

# Victoria Area Planning Brief, London SW1



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Note: The image on the right hand side of the title page was sourced from London Underground Limited.

# FOREWORD

## **Welcome to Westminster City Council's Victoria Area Planning Brief**

The Victoria area is home to major national infrastructure: the listed Victoria Station, one of the busiest transport interchanges in the country; Terminus Place a major hub for bus and taxi movement; and the Victoria Coach Station which provides long distance links to the UK and continental Europe. It also incorporates Victoria Street, an established office and shopping precinct which accommodates a number of major commercial and government buildings including Westminster City Hall, New Scotland Yard and Windsor House; intermingled with and adjacent to significant and well established residential communities and local facilities.

It is undeniably a congested neighbourhood and the area currently struggles to cope with the daily demands of its residents, workers and visitors. There is insufficient capacity to accommodate pedestrian flows and an obvious conflict between pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Victoria currently lacks a coherent sense of place and urban quality and is in need of comprehensive and well managed improvement and regeneration.

Westminster City Council is committed to providing an excellent service to Victoria's wide and varied community. It wants to see the area achieve its potential as a top commercial, residential and visitor destination, with more and better housing, improved employment opportunities, better public transport integration and public realm improvements to the benefit of all.

We want to make Victoria a more sustainable area which values its heritage and accommodates growth and change to ensure its continued economic success whilst providing opportunities and a high quality of life for its residents, workers and visitors. We want to move away from and learn from past mistakes to create a visually appealing area, with interesting and varied facades.

It is necessary to address the high volumes of pedestrian traffic associated with the transport interchange, and provide a high quality environment that functions well in terms of its connections, streetscape and economic and environmental performance.

The Victoria Area Planning Brief 2011 sets out the Council's vision for the Victoria Area and the policies and mechanism it has adopted to achieve these aims.

It has been produced in conjunction with key stakeholders, partners and the local community and I would like to thank all those involved in the production of this document and in the development of this opportunity area. We will continue to work with you to deliver our vision, and achieve a city that we can all be proud of.

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**Councillor Robert Davis DL**  
Deputy Leader of Westminster City Council  
Cabinet Member for the Built Environment



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# Executive Summary

Since 2001, the council has used versions of this brief to promote and influence proposals in order to secure improvements to the Victoria area. This document is the latest version in this series and will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document as part of the council's Local Development Framework (LDF).

Since the previous version of this planning brief was adopted on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2006, proposals for the area have moved on in various ways and the council has adopted its Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy. This version of the planning brief has been developed to reflect these changes as well as increasing pressures on infrastructure and the public realm, to provide guidance for emerging development.

This amended planning brief sets out a framework for development in the Victoria area, taking account of recent studies and the active co-operation of key stakeholders in the area. This includes the Greater London Authority, Transport for London as well as residents groups, major landowners and developers.

This brief also responds to a number of new planning documents which will have an impact on the future of the Victoria area, including the following mayoral documents:

- The London Plan October 2009 (consultation draft replacement London Plan);
- The Mayor's Transport Strategy May 2010;
- The Mayor's Economic Development Strategy May 2010; and
- Transport for London Business Plan 2009/10 - 2017/18;

The following recent Westminster City Council documents are also relevant to Victoria:

- Westminster Core Strategy January 2011;
- Westminster Economic Development Strategy 2008 -11;
- Westminster Open Space Strategy 2007;
- Westminster Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning Obligations 2008 and subsequent replacement anticipated in 2011;
- Westminster Cathedral Piazza Area Action Plan July 2009.

This brief supersedes the 2006 version of the *Victoria Area Planning Brief* and its 2001 predecessor. It also subsumes and supersedes the *Draft Victoria Street, Buckingham Gate and Palace Street Site Planning Brief* (2007) and the proposed *Draft Victoria Coach Station Brief*.





# 1. Introduction

1.0.1 The council is committed to the long term development and improvement of the Victoria area shown in Figure 1 below. Five key principles/priorities have been identified which reflect the key problems with the area which future development needs to address. These can be summarised as follows:

- A. Pedestrian movement and crucially the ease and enjoyment of that movement should be given the highest priority;
- B. Development and transport must be aligned;
- C. Development must respect and enhance residential amenity;
- D. New buildings must be of the highest quality design and constructed in accordance with best practice, especially in regards to energy efficiency; and
- E. Collaboration between City of Westminster, Transport for London (TfL), the Greater London Authority (GLA) and English Heritage will be necessary to achieve these aims.

1.0.2 This brief provides information and guidance to support these principles which are discussed further in Section 2 below. This applies to the entire Victoria area however, more detailed information on specific sites is provided in Section 6 below.

## Context and Scope

1.1.1 The Victoria area is dominated by Victoria Station and its associated transport activities: it is one of the busiest public transport interchanges in London. This includes the listed railway station buildings, the Underground station as well as Terminus Place which is a major hub for bus and taxi movement. The Victoria Coach Station is located 800m southwest of the railway station and provides long distance links to the UK and continental Europe. These sites are shown in their context in the Site Context Map and on the photograph in Figures 4 and 5 below.

1.1.2 Victoria Street extends just over one kilometre between Victoria Station and Westminster Abbey and accommodates a number of major commercial and government buildings including Westminster City Hall, New Scotland Yard, Windsor House and Cardinal Place.

1.1.3 Victoria Street is not only a major traffic artery but links one of London's busiest transport hubs at Victoria to Westminster. It is somewhat unique as a Central London artery in that it has changed completely since the Second World War. An image of the typical development lining Victoria Street in those times is provided in Figure 3 below.

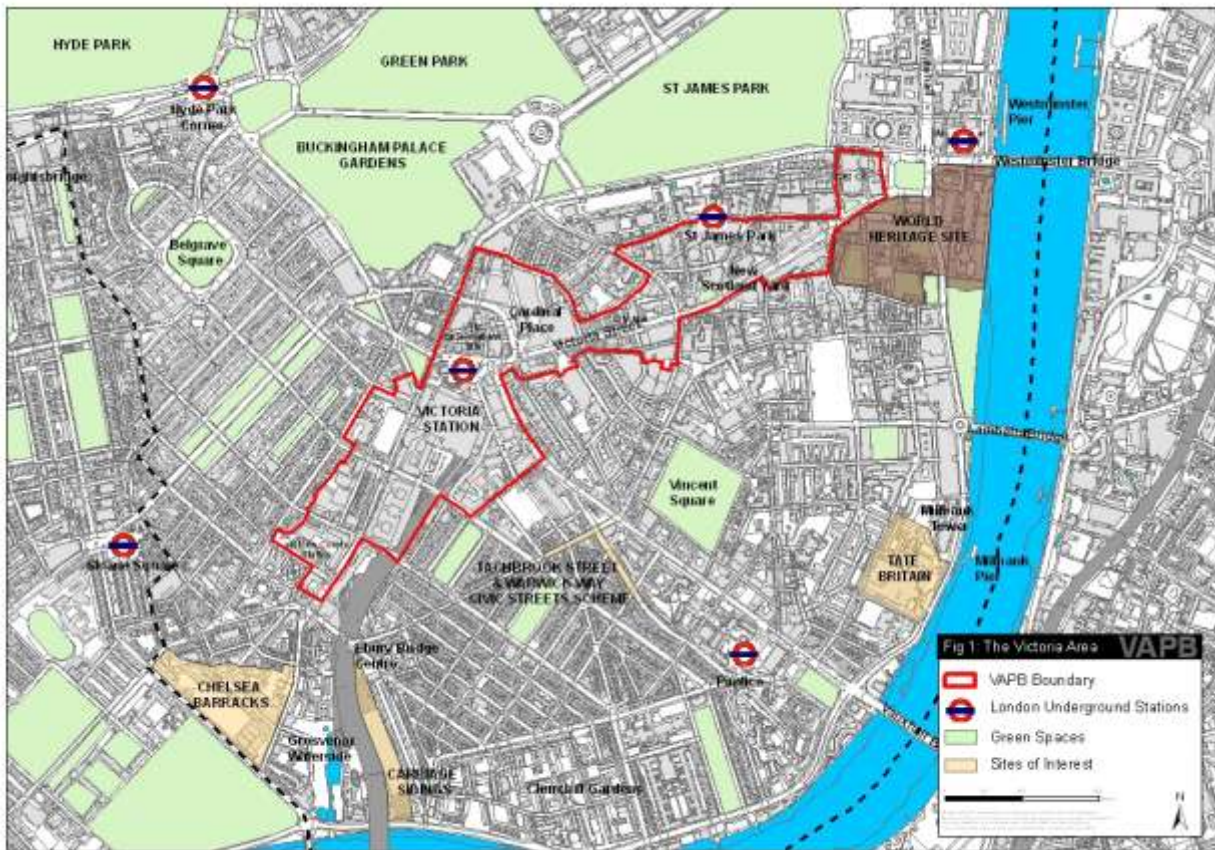


Figure 1: The Victoria Area – Planning Brief Boundary

1.1.4 Broad Sanctuary and the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre (QEICC) sit at the far end of Victoria Street, adjacent to the World Heritage site (Westminster Palace, Westminster Abbey and Saint Margaret's Church), within a locality typified by institutional and government buildings. In addition to being an established shopping area, Victoria Street is also the site of a number of significant redevelopment proposals.

