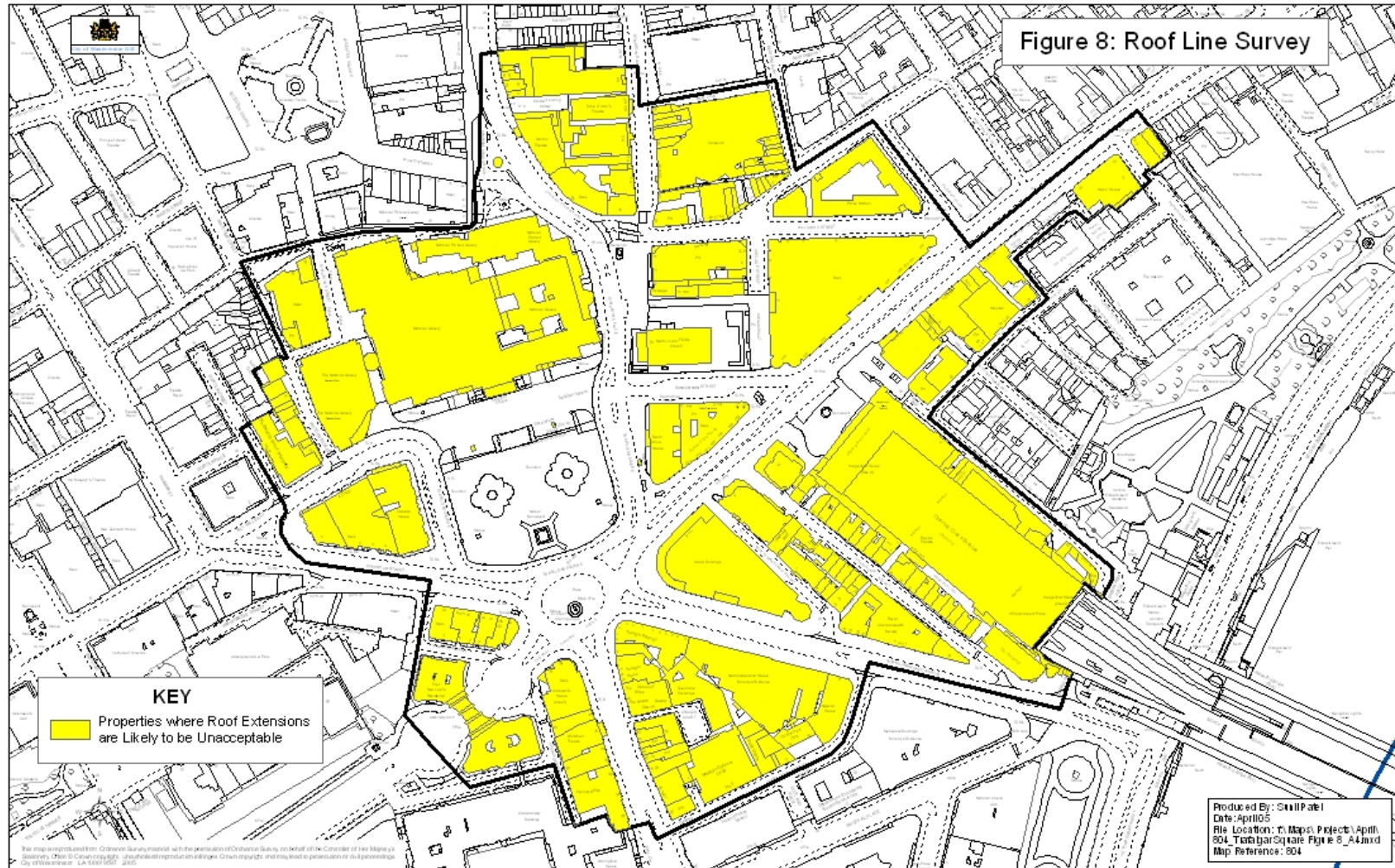
Nelsons Column,  
The National Gallery,  
The National Portrait Gallery,  
The Coliseum,  
St Martin-in-the-Fields,  
South Africa House,  
Canada House,  
Charing Cross Hotel,  
Charing Cross Station as seen from the river side (Terry Farrell extension).  
The Grand Buildings, and  
Admiralty Arch

3.48 The interplay between these buildings provides views of particular quality, see section 3.58 below. The main landmark, Nelsons Column, is a feature in many views from outside the conservation area and is an internationally known symbol of London.