#### Planning Brief Area

1.1.5 This brief covers an area approximately 40 hectares in size. The boundary of this area has been increased since the previous 2006 version of this brief and reflects a number of proposals and opportunities for significant change coming forward along Victoria Street.

1.1.6 The brief area intersects a number of conservation areas, and includes over a dozen listed buildings including:

- the Grade I listed 55 Broadway and the Blewcoat School building in Caxton Street;
- the Grade II\* listed: Grosvenor Hotel on Buckingham Palace Road; New Victoria Theatre on Wilton Road; Middlesex Guildhall on Parliament Square and No. 11 Great George Street;
- and a number of Grade II listed buildings as shown on Figure 2 below.

1.1.7 The brief also covers 2 areas of archaeological priority: Lundenwic and Thorney Island; and Ebury Village, where important archaeological remains will be preserved in situ.

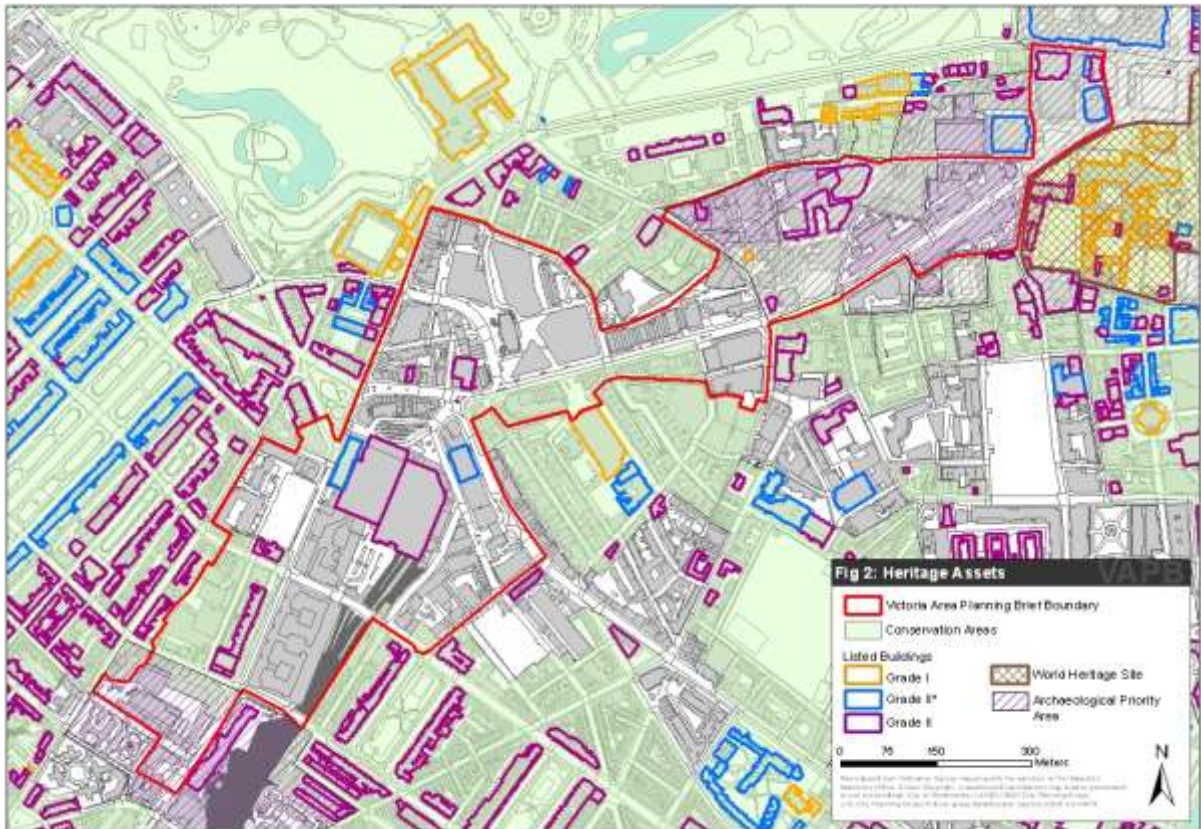


Figure 2: Heritage Assets

### Historical development

- 1.1.8 The first significant development in the Victoria area (to the west of Westminster Abbey) occurred some 300 years ago with the construction of the Stag Brewery and associated buildings on previously rural land. This was followed by a swathe of mixed use development along Buckingham Palace Road, which was formerly a medieval route linking the villages of Marylebone and Chelsea. The opening of the Grosvenor Canal in 1825 which ran parallel to Buckingham Palace Road along the line later used by the railway also served to attract many industries to the area.
- 1.1.9 In 1851 Victoria Street was carved through the slums to the west of Westminster Abbey and named after the young Queen. The street was constructed in phases during the 1850s and 1860s to promote the movement of traffic from the new terminus to Parliament Square and beyond over Westminster Bridge, which was itself a contemporary project linked to the new Palace of Westminster.
- 1.1.10 The introduction of Victoria Street triggered major renewal and redevelopment. At this time the canal fell away to dereliction and the reclaimed land provided the site for the alignment of railway tracks and construction of the station in 1860. The Victoria Underground station was first opened by the Metropolitan District Railway in 1868, and was enlarged to accommodate the later Victoria line in 1969. It is now being further extended.
- 1.1.11 Victoria Street was one of the most ambitious new streets formed in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in London and was admired for its proportions and the relatively consistent

height of buildings along it<sup>1</sup>. These consisted of a hotel (the Westminster Palace Hotel, at the junction with Tothill Street), the first Army and Navy Store (1864) and early mansion flats and commercial offices. The London County Council (LCC)'s re-planning of the area sought to achieve a uniformity of scale in the eastern stretch, (the street itself divides into two clear stretches) as well as a consistent architectural appearance. Today, although these recent buildings are generally not distinguished, the colour, consistency of scale and restrained quality provide a suitably understated setting for the World Heritage Site at the eastern end of the street.



Figure 3: Victoria Street 1960, standing in the current location of Cardinal Place. (Source: Westminster Cathedral Archives, Copyright)

- 1.1.12 Until the mid 20th century, the Victoria area was characterised by rhythmical narrow terraced building plots with some standout examples of Edwardian architecture such as the Victoria Palace Theatre. Comprehensive redevelopment of much of the area in the 1960s saw the amalgamation of smaller blocks and the construction of large commercial buildings such as those now extending down Victoria Street.
- 1.1.13 Following the opening of Cardinal Place in January 2006 a number of proposals have come forward for the redevelopment of aging building stock in Victoria Street and its hinterlands. In March 2009, the council approved the redevelopment of Selborne House, 54-60 Victoria Street and neighbouring Wellington House, 58 Petty France. The Victoria Transport Interchange (VTI2) scheme to the west of Victoria Street was

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1 Pevsner, buildings of England, London: 6: Westminster (2005).

approved in October 2009. Plans for Kingsgate House, 66-74 Victoria Street are currently being considered. These development sites are highlighted in Figure 4.

### Layout

- 1.1.14 The historical hierarchy of streets and squares is arranged around the primacy of the key routes through the area: Buckingham Palace Road, Vauxhall Bridge Road and Victoria Street. Historically these are the routes of major movement through the area and have contributed to the emergence of spaces around and through the wider station complex.
- 1.1.15 The arrangement of urban blocks and their qualities of scale entirely accord with the history of development in the area with the most massive blocks being on railway land, with medium scale blocks being associated with the immediate perimeter of the station complex where site assembly has allowed comprehensive development and on the margins beyond fine scale urban grain associated more with the adjoining districts. These relationships provide clear guidance on the appropriate scale of new development, further details of which are provided in section 4 below.