## **Roof lines and extensions**

3.49 Roof lines are an important element which can influence the character and appearance of the conservation area. As a result roof extensions are not always acceptable as they can have a negative impact on this. Policy DES6C highlights instances where roof extensions would not be acceptable. This includes terraces where the existing roofline is largely unimpaired by any extensions or alterations; buildings that are significantly higher than their neighbours; buildings or terraces which are complete compositions or which have existing roof extensions; where there is an unbroken line of butterfly roofs; and where a roofline is visible in long views of public spaces.

3.50 The policy acknowledges that there are some instances where additional storeys may be acceptable, notably when the extension would not harm the proportions or the architectural integrity of the building or terrace. Policy DES6 states that a roof extension should always compliment the appearance of the existing building and should not adversely affect the character and appearance of the conservation area. The impact of roof top plant, talcum antennae and satellite dishes, in short and long distance views through the area, must be given full consideration





3.51 Due to the scale and topography of Trafalgar Square there are open views to the roof forms of the surrounding buildings, and those beyond outside the conservation area. There are also open views from the converging streets across this large open space and this is particularly evident in views from the Strand. Most of the buildings are therefore very sensitive to roof alterations, including the addition of plant and telecommunications equipment, due to the high level of visibility.

3.52 Many buildings have been designed as set pieces with mansard or pitched roofs, or are within terraces where the absence of roof extension is a townscape characteristic and are therefore sensitive to alterations at roof level. A large amount of the buildings in the conservation area are listed, many Grade II\* and I and would therefore be particularly sensitive to alterations at roof level due to the potential impact on both the historic fabric and their architectural composition.

3.53 There is little scope for further roof extension in the conservation area. Properties where it is considered roof extensions are likely to be unacceptable are identified in figure 8.

Policy DES6A highlights instances where roof extensions would not be acceptable in townscape terms 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.

## **METROPOLITAN AND LOCAL VIEWS**

3.54 The Unitary Development Plan defines two categories of views in Policy DES15 which contribute to Westminster's townscape and historic character. The following section of the audit identifies local views in the conservation area and provides a preliminary list of views which are considered to be of Metropolitan importance. A separate Borough wide document will be produced identifying views of Metropolitan Importance which will undergo full consultation before being adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

3.55 Full consideration must be given to the impact of any development proposals on important metropolitan and local views both within the conservation area and into and out of it.

3.56 A large part of the conservation area is affected by Strategic View corridors as shown in the plan in the directory section. This includes the views of The Palace of Westminster from Primrose Hill and from Parliament Hill and the view of St Paul's Cathedral from Richmond Park:

## **METROPOLITAN VIEWS**

3.57 Two of the preliminary Metropolitan views originate from within the conservation area and one of them focuses on buildings within the conservation area. These are (see figure 9):

### View from Conservation Area

- The views from Trafalgar Square southwards along Whitehall.
- vista along The Mall from Admiralty Arch to Buckingham Palace

### Views into the Conservation Area

The view from Whitehall towards the National Gallery and Nelsons Column

## **LOCAL VIEWS**

3.58 The openness of Trafalgar Square and number of converging primary routes allow for long views throughout the area. These focus on the rich historic fabric, much of which is listed and the numerous landmark buildings. There are also more intimate views such as into the arches below Charing Cross Station. Important local views within the area include, see figure 9:

- Views out of Trafalgar and across and through it in all directions
- View along Northumberland Avenue towards Trafalgar Square and Nelson's Column
- View along St Martin's Place towards Trafalgar Square and Nelson's Column
- View down Whitehall from the southern boundary
- View from outside of Playhouse Theatre towards the Victoria Embankment with the Thames beyond.
- View along Strand towards Trafalgar Square and Nelson's Column
- View from Charing Cross Road into St Martins Place with National Portrait Gallery and St Martin-in-the-fields and the Edith Cavell memorial statue
- View along William IV street towards entrance of National Portrait Gallery
- View north along George Court of the listed former east wing of Charing Cross Hospital (1831-34) by Decimus Burton.
- View down Villiers Street to Golden Jubilee Footbridge Pylons beyond the Embankment Tube Station.
- View from Northumberland Avenue into Northumberland Street of listed P.H. adjoining terraced houses and No 22-25 Northumberland Avenue
- View from Charing Cross towards and through Admiralty Arch
- View down Charing Cross Road towards statue of Henry Irving and National Portrait Gallery beyond.
- Views down St Martin's Lane towards portico of Martin-in-the-fields with London Coliseum in the foreground
- View of Charing Cross Hotel and memorial in forecourt with decorative boundary from Duncannon Street.
- View from St Martins Place to St Martin-in-the-fields Secondary School and adjoining Vestry Hall and Vicarage
- Views of Golden Jubilee Footbridges from Northumberland Avenue
- View from the Strand towards the south eastern corner of the triangle development
- View from Strand by Charing Cross Station forecourt towards the rear of St Martin-in-the-fields and the churchyard
- View from the National Gallery of the tower of Big Ben
- View down Cockspur street towards the decorative facade of No. 20 built as headquarters for the International Sleeping Car and European Express Co.
- View east along Craven Street of the uniform terraced properties.
- View into Craven Passage and the Arches beyond
- Views into Arches from Villiers Street



- View up Whitcomb Street from Pall Mall East
- Views of St Martin-in-the-Fields from the West (Pal Mall East) and South West across the Square
- View to dome of National Gallery from Pall Mall East
- View north through Spring Gardens of National Gallery.

In the Unitary Development Plan Policy DES14 seeks to protect strategic views across the city, resisting development that impinges or adversely affects these views. Policy DES15 seeks to protect metropolitan and local views.

## **CHARACTERISTIC LOCAL TOWNSCAPE DETAILS**

3.59 Local townscape details contribute to the sense of local distinctiveness and may be unique to a particular conservation area. They can range from specific building detailing, characteristic building elements, boundary treatments to the landscape qualities of the streetscape. Individually and collectively they contribute to the overall quality of Westminster as well as enhancing individual areas of character within the City.

### **Railings, boundary walls & enclosure**

3.60 Railings and boundary walls can contribute significantly to the character of a conservation area. The City Council considers that they should be protected and properly maintained. They add interest and richness and provide a sense of enclosure marking the boundaries between public and private spaces.

3.61 The most notable boundary treatment in the area are to the Square itself, around St. Martin-in-the-fields and the National and National Portrait Galleries. Other examples include Charing Cross Station forecourt and the Civil Service Club in Great Scotland Yard. There are also good railings to the remaining domestic properties in the area. Elsewhere buildings tend to front directly onto the street edge. (the boundary to Trafalgar Square is described in the Street furniture section below).

3.62 The boundary railings to St. Martin-in-the-fields are listed in their own right . Between the columns of the Portico they are c 1726, the other churchyard railings are exact copies c1830 on a Portland stone wall with segmental coping and have ball and cone finials. The later were erected to surround the new churchyard created by Nash's West Strand Improvements.

3.63 The National Gallery has a stone wall, part of its formal composition retaining the grassed areas on either side of the central portico entrance (formerly enclosed by railings) reached by an impressive flight of stairs. The National Portrait Gallery has ornate cast iron railings set on a low stone wall forming a particularly important edge to the rear elevation looking onto Charing Cross Road and simpler bold railing panels over low stone wall with solid stone piers to the St Martin's Place frontage. Charing Cross Hotel has a bold boundary treatment of stone piers with globe lanterns and cast iron inset railings to the central section to its forecourt (1991 as part of Terry Farrell and Co. scheme). There is a red brick wall with good piers and tall iron railings to the forecourt to the Civil Service Club. Bottle balustrading encloses the lightwells to South Africa House.

3.64 Notable period area railings remain the shallow lightwells to many the terraced properties in Craven Street, as do the cast iron area railings to No1 Great Scotland Yard with urn finials.

The relevant City Council policy in respect of these is DES7 G and further guidance can be found in the design guide Railings in Westminster A guide to their design, repair and maintenance.

## **Shopfronts**

3.65 Shopfronts, including non-original ones of an appropriate design, can be of great importance in contributing to the character and appearance of both individual buildings and conservation areas and can be of historic and architectural interest in their own right.