### Movement

- 1.1.16 Movement is one of the area's main activities and defining features. This movement takes place at local, city wide and regional levels and responds to international pressures as well. In the future Victoria needs to recognise these layers of importance in generating a place and associated spaces of interest and quality that are proposed whilst retaining the high quality and positive features of the conservation and residential areas in and around the area covered by this brief.
- 1.1.17 Vehicular and pedestrian movement however generates major conflict at street level. Earlier developments have presented physical obstacles for this movement where pedestrians are pushed to the margins, corralled, contained and directed on tortuous and confusing journeys. In some cases the microclimate itself is inhospitable where successive developments have failed to fully mitigate the effect of wind and shadowing. Breaking out of these routes causes immediate danger to the pedestrian. Visual clutter and the lack of key landmarks add to the general confusion. Patterns of movement need to be carefully considered and where necessary re-arranged in order to give due precedence to pedestrians and to make their journeys more legible, pleasant and safer.
- 1.1.18 There is also a need to reinforce walking routes around Victoria, particularly to the south, to such areas as Pimlico, the Tate Britain, Tachbrook Street market and the Millbank pier. Similarly, relatively little signage is currently provided to direct pedestrians to other popular attractions such as the Royal Parks, Parliament Square, Westminster Pier or Victoria Embankment.

### Area Context

- 1.1.19 The Victoria area roughly corresponds with the southern boundary of the Central Activity Zone (CAZ) as shown in Figure 4 below and generally aligns with the boundary for the Victoria Opportunity Area (VOA)<sup>2</sup>, in the south of Westminster. The Vauxhall Nine Elms Battersea Opportunity Area (VNEB) is also located just south of the river

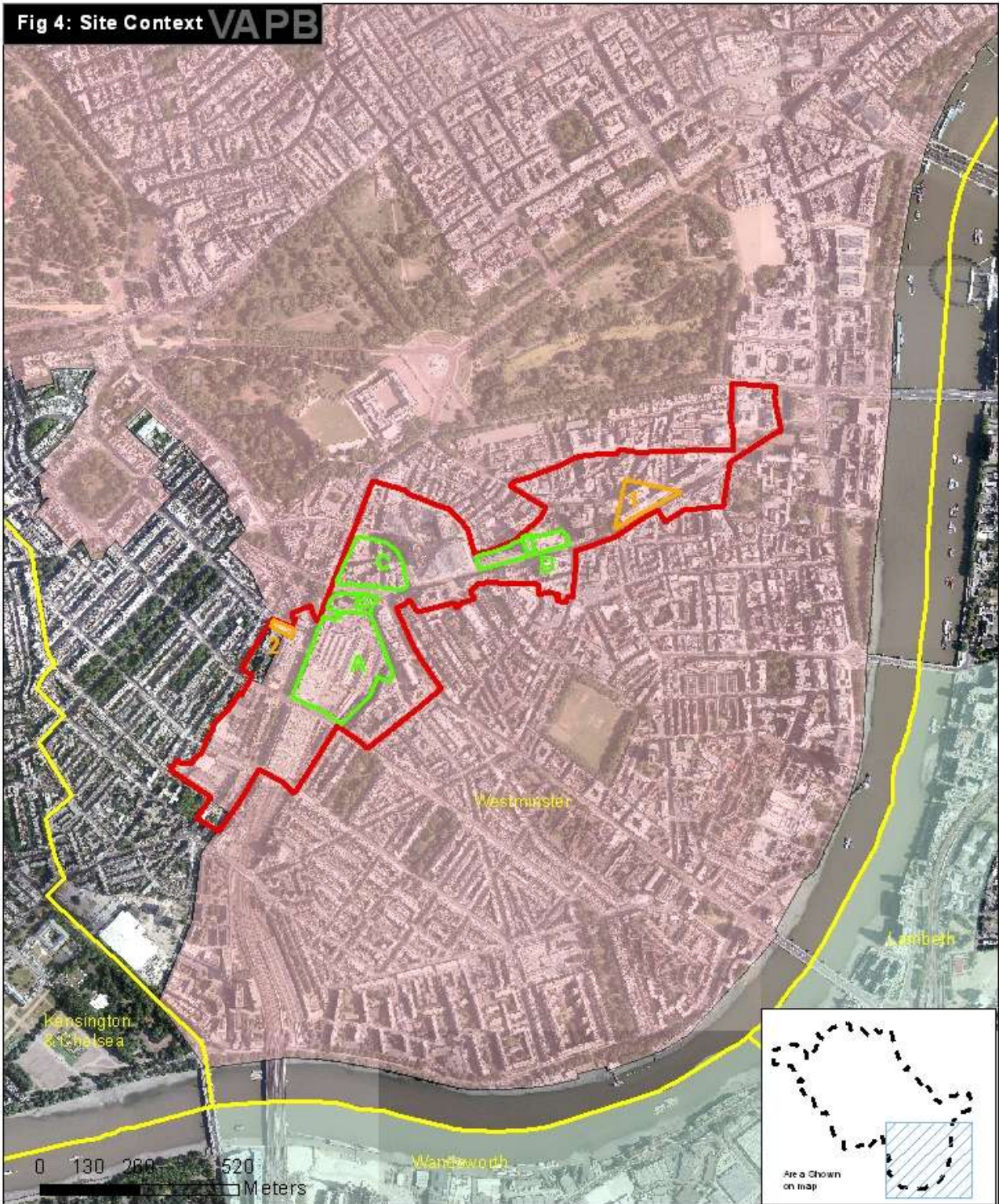
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2 See section 4 below

and may provide a number of linkages, particularly with respect to the expansion of existing heating networks in the area.

- 1.1.20 The area contains a number of proposals sites that offer potential for large-scale redevelopment, also shown in Figure 4 below. One of the largest of these, the Victoria Transport Interchange site (VTI2) is also shown on the oblique view of Victoria shown in Figure 5 below.

**Fig 4: Site Context** **VAPB**









- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
|  | VAPB Boundary  |  | Proposals Sites (Core Strategy Submission Draft, November 2010)               |
|  | Westminster CAZ (Core Strategy 2010)                   |   | A- Victoria Railway Station   |
|  | Vauxhall, Nine Elms, Battersea Opportunity Area        |   | B- Terminus Place, Victoria Street/Wilton Road                                |
|  | Borough Boundaries                                     |   | C - Site bounded by Victoria Street, Buckingham Palace Road, Bressenden Place |
|  | Other Key Sites: 1: New Scotland Yard<br>2: Ebury Gate |   | D - Kingsgate House, Westminster City Hall, Selbourne House, Victoria Street  |

Figure 5: Site Context Photograph



Oblique View of the Victoria area



## 2. A Vision for the Victoria Area

- 2.0.1. The council wants to see the Victoria area achieve its potential as a top commercial, residential and visitor destination. This means careful consideration of sometimes conflicting needs and pressures. Over the next 20 years the council will facilitate increased and improved employment opportunities in Victoria Street, additional and improved residential accommodation, with community facilities throughout the area, public realm improvements to the benefit of all pedestrians and improved public transport provision with integrated and accessible transport interchanges, all in the context of the area's existing historic setting.
- 2.0.2. Part of the aim is to make Victoria a more sustainable area which values its heritage and accommodates growth and change to ensure its continued economic success whilst providing opportunities and a high quality of life for its residents, workers and visitors. All development should aim to meet the Strategic Objectives for development as set out in the council's Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, from which this vision derives.
- 2.0.3. To be truly successful Victoria should allow a proper sense of arrival, time and space for orientation, and opportunities for the appreciation of place. Victoria also needs to improve its ability to function as a place to visit, live and work in, not simply a space to pass through.
- 2.0.4. A number of locations within the brief area would benefit from development, as they are unresolved in townscape terms and unable to cope with the movement demands placed on them. These locations also fail to deliver the positive economic functions required of such important sites. Such sites can be addressed by positive development which also improves the public realm.
- 2.0.5. Management opportunities also exist for the enhancement of existing public spaces and of the setting of listed and other landmark buildings. These opportunities include greater control of commercial signage, more efficient coordination of street traders/distributors and the improved provision of public information and directional signage.

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### 1.1 Principles for development

- 1.1.1 Following discussions between the council, the GLA and Transport for London the following principles have been agreed for all major developments within the Victoria Planning Brief area. These principles are generally consistent with those set out in the previous adopted 2006 brief.

A: Pedestrian movement around sites and within the transport interchange should be given the highest priority – this includes both the capacity and quality of the public realm.

- 1.1.2 Everyone who uses the station is a pedestrian at some point, whether they walk to the station or arrive by train, bus, taxi or private car. However, the particularly high

pedestrian flows during peak hours provide an extreme example of the pressures the area is under.

- 1.1.3 This part of their journey should be made as easy and safe as possible. This can only be done by giving pedestrians the highest priority when designing proposals to improve access to and from and within the station complex, and around the Victoria Planning Brief area. Pedestrian routes should be as direct as possible and follow desire lines; pedestrians and vehicles should be segregated where possible through good design, avoiding the use of unsightly signs or barriers. Walking routes to key tourist and cultural destinations surrounding Victoria need to be reinforced. As an overriding principle, new spaces and links between them must also serve to delight their users (including residents, commuters, workers and tourists) by, amongst other things, mitigating the effects of wind. This will be achieved by providing sensible links based on proven patterns of existing and projected desire lines, by maximising street level vitality, by mitigating the effects of wind, by securing opportunities for sunlight, and through the enjoyment of views. The Legible London way finding scheme should be incorporated into improvements to the Victoria area where appropriate and should be utilised inside the railway, bus and coach stations.

B: Proposed developments must take account of, and as far as possible address, the transport requirements at Victoria.

- 1.1.4 The transport requirements for all transport modes, as agreed by the council, TfL and the GLA, are set out in Section 5 of this brief, with those of Network Rail set out in Section 6. Developments should be designed to facilitate these requirements – either through in kind benefits (such as provision of rights, land or street level setbacks to enhance footway space) or financial contributions towards the improvements which will be realised using the implementation mechanisms set out in Section 7 of this brief.
- 1.1.5 All forms of traffic congestion vehicular and pedestrian should be reduced.

C: Proposals must not harm the residential amenity of the Victoria area, and the integration of developments with the local community should be facilitated.

- 1.1.6 London Plan policy 3A.3 states that development proposals should achieve the maximum intensity of use compatible with local context, design principles and public transport capacity. Development should be focussed in areas with high public transport accessibility to lessen the need to travel and therefore, in Victoria, amongst other things, lessen the impact on residential neighbourhoods. The station and nearby sites have significant potential capacity for intensification and *could* therefore be considered to be appropriate locations for more intensive commercial/retail development, however, due to site constraints these opportunities may be limited and would require a Masterplan approach to ensure all policy requirements are met.
- 1.1.7 There are however substantial well established residential areas in and around Victoria. The council will need to consider the impact of individual buildings and uses on residential amenity. The commercial impact of changed traffic patterns and large

amounts of additional retail space could severely impact on the amenity of these long standing residential communities.

- 1.1.8 The council will consider the impact of the intensification of particular land uses and also how this will affect parking in the area. Radical changes at Victoria should address key concerns of, and provide benefit to, the local community.
- 1.1.9 Mechanisms for the establishment of a Victoria Social and Community Fund to help to address the impact of the developments on the local community and to integrate developments into the local community by helping to fund measures to improve services are set out in Section 7 below. The application of relevant policies (see Section 3 below) will also seek to ensure that adequate social and community facilities are provided within the area.
- 1.1.10 Developments should be designed to ensure that the public realm surrounding new and existing buildings does not encourage anti-social behaviour. Planning obligations are also likely to be used to address city management issues including measures to deal with anti-social behaviour in the area where the council considers these to be appropriate.

D: New buildings in Victoria must be designed and built to the highest quality (including in relation to energy and water efficiency), using a design-led approach to optimise the potential of sites and improve the quality of life and the negative impacts of construction activity should be ameliorated.

- 1.1.11 New buildings must be designed and built to the highest quality and must conserve and enhance the area's heritage assets, their settings and the wider historic environment, including strategic and local views.
- 1.1.12 The height, bulk, form, scale and use of facing materials of new buildings will be assessed against all relevant policies in the UDP (including DES 1, DES 3, DES 4, DES 9, DES 10, DES 12, DES 14, DES 15, DES 16, RIV 1 and RIV 2), the Supplementary Planning Guidance document Design Matters in Westminster, and the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy (see Section 3 below). Further guidance on conservation and urban design issues is provided in Section 4 of this brief and must be considered when developing proposals for buildings in the Victoria area. In particular, Figure 10 provides general guidelines for building heights.
- 1.1.13 High design standards should also apply to energy efficiency in new buildings and buildings should be as energy efficient as possible. In the case of more significant schemes, capacity should be provided to link to broader heating schemes such as the Pimlico District Heating Undertaking (PDHU) (see Section 4 below).
- 1.1.14 The council's Environmental Inspectorate and codes of construction practice accompanying major schemes and secured through Section 106 agreements will be used to limit the negative impact of construction activity on the Victoria area. This mechanism will also be used to co-ordinate phasing of developments so that the cumulative impact is minimised. Further information is provided in Section 7 below.

E: City of Westminster, TfL, the GLA and English Heritage will work together to support and develop the strategic and long term objectives for Victoria.

- 1.1.15 This work will include establishing and managing the implementation mechanisms as set out in Section 7 below and providing support and advice to developers on their development proposals.

## 3. Policy Framework

3.0.1 This section provides an overview of the existing policy context against which any planning applications will be assessed by the council. This brief is not intended to present an exhaustive list of applicable policy but rather a summary of the key policy issues as they apply to the Victoria area. Where relevant, some areas where and reasons why existing policy can be applied flexibly are noted. As this brief is designed to supplement adopted policy it should be read in conjunction with the relevant Development Plan Documents (DPDs) for Westminster. It is not intended to repeat the policies set out within them.

### 3.1 National and regional policy

3.1.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government determines national policies on different aspects of planning and the rules that govern the operation of the system within the context of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. They have published a series of Planning Policy Statements and Guidance documents that are of relevance to development in Victoria.

#### Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) & Planning Policy Statements (PPS)

3.1.2 The government's PPGs and PPSs which are of particular relevance to Victoria are:

- PPS 1 – Delivering Sustainable Development;
- PPS 3 – Housing;
- PPS 4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth;
- PPS 5 – Planning for the Historic Environment, including its Practice Guide;
- PPS 9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation;
- PPS 12 – Local Spatial Planning;
- PPG 13 – Transport;
- PPS 23 – Planning and Pollution Control; and
- PPS 25 – Development and Flood Risk.

3.1.3 Further national guidance exists and is relevant to the Victoria and surrounding area including, but not limited to:

- Circular 07/2009 on the Protection of World Heritage Sites;
- English Heritage Guidance Note to Circular for England on the Protection of World Heritage Sites;
- English Heritage/CABE Guidance on Tall Buildings (2007);
- Draft English Heritage Guidance on the Setting of Historic Assets;

## The London Plan

- 3.1.4 The London Plan Consolidated with Alterations since 2004 (February 2008) forms part of the Development Plan for Westminster, and should be used in conjunction with the council's policies to determine planning applications for the Victoria area.
- 3.1.5 The Mayor published his draft replacement London Plan on 12 October 2009 for public consultation. This was subject to Examination in Public (EIP) in summer 2010 and once adopted will supersede the London Plan 2008.
- 3.1.6 The London Plan<sup>3</sup> is a 'Spatial Development Strategy' – an overarching strategic plan for London, setting out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20-25 years. As it is a Development Plan Document (DPD) which forms part of the statutory development plan for Westminster, some of its policies can be used directly for determining planning applications. The council's local planning policies must be in general conformity with the London Plan<sup>4</sup>.
- 3.1.7 Victoria is identified as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan, reflecting its high public transport accessibility and potential for redevelopment and growth. Between 2001 and 2026, Victoria is now predicted to provide 4,000 new jobs<sup>5</sup> (down from 8,000 in the 2008 London Plan) and 1,000 new homes. The broad location of the Opportunity Area is shown in the London Plan. However, the detailed boundary has been defined by the council in its adopted Core Strategy (see 'LDF' section below) and broadly aligns with the area covered by this planning brief.
- 3.1.8 The majority of the Victoria Planning Brief area is also located within London's Central Activities Zone (CAZ). This contains a unique cluster of vitally important activities including central government offices, financial and business services and various other sectors. Further discussion of CAZ is provided in the *Westminster Unitary Development Plan* section below.
- 3.1.9 Other particularly relevant points of the draft replacement London Plan include the following:
- Affordable housing – provides a definition of affordable housing, together with policies on affordable housing targets and the threshold for application.
  - Offices – states that local policy should bring forward and renew development capacity and states that most office based employment growth is anticipated to take place within CAZ and Canary Wharf.
  - Mixed-use development and offices – states that increases in office floor space within CAZ should provide for a mix of uses, including housing.
  - Decentralised energy networks – the Mayor expects 25% of heat and power used in London to be generated through the use of localised decentralised energy systems by 2025;

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3 Prior to adoption of the Draft Replacement London Plan, references to "the London Plan" should be taken to mean the London Plan 2008 Consolidated with Alterations since 2004 unless otherwise stated.