3.66 The northern end of Whitehall contains three Public Houses, the Clarence (No. 53), the grade II listed Old Shades (No. 37-39), and on the west side the recent sympathetic bank conversion Lord Moon of the Mall (Nos. 16-18) which retains a fine ground floor frontage of stone with arched windows and pilasters. The Clarence has an arched stucco frontage supported by Corinthian columns. The canted bays to either side of the door have leaded glass and carved spandrels. The Old Shades has a late Victorian half-timbered frontage with carved spandrels and four centred arched doorway.

3.67 Number 10 Northumberland Street (the Sherlock Holmes PH) is an attractive Victorian Public House with timber frontage facing across a widening of the street, it has etched windows showing Holmes, Watson and Conan Doyle (1957).

3.68 The Grade II listed Ship and Shovell Public House (In two separate buildings at Nos. 2-3 and No. 1 Craven Passage), a pair of 1731-2 terrace houses, converted to a public house in the late nineteenth century. The ground floor has panelled and glazed doors and bar windows articulated by Corinthian pilasters. The pub has been extended to include the early nineteenth century former shop facing across Craven Passage. This is also a grade II listed building with stuccoed ground floor and carved consoles to the main doorway.

3.69 Along William IV Street, Chandos Place and Bedfordbury. On Bedfordbury a sequence of late Victorian timber shopfronts (Nos. 1-3) is terminated by the Victorian pub front of the Lemon Tree (No. 4). The Lemon Tree has a timber frontage with dentilled cornice above the signboard. The capital of the stucco pilaster is marked 1897. Numbers 1 and 3 both include covered access to yards at the rear within the timber surrounds.

3.70 The Harp Public House on Chandos Place has a dentilled cornice to the shopfront supported on consoles. The top lights are leaded with coloured glass. On the corner of St Martin's Lane and William Chandos Place IV Street is the Chandos Public House. This building has a reconstruction timber frontage with decorative glazing bars reflecting the shape of the sill guards to the first floor windows. Leaded glass porches to Chandos Place and St Martin's Lane repeat the use of multicoloured glass in the first floor sash windows. Nos. 51-52 Chandos Place, the Marquis of Granby Public House is listed grade II, with timber front to the ground floor, bar windows and panelled and glazed doors with pilasters.

3.71 Along St Martin's Lane the shopfronts are timber framed and of traditional proportions and fascia details. A good original timber framed commercial frontage to a turn of the century property remains to No.12 with Georgian style lights and a dentiled cornice to the door. No 38 William IV Street has a good timber fascia and surround with capital details to the pilasters. Nos. 43 & 44 Chandos Place are good examples of traditional timber shopfronts with good details intact including panelled stallriser to No 43.

3.72 The ground floor frontages to the properties at the northern end of Charing Cross Road are of varying quality. They all retain their original surround details which are an integral part of the ground floor design, some as with the library, being carried up to 1<sup>st</sup> floor level (the insertion of a door opening into one of the original windows is unfortunate). Most shopfronts are modern though generally in timber and of traditional proportions and design.

3.73 Along the Strand there is a varying quality of modern shopfronts. The block, Nos. 430-449 has modern uniform shopfronts inkeeping with the style of the new central glassed atrium. Of a simple design they have a run of plain brown fascias and generally low key signage located centrally below.

The relevant City Council policies concerning historic shopfronts and the design of new ones are 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).

### **Public Art, Statues and Monuments**

3.74 Many of the country's most important and internationally well-known monuments and statues are to be found in Westminster. Many of these are listed, and are of significant importance to both the townscape of the city and in their own right as pieces of public art.

3.75 Trafalgar Square was planned before the idea of a monument to Nelson was first proposed in a letter to *The Times* in 1837. Sited at the centre of Trafalgar Square is Nelson's Column, one of London's most famous pieces of statuary and a national icon. Consisting of a fluted granite column with a bronze capital, it is 170 feet high and was designed by William Railton. Surmounting the column there is the 17 foot statue of Nelson by Baily. The ensemble was completed in 1843.

3.76 Around the base of the column are four bronze panels depicting scenes from Nelson's life; "The Battle of Copenhagen" (east side), "The Battle of the Nile" (north side), "The Battle of Cape St Vincent" (west side) and "The Death of Nelson" (south side), the metal coming from captured French guns. Guarding the column are four lions, each twenty feet long by Landseer, installed 1867.