4 Under section 24 (1)(b) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

5 In the draft replacement London Plan

- Providing public transport capacity and safeguarding land for transport – states that Boroughs must ensure the provision of land, suitably located, for the development of an expanded transport system to serve London’s needs;
- Cycling and Walking – promotes an increase in cycling and walking capacity in London and to ensure that cycling accounts for at least a 5% modal share by 2026;
- Tall Buildings – policy approach states that tall buildings should not have an unacceptably harmful impact on their surroundings;
- Intensification - states that development proposals should achieve the maximum intensity of use compatible with local context<sup>6</sup>;
- Views – the Mayor has designated a list of strategic views, as part of the London View Management Framework (see Section 3 below);
- Blue Ribbon Network – restores the Blue Ribbon Network so that the use of the canal and river network for passengers, tourism and freight transport can be increased [thus lessening the burden on other forms of public transport]; and
- Planning Obligations – states that development proposals should address strategic as well as local priorities in planning obligations.

### The Mayor’s Transport Strategy

3.1.10 The Mayor’s Transport Strategy (MTS) was published in May 2010 and sets out the Mayor’s vision for transport in London over the next 20 years. It describes how Transport for London (TfL) and its partners, including the London boroughs, will deliver that vision. It replaces the original Transport Strategy which was first published in 2001<sup>7</sup>.

3.1.11 Aspects of the Mayor’s Transport Strategy of particular relevance to the Victoria area include the following:

- Promotion of the upgrade of Victoria Underground station to alleviate congestion and improve accessibility;
- Identification of the potential extension of the Northern line to Nine Elms and Battersea Power Station;
- Upgrade of the Victoria Underground line by 2012;
- Identification of the Chelsea Hackney line and need for adequate safeguarding;
- Removal of the Western Extension of the Congestion Charging Zone;
- An emphasis on making walking easier – including extending Legible London to other areas;
- Longer trains on the south and south-eastern trains routes;
- A ‘cycling revolution’ – promotion of a shift from car to cycling, as supported by the Central London Cycle Hire Scheme and Cycle Superhighways scheme and improved parking at stations;
- Provisions of improved taxi ranks and facilities at interchanges;

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6 Adopted London Plan policy 3A.3  
7 Also incorporating updates in 2004 and 2006.

- Promotion of the Blue Ribbon Network and provision of additional pier capacity where feasible;
- Use of planning obligations to help secure improvements to transport and to mitigate any negative impacts on the existing transport system;
- Use of existing facilities to increase capacity for coaches and investigation into developing a series of coach hubs or alternative locations for coach station facilities in the long term; and
- Identification of the benefits of a new high speed rail link, potentially located at Euston – which may have accompanying implications for Victoria and increase the need for the Chelsea Hackney line.

### Local Implementation Plan

3.1.12 Westminster’s emerging replacement Local Implementation Plan (LIP) will set out how the council intends to implement the Mayor’s transport objectives. It sets out a series of transport objectives for Westminster, a 20 year strategy/delivery plan and a more detailed 3 year implementation programme for 2011/12-2013/14. The draft LIP was published for public consultation in January 2011 prior to formal Council approval and submission to TfL (expected in spring 2011).

### The Central London Sub-Regional Transport Plan

3.1.13 The Central London Sub-Regional Transport Plan details how the Victoria underground line upgrade in 2013, the District and Circle line upgrades in 2018 and overland rail capacity enhancements will provide additional capacity to support growth in the Victoria Opportunity Area. It includes reference to the Victoria Station Upgrade scheme and the Victoria Coach Station, see section 6 below.

### Other Transport Strategies and Guidance

3.1.14 In late 2009, TfL also released their *Interchange Best Practice Guidelines*. This document and accompanying website<sup>8</sup> provides advice and guidance to those within TfL and its delivery partners, including London boroughs. The focus of these guidelines is on multi-modal interchange between one mode of public transport and another, for example between bus and train. It also considers interchange between public transport and the feeder modes used to get to and from the interchange, for example walk, cycle or motor vehicle. These guidelines will be reviewed and updated as further developments and improvements take place.

### The Mayor’s Economic Development Strategy

3.1.15 This document was published in May 2010 and sets out the Mayor’s ambitions for the economic development of the capital. It provides an analysis of the economy and policy directions of involved organisations and clarifies roles and responsibilities with other parties who make a major contribution to developing London’s economy.

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8 See: <http://origin.tfl.gov.uk/microsites/interchange>



3.1.16 The Mayor's overall objectives are to:

- promote London as a city that excels as a world capital of business;
- ensure that London has the most competitive business environment in the world;
- drive London's transition to a low carbon economy and maximise the opportunities that this creates;
- give all Londoners the opportunity to share in London's economic success; and
- maximise the benefits to London from investment to support growth and regeneration.

## 3.2 Local Planning Policies

### Westminster's Local Development Framework

3.2.1 The council is drawing up a new plan to guide future development in Westminster. The Local Development Framework (LDF) will be made up of a folder of documents which will guide the development of Westminster over the next 20 years. This brief forms part of the LDF (see figure 6 below). The 'Development Plan Documents' (DPDs) of the LDF will eventually replace the 'JDP' (see section 4 below).

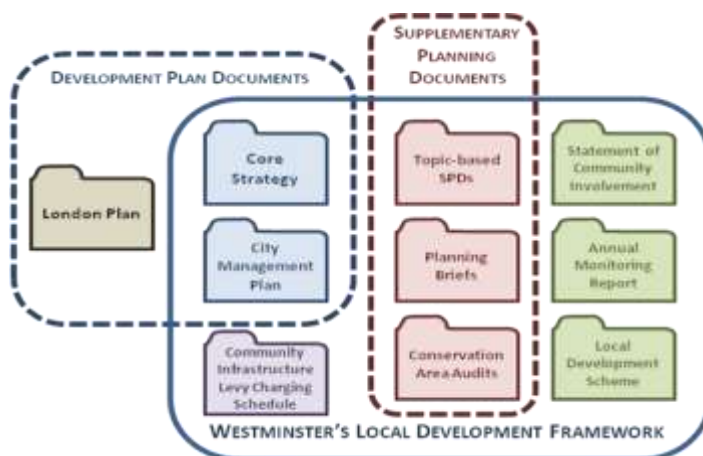


Figure 6: The Development Plan for Westminster

3.2.2 The key planning document within this folder is the *Core Strategy*, adopted in January 2011. The Core Strategy was developed following consultation on fundamental issues and options, and sets out a spatial vision and strategic objectives for the City of Westminster. .

3.2.3 Of particular relevance within the Core Strategy is the newly designated 'Victoria Opportunity Area' (VOA). Geographically, this area largely aligns with the area covered in this brief.

3.2.4 Core Strategy policy CS4 Victoria Opportunity Area states that: "At least 1,000 new homes and development capacity for 4,000 new jobs will be provided within the Victoria Opportunity Area between 2010/11 and 2024/25, together with the following:

- improvements within and around the Victoria transport interchange as opportunities arise;

- integration of Crossrail Line 2 [now known and henceforth referred to as the Chelsea-Hackney Line];
- public realm and environmental improvements to improve legibility and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists;
- a mix of uses on all development sites including active frontages at ground floor level except where this would compromise movement in and around the Victoria Transport Interchange;
- provision of publicly accessible open spaces, including tranquil spaces in the vicinity of the transport interchange, and play spaces for children;
- provision of a new purpose-built library [and/or community facility]; facilities for young people/teenagers; and improved sports and leisure facilities;
- protection and enhancement of Strutton Ground street market; and
- a Combined Heat and Power facility, connected to the Pimlico District Heating Undertaking (and potentially to the Whitehall system if supported by Government), with sufficient capacity to serve all sites within the Opportunity Area.

3.2.5 Other Core Strategy policies of *particular* relevance to the Victoria Planning Brief area are:

- CS1 and CS6 relating to the Central Activities Zone;
- CS14-CS16 in relation to housing delivery;
- CS18-23 for commercial uses;
- CS24-34 and CS37-42 which cover a range of topics from heritage, views and design, to air quality, open space and major transport infrastructure;
- And CS43 Sustainable Waste Management.

3.2.6 Any development in the Victoria area will need to comply with these and other relevant policies.

3.2.7 The City Management Plan (CMP) DPD containing more detailed development management policies will be produced by the council to support the London Plan and Core Strategy. Together the Core Strategy and the CMP will supersede the UDP to form the local development plan for Westminster.

#### City of Westminster Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

3.2.8 Westminster's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in January 2007 and contains policies concerning transport, the environment, urban design and conservation and shopping and services.

3.2.9 Although the UDP itself has expired<sup>9</sup>, with the exception of policies STRA 20, 32, 33 and 38, COM 4 and 5, ENV 1 and 9, DES 2, and a number of major development and opportunity sites, the majority of the Adopted UDP policies have been saved<sup>10</sup> and therefore continue to form part of the local policy framework for Westminster. Any

9 (under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Schedule 8: Transitional Provisions)

10 See [http://www3.westminster.gov.uk/docstores/publications\\_store/Policy\\_list\\_for%20CS\\_and\\_UDP\\_Jan2011.pdf](http://www3.westminster.gov.uk/docstores/publications_store/Policy_list_for%20CS_and_UDP_Jan2011.pdf) for a full list of saved UDP policies

development in the Victoria area will need to comply with the saved policies in the UDP until they are superseded by the Core Strategy and City Management Plan policies as noted above.

- 3.2.10 Notably, the UDP clearly demarcated the „CAZ’ area. Within the CAZ there are distinctive concentrations and clusters of particular mixed use activities. These include those relating to the state and government, arts, culture and entertainment as well as commercial uses. The mixed use nature of the CAZ will be reinforced through requirements for residential and community uses as part of major commercial developments (see section 4 below).
- 3.2.11 The Core Strategy builds on the UDP policy approach and expands the geographical extent of the CAZ in accordance with the London Plan.
- 3.2.12 It is important to remember that where a policy conflict exists, the most recently adopted policy will take precedence<sup>11</sup>. Emerging policies can also have material weight when determining planning applications especially once they have been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

#### Westminster Economic Development Strategy 2008-2011

- 3.2.13 The council’s Economic Development Strategy was adopted in 2008 and builds on the previous Economic Development Strategy of 2005. A review of this is now underway. The adopted strategy proposes actions based on three cross-cutting themes:
- Employment and training;
  - Business support; and
  - Business environment.
- 3.2.14 Development at Victoria will be expected to meet other priorities within the Economic Development Strategy, in particular in relation to the Business Improvement District (see section 7 below) and support for Social Enterprise in South Westminster, providing subsidised work placements within local voluntary and community organisations. Development at Victoria will also be expected to continue support for SW1st, an agency founded in 2005 to enable local residents to effectively compete for job vacancies within the area (also see Section 7 below).

#### Westminster’s City Recovery Programme

- 3.2.15 The council launched a City Recovery Programme in November 2008 to help residents into work and training and to help them to start their own businesses. Within its first phase it had helped over 4,000 residents and businesses in Westminster to fulfil their potential. City Recovery 2 aims to support another 4,000 residents into work and training.

#### Central London Infrastructure Study

- 3.2.16 This study was completed in July 2009 and assesses the infrastructure needs of Central London for the next 15-20 years. It covers basic utilities infrastructure, transport infrastructure (in particular proposals for mainline rail termini and major road congestion hotspots) and social infrastructure such as adult learning, schools and emergency services. The study was undertaken by URS Corporation Ltd, as

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11 Section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

commissioned by Westminster City Council and its partner authorities in Central London Forward (CLF).

3.2.17 Key priorities identified by the study in Westminster included:

- Shoring up flood defences;
- Major station upgrade/redevelopments at Victoria Rail Station;
- Station Congestion Scheme at Victoria; and
- Opportunity to introduce Combined Heat and Power (CHP) schemes in key centres such as Victoria, amongst others.

3.2.18 It was also recommended that the feasibility of a Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) be examined to help forward fund key strategic infrastructure. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) options are also discussed.

### **3.3 Design and conservation policy**

3.3.1 The council recognises the opportunities for change in Victoria however proposals must fully take into account heritage assets. Listed buildings and conservation areas will be protected and enhanced and the impact of proposals on the wider historic environment and setting of the Westminster World Heritage Site will be key when determining any application for development. The general presumption is in favour of protecting Westminster's historic assets.

3.3.2 Information about buildings that contribute to the character and function of Conservation Areas, but that are not necessarily listed, are set out in the Conservation Area Audits.

3.3.3 Important views should also be preserved and all development throughout Westminster should meet the requirement for exemplary standards of architecture, landscape and design. The council's conservation and design policies are set in Core Strategy policies CS24 (heritage), CS25 (views), CS27 (design) and in Chapter 10 of the adopted UDP, including those applying to conservation areas and heritage items (see Figure 2).

3.3.4 The council's specific design intentions for the Victoria area have been informed by a 2002 Urban Design Study<sup>12</sup> and the 2011 Study into Victoria<sup>13</sup>. The former included a building audit and sets a robust benchmark for the understanding of the physical context and for the generation of guidelines. The methodology for this study was in turn based upon the Westminster model for townscape appraisal as applied across the city in relation to conservation area assessments.

3.3.5 Many of the recommendations of this study have been incorporated in this brief and extend to matters such as the enhancement of the public realm, building height guidelines and alterations to Victoria Station. Some recommendations, such as the proposed extension of the conservation area and listing of significant buildings, have since been addressed and are no longer relevant.

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<sup>12</sup> Bennett Urban Planning, 2002. Victoria Station Planning Brief – Urban Design Strategy. For a copy of this study please contact the officer noted at the front of this report.

<sup>13</sup> Montagu Evans, 2011, Building Heights in Victoria Study

- 3.3.6 The High Buildings Study, commissioned by the council in 2000, provided further direction on major development. A further Study into Building Heights, specifically relating to the Victoria area, was commissioned by the council in December 2010 (see section 4 below). The council's Metropolitan Views Draft Supplementary Planning Documents should also be taken into consideration and was used to inform development of the latest High Buildings Study<sup>14</sup> .
- 3.3.7 The UDP and LDF policies and supplements are underpinned by central government advice in PPS 5, together with jointly published advice from English Heritage and CABE on tall buildings and conservation areas. EH/CABE Guidance sets out how tall buildings should respond to the public realm to contribute positively to surroundings at street level and conserve the historic context. English Heritage will be jointly involved with the council in respect of all applications for listed building consent (for all works including those affecting Grade I and Grade II\* listed buildings and for Grade II listed buildings at their discretion) and relevant planning applications affecting the setting of listed buildings within the planning brief area. The council will consult with the Mayor, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE<sup>15</sup>) and local amenity societies in respect of all significant development proposals within the area of the planning brief.
- 3.3.8 Additional guidance on design and conservation is provided in the council's Supplementary Planning Guidance, including the following:
- Repairs and Alterations to Listed Buildings;
  - Conservation Areas – A Guide For Property Owners; and
  - Design Matters in Westminster.

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<sup>14</sup> although this has limited if an weight as it has been overtaken by other policy documents

<sup>15</sup> See glossary



## 4. Character, Urban Form and Land Use

- 4.0.1. The Victoria area lacks a coherent sense of place and of urban quality. This brief seeks to address this issue and to provide the framework for the improvement of the area, specifically by protecting the better examples of development in Victoria whilst facilitating the replacement of the worst. Ultimately, Victoria should be a place where its best buildings frame attractive spaces, where new buildings contribute to a dynamic future and where historic buildings can be retained and sensitively adapted to accommodate modern requirements.
- 4.0.2. In urban design terms the area is a victim of its own popularity. It is a hugely busy location, incorporating a multi-modal transport interchange, a work place and residential neighbourhoods. As a commercial hub there is significant demand for new development. Indeed the scale of activity, movement and development in the area inevitably creates conflicts, not least of which is the conflicting demands between pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Yet more conflicts arise from the difficulty in balancing the competing demands of mixed uses alongside densely populated residential areas to create an attractive community. Last but not least are the key issues of coordinating commercial development with the protection of listed buildings and valuable townscape.
- 4.0.3. This incoherence is manifest in the spaces through which movement takes place. Cars, buses and goods vehicles dominate spaces with pedestrians being pushed to the margins: there is a need to redress the balance and improve the pedestrian experience. Incoherence can also be seen in the built form that defines these spaces – buildings of variable quality which compromise the setting of those genuinely important landmark buildings of architectural and historic value. However these failings provide significant opportunities for improvement, enhancement and beneficial development which this brief seeks to promote.
- 4.0.4. Redevelopment proposals or schemes to improve the public realm will need to address the existing deficit in respect of room for pedestrians and the provision of suitable crossings, links and spaces on and across streets and sites. These will be considered as opportunities arise on specific sites and schemes.
- 4.0.5. Opportunities to increase greening (trees and other forms of soft landscaping) should also be considered. The retention of existing trees and open spaces is a prime consideration for the city council.
- 4.0.6. The retention and improvement of pedestrian links capable of meeting the existing demands and those arising from intensification of developments is a parallel concern.
- 4.0.7. As the principal, planned thoroughfare in the area, the opportunity for significant change in Victoria Street from the redevelopment of the post war commercial buildings should be sought.
- 4.0.8. Consideration for re-aligning the kerbs and reducing the carriageway space at points of demonstrable pedestrian footway constriction and congestion, in the vicinity of the transport interchanges, would be welcomed by the council to help achieve this balance and discussions with TfL and landowners will continue to review and bring about these opportunities.