3.77 Trafalgar Square is also the site of numerous smaller statues. An equestrian statue of King George IV (1829) stands at the north east corner of Trafalgar Square (this is believed to be the first full size equestrian statue of a monarch in this country); at the south east corner there is an 1861 statue of Major General Sir Henry Havelock and Major General Sir Charles Napier occupies the south west corner. The empty plinth in the northwest corner has been used in recent years for a rolling programme of temporary sculptural installations.

3.78 To the front of the National Gallery along the north side of Trafalgar Square are George Washington to the east (1921, from a 1785 original) and to the west is an equestrian King James II (1684) depicted as a Roman general. Set into the north wall of the square are busts to Admirals Lord Cunningham, Lord Beatty and Earl Jellicoe.

3.79 Against the outside wall of the St. Martin-in-the-fields churchyard is a memorial drinking fountain to William Gilson Humphry. Inside the churchyard in the south west corner is a monument to John Law Baker, c.1886 featuring a stone column with lion head fountains issuing into basins. A circular relief panel in the pediment to the Vestry Hall depicts St Martin and the Beggar. Behind the church in Adelaide Street is a monument to Oscar Wilde (1998).

3.80 In the forecourt of Charing Cross Hotel is a Victorian version of Queen Eleanor memorial Cross, 1864-65, listed grade II\*. Designed by E M Barry and carved by the firm of Thomas Erp, it is in an elaborate 14<sup>th</sup> century style. The original cross stood where the Equestrian Statue of King Charles now stands; on the roundabout to the south of the Square.

3.81 South Africa House, forming the east side of Trafalgar Square boasts three high relief carvings, all mid 1930s. Dias Bartholomeu and the Good Hope recall the discovery and European settlement of South Africa, and a gilded and winged springbok is carved to the corner of the building.

3.82 There is a statue to Sir Henry Irving, 1910 by Sir Henry Brock RA, behind the National Portrait Gallery off Charing Cross Road, and a memorial with statue to nurse Edith Cavell by Sir George Frampton (1920), inscribed with "Patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness for anyone" and "Faithful unto death".

Policy DES 7 (A) in the UDP encourages the provision of public art in association with all large development proposals.
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## **Street Furniture**

3.83 Westminster has an outstanding heritage of interesting and historic street furniture, many of them listed. Trafalgar Square has a high number of listed street furniture items, most importantly the walls, bollards and water features associated with the formal layout of the Square itself. The appropriate maintenance and protection of these is important, as is the need to prevent modern street clutter from detracting from their setting.

3.84 The history of the development of Trafalgar Square is described above. The items of listed street furniture relate to the 1840 designs by Sir Charles Barry providing the formal setting for Nelsons Column, and include walls, steps and bollards enclosing the open space of the square and the two fountains (with later alterations, see below). Barry defined and levelled the rectangular plan of the square with heavy granite retaining terrace walls on three sides with steps and a screen of massive granite bollards across the level south side linking with the base of Nelson's Column. The terrace walls are surmounted at intervals by bronze lamp standards with Nico lanterns. The lamps flanking the steps to the north are more elaborate pedestals with polygonal lanterns as those to

the southern terminal circular pedestals. The pedestal to the east with doors was used as a Police Observation Post.

3.85 The fountain basins to each side have deeply lipped granite retaining walls, by Lutyens and the bronze mermen and mermaid groups in the basins respectively by Wheeler and McMillan.

3.86 Charing Cross is endowed with a number of listed lamp standards relating to the streetscapes radiating away from Trafalgar Square. To the south of the Square an ornate vented c.1800 lamp standard decorated with griffins, surmounted by an urn carries three lamps on curved, scrolled ornamental brackets. A similar lamp standard stands on the traffic island at the head of Northumberland Avenue. There is a listed richly ornamented cast iron lamp standard with three Nico lanterns on scrolled brackets on the island in Charing Cross Street.

3.87 At Chandos place on the boundary of the Conservation area is an Eddystone type lamp standard dated 1910 and monogrammed G.V.R. This single piece is a part of a group along the remainder of Chandos Place in Covent Garden Conservation Area. Suffolk Street, at the western boundary of the conservation area contains one late nineteenth century lamp stand with fluted 'Bradshaw' type shaft. Another four lamp stands extend down the road in the St. James Conservation Area.

3.88 On the corner of Agar Street and William IV Street is a K2 type telephone kiosks in the conservation area. These were produced in 1927 to a design by Giles Gilbert Scott.