## **4.1 Land use**

- 4.1.1. Existing land uses in the Victoria area are shown in Figures 7 and 8. The former shows the predominant land use per street block, whilst the latter shows ground floor land uses only.
- 4.1.2. The council aims to maintain and enhance the mix of uses in central Westminster, particularly residential. The most recently adopted housing policies<sup>16</sup> are contained within the Core Strategy. These are in general conformity with the Mayor's London Plan and should be used to help determine planning applications. However, as the Core Strategy is a strategic document, it does not contain all details, thresholds or criteria required to assess all planning applications. These details will be available in the forthcoming City Management Plan.

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<sup>16</sup>

As of January 2011



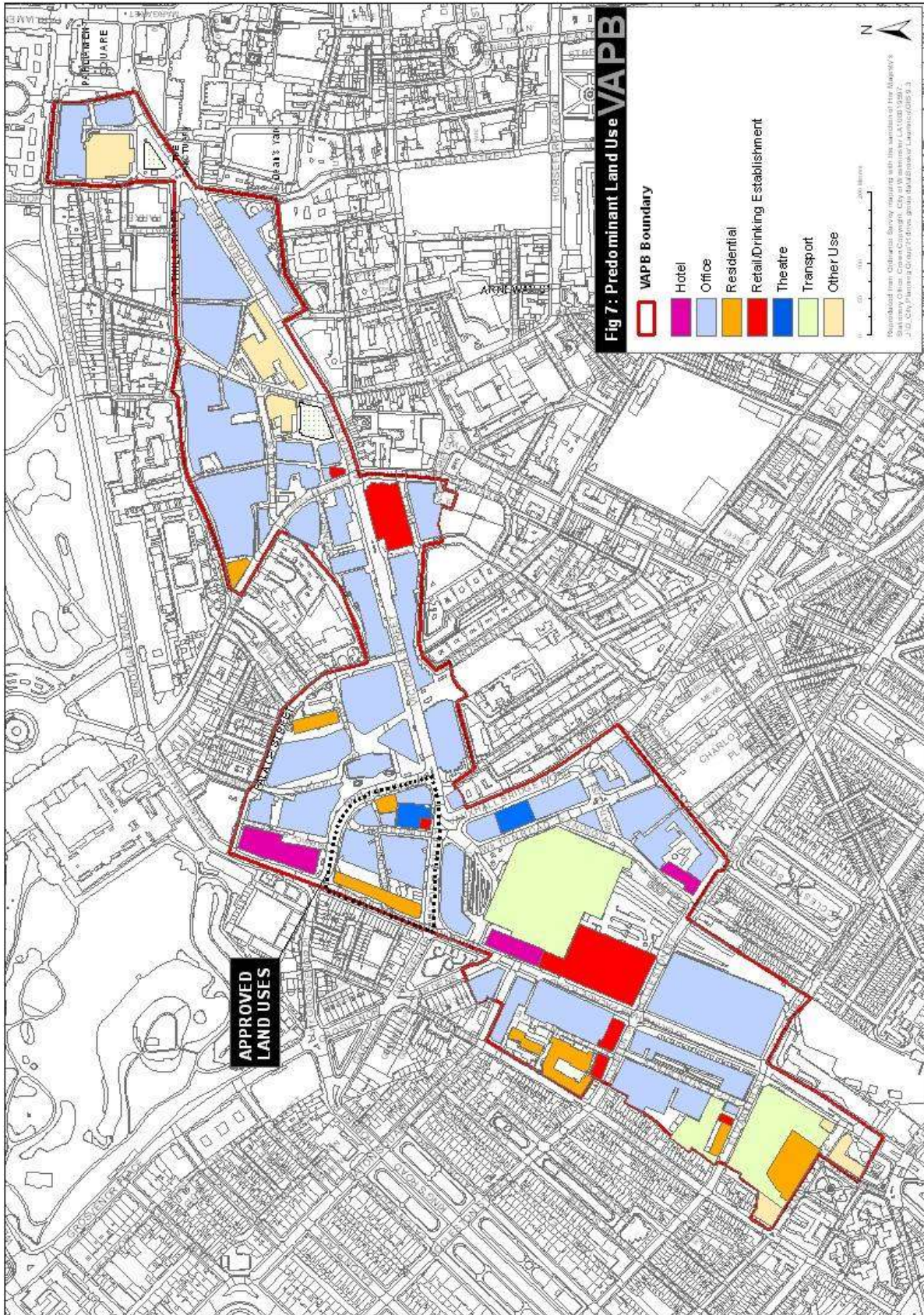


Figure 7: Predominant Land Use Map

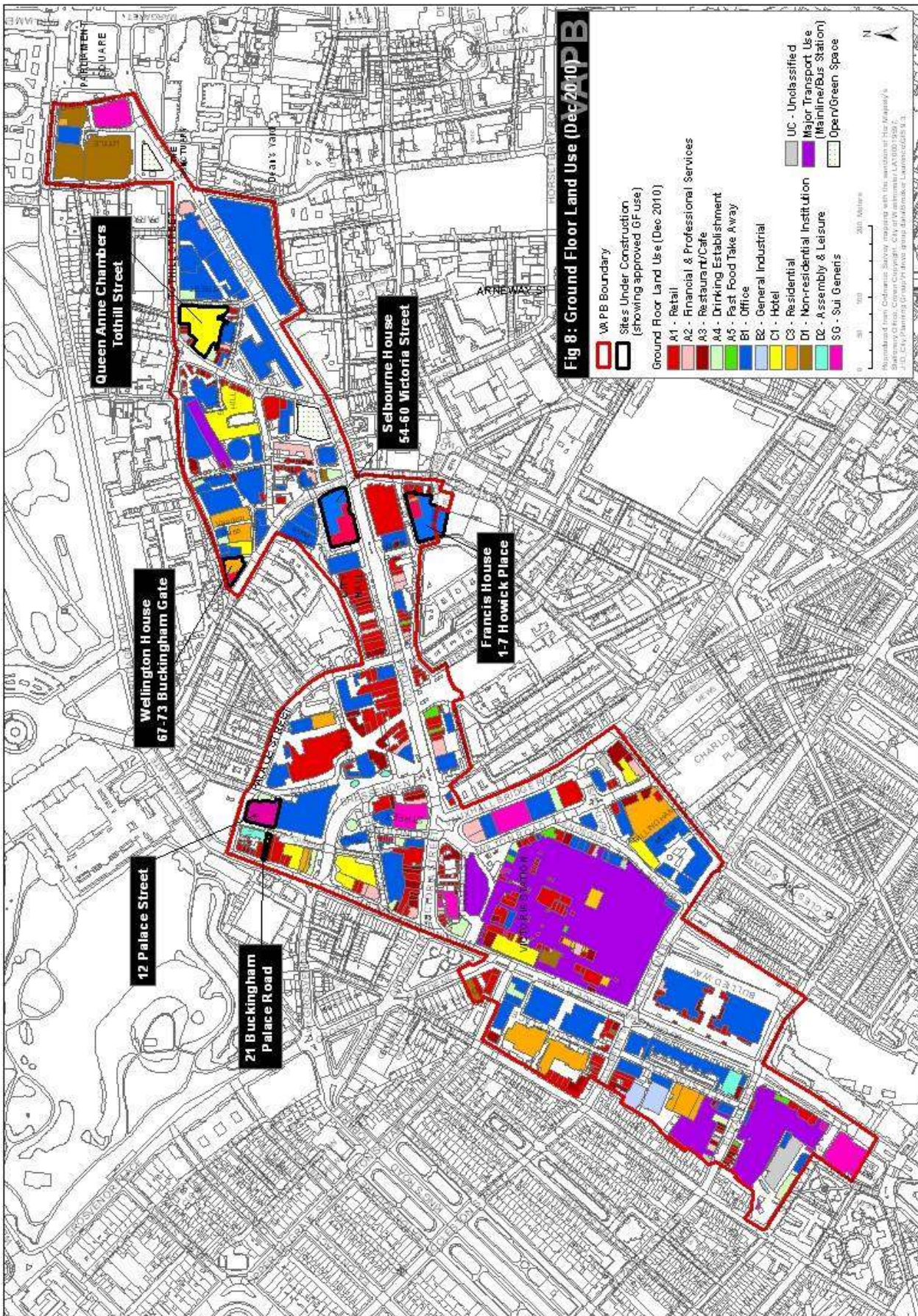


Figure 8: Ground Floor Land Use Map

### The importance of residential use, character and function

- 4.1.3. London Plan policy 3B.3 encourages mixed use development. In Westminster, which is well served by shops, hotels, and entertainment uses, the council considers this mix is best enhanced by the provision of residential uses, which help maintain activity throughout the day and into the evening.
- 4.1.4. Victoria is already an established centre for offices and it is likely that there will continue to be market demand for offices and increasing pressure for increased retail floor space and entertainment uses which take advantage of the proximity of large numbers of local workers. Long term trends have shown that developers in Westminster would generally rather bring forward office floor space rather than any other land use<sup>17</sup>.
- 4.1.5. To encourage housing provision and a greater mix of uses in the context of limited sites and competition from commercial uses, the council will require the equivalent provision of housing where proposals increase the amount of commercial floor space by 200 sqm or more, or in the case of A1 retail or private educational, health and leisure facilities (D1 or D2 uses), by 400 sqm or more. The residential should be provided on-site, where the council considers this to be appropriate and practical in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS1.<sup>18</sup>
- 4.1.6. Under Core Strategy policy CS4, the requirement to provide residential floor space could be applied more flexibly where the council considers this to be necessary in order to deliver substantial planned transport infrastructure improvements and/or public realm improvements<sup>19</sup>. However, any improvements to rail, Underground, bus and pedestrian facilities must be *substantial*, apparent and accepted by all parties. In all other cases, the presumption is that large<sup>20</sup> increases in commercial floor space will be accompanied by the pro-rata provision of housing, on-site.
- 4.1.7. There are established residential areas to the east of Victoria Station (around Westminster Cathedral), to the south in Pimlico, and to the west in Belgravia. These contain longstanding residential communities that are vulnerable to the expansion of central London activities such as offices into their areas. As housing and the residential environment have the highest priority in the Core Strategy, developments which have a detrimental impact on the amenity of these residential areas and which do not positively contribute to them will not be allowed. Under Core Strategy policy CS28 developments should aim to *improve* the residential environment.
- 4.1.8. All development proposals should take flood risk into account and in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS29 new residential units below the tidal breach flood level and extensions to residential at basement level will not be acceptable. Developers should liaise with utility companies, including Thames Water, to ensure development is phased in line with the provision of appropriate infrastructure/sewers etc, for example

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17 As referenced on page 81 of the Submission Draft Core Strategy

18. Where the site is located within the CAZ.

19. Transport/public realm benefits are listed in Core Strategy policy CS4 and include improvements within and around the Victoria Transport Interchange, improving legibility and accessibility, and the provision of public open spaces. The level of financial contributions required would be calculated with reference to the council's affordable housing formula and the cost of the transport improvements required.

20 As defined by Policy CS1

to ascertain whether the proposed development will lead to overloading of existing water and sewerage infrastructure.

### Affordable housing

- 4.1.9. UDP policy H4 states that where 25 or more residential units are proposed 30% of these are required to be affordable housing<sup>21</sup> and where the number of residential units proposed falls within the range from 10 to 24 the proportion of affordable housing required on site is stepped from 10% to 30%.
- 4.1.10. London Plan Policy 3A.11 and Draft Replacement London Plan Policy 3.14 require affordable housing on sites with a capacity to provide 10 or more homes,
- 4.1.11. Core Strategy policy CS16 builds on this and sets out the requirement for affordable housing provision in schemes proposing 10 or more additional units or schemes proposing over 1,000 sqm additional residential floor space, whichever is the lower, as it is accepted that schemes over 1,000 sqm could reasonably accommodate 10 units<sup>22</sup>.
- 4.1.12. Until detailed City Management policies are adopted in late 2011, the thresholds set out in Core Strategy policy CS16 must be used in conjunction with the unit proportions set out in UDP policy H4, with particular reference to UDP Tables 3.1 to 3.3. The unit figures in these tables will need to be translated into floor space and adjusted to reflect maximum floor space proportions suggested in the Affordable Housing Assessment. This should be based on the assumption that a housing unit = 100 sqm and an affordable housing unit = 80sqm. Once the CM's affordable housing policies are adopted they will replace policy H4 as part of the Development Plan for Westminster. A separate 'Interim Housing Note' Report is being produced by the council to make this position clear<sup>23</sup>.