3.89 There are 4 cast iron bollards from 1922 with good decorative detailing at the top of the steps leading down to Durham House Street from the Strand.

Policy DES7 F 1 & 2 intends to protect these historic and characteristic features of the street scene.
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### **Historic floorscapes**

3.90 Historic floorscapes are important elements in the townscape of an area and often an integral part of landscaping schemes in an urban environment. This can include major city squares or a mews development. Paving, if well designed and maintained and in suitable quality materials, will contribute to the townscape qualities of an area, often by providing a backdrop to the surrounding built fabric.

3.91 Trafalgar Square is paved mainly with large square slabs of York Stone with granite details around the fountain basins. The majority of the footways in along the primary routes are of recent York Stone paving with granite kerbstones. In addition to these there are areas of modern reconstituted stone pavers, particularly the northeast side of Admiralty Arch and the east side of St. Martins place. Many secondary routes have modern granite setts at junctions and parking spaces as traffic calming measures.

3.92 Historic floor treatments within the conservation area include:

- St Martins Churchyard. Large worn York Stone flagstones, incorporating shaped drainage channels to the perimeter.

- Trafalgar Square. Between the two fountains is a memorial tablet set into the floor commemorating Admirals Lord Beatty and Earl Jellicoe.
- The Mall, south west of Admiralty Arch. The footways on the north and south sides of The Mall, along the Mall Access Road and the west side of Spring Gardens (southern section) are paved with historic York Stone slabs.
- The Mall, beneath Admiralty Arch. In the carriageway, between the bases of the central arch are small areas of worn yellow York Stone.
- Pedestrian Tunnel beneath Charing Cross station has Worn York Stone flags.
- At the corner of Craven Passage and Craven Street there is a small area of remnant paving and kerb stones, very worn, within recent tarmac footway.

Policy DES7 F intends to promote good quality paving materials by the Council and in private schemes.

For guidance relating to public realm works and street furniture, the Westminster Way is the council's emerging public realm manual.

## Trees

3.93 Trees provide significant amenity value in an urban environment in both visual and environmental terms. They are important elements in the character and appearance of a conservation area contributing to the townscape in many ways. This can range from a single specimen providing a focal point, a group of mature trees forming part of an historic planting scheme or street trees forming an integral part of an estate layout.

3.94 A variety of street trees can be seen throughout, some mature others semi-mature. All contribute significantly to the quality of the environment providing a softening element to this very hard urban landscape.

3.95 There is a row of trees along the east and west sides of Trafalgar Square. Groups of trees can be found on Adelaide Street adjacent to St Martin-in-the-fields churchyard, around St Martin's Place, along Charing Cross Road and the island at the southern end, on the Cockspur Street Island and to the rear of the National Gallery (visible from Leicester Square). A single specimen can be found outside South Africa House

3.96 Northumberland Avenue is lined with mature and semi-mature London Plane trees forming an impressive colonnade up to Trafalgar Square and providing a visual link with the tree lined Embankment.

UDP policy ENV 14 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.

## CHARACTERISTIC LAND USES

3.97 The contribution of land uses to the character and appearance of a conservation area is of importance. This will not only have a direct influence on the building typology or make-up of an area but also on the nature and use of the public spaces and streets. Particular uses may be of historic or national importance and will have dictated the evolution of an area.

3.98 The land use pattern of the area is very mixed, and contains many functions of national significance, including galleries, a transport terminal, an opera house, theatres, offices, embassies, banks, places of worship, cafes, restaurants, pubs and a market. This diversity is an essential part of the area's character. The Square itself is a well used public open space as well as a venue for celebrations and meetings.

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

## NEGATIVE FEATURES

3.99 Negative features detract from the special character of an area and present the opportunity for change which will enhance the character and appearance of an area. It may be that simple maintenance works could remedy the situation or in some cases there may be the opportunity to redevelop a particular site.

3.100 Those buildings or features considered to have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area include:

- Hotel development on block defined by St Martin's Street, Orange Street and Whitcomb Street
- Carrara House (No. 20 Embankment Place and Nos. 32-46 Villiers Street)
- Nos. 18-30 John Adam Street, to rear of Strand building, including service area and detailed appearance of Buckingham Arcade.
- The view of New Zealand House from Northumberland Avenue is unfortunate.

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.

## **DIRECTORY**





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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.