- 4.1.13. The presumption is that this affordable housing should be provided on-site. Off-site provision *beyond the vicinity* of the development will only be acceptable where the council considers that the affordable housing provision is greater and of a higher quality than would be possible on-site or off-site *in the vicinity*. Concentrations of social housing resulting from off-site provision will not be permitted.
- 4.1.14. Under UDP policy H4 in schemes involving 15 or more units, transport benefits can be used in lieu of affordable housing however, as above, this should only be considered where the benefits are substantial, apparent and accepted by all parties. The provision of transport benefits to offset housing or affordable housing requirements is not acceptable on all sites in the Victoria Planning Brief area. The acceptability of such an approach depends on the individual characteristics of the site, and the varying suitability of the use proposed. It is unlikely that minor/small-scale changes to the width and configuration of pavements or notional increases in open space alone will be considered sufficient to offset any need for affordable housing.

### Offices

- 4.1.15. New offices are encouraged in Victoria to help meet the requirement for new jobs<sup>24</sup> and support London's global competitiveness. Core Strategy policy CS4 states that

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21. Where the site is located within the CAZ.

22. This was accepted by the Planning Inspector at the Core Strategy's Examination in Public in summer 2010.

23. The Interim Housing Note is available on the council's website [www.westminster.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/ldf)

24. As set out in the London Plan and Core Strategy policy CS4.

development capacity for 4,000 new jobs will be provided within the Victoria Opportunity Area between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

- 4.1.16. New commercial uses, including offices, must be appropriate in terms of scale and intensity of land uses and character and function of the area.
- 4.1.17. Victoria Street has historically been a key location for government offices, with organisations such as Westminster City Council, Department for Transport, the Metropolitan Police and Transport for London (TfL) all located within the area's established building stock. However recent development schemes such as Cardinal Place (76-98 Victoria Street) and The Peak (Victoria Street/Wilton Road) are supporting the increasing stature of Victoria as a more general/commercial office location and have contributed to the relocation of companies such as Google, EDF Energy, John Lewis Partnership, Rolls Royce and, more recently, the Telegraph Group and Microsoft. The council is supportive of this change, particularly in assisting larger regeneration objectives, and subject to these developments facilitating provision of increased residential development and securing wider benefits.

### Retail

- 4.1.18. Victoria Street has a healthy retail economy<sup>25</sup>. The area offers a range of retailing that would be expected in a CAZ area, although the proportion of comparison shopping compared to convenience shopping<sup>26</sup> is below average for Westminster's Shopping Centres in CAZ. The Victoria Street Shopping Frontage is relatively isolated in the southern part of the CAZ, but there are nearby shopping facilities in Victoria Plaza (in Victoria Station), in Strutton Ground Local Shopping Centre and in Warwick Way/Tachbrook Street.
- 4.1.19. The Victoria Street frontage is undergoing considerable change with increasing retail provision provided in Cardinal Place and proposed in the Victoria Transport Interchange and other development schemes along Victoria Street.
- 4.1.20. The area has seen an increase in restaurant/café uses from 14 units in 2002 to 25 units (3,176sqm) in 2008<sup>27</sup>.
- 4.1.21. In general it is recommended that more active ground level uses should be encouraged when redevelopment or alterations allow. This would allow the benefit of active frontages to be spread as wide as possible, particularly where pedestrian movement might be encouraged (such as in Buckingham Palace Road, Bressenden Place and Wilton Road). A more diverse spread of such uses and activities would also help reduce some of the pedestrian pressure on more intensively used areas. However, retail will not be encouraged where it may adversely impact upon existing residential amenity<sup>28</sup>.

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25 Westminster City Council, December 2008, Central Activities Zone Shopping Area 12: Victoria Street. Shopping Area Health Check Survey.

26 Comparison goods Predominantly durable goods and services where customers may wish to compare prices/quality/type of product sold, with other similar products sold in other shops. Convenience goods retail uses include grocers and Newsagents. Both types of shop fall within the classification of A1 Retail in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and its subsequent amendments.

27 WCC Central Activities Zone Frontage Shopping Area 12: Victoria Street Shopping Health Check Survey December 2008. Although similar data is available from 2002, this is grouped by the old use class and so comparable floor space information for café uses only is not readily available.

28 In assessing this impact, and whether to grant planning permission for A3, A4 and A5 retail uses the council will apply the criteria as set out in policies TACE 8-10 of the UDP and the adopted Core Strategy.

- 4.1.22. The council would like to see a greater introduction of active uses at ground level in Victoria Street, particularly retail. Whilst it is recognised that even the eastern part of the Street (beyond Buckingham Gate) has a less commercial character, the extension of on-street retail in this area will encourage a more pedestrian focused environment and a better range of retail and supporting uses for use by those that live in, work in and/or visit the area.
- 4.1.23. The Victoria Business Improvement District (BID) will work closely with the local retail sector to maximise performance and actively market Victoria as a prime retail destination in partnership with the council.
- 4.1.24. Improvements to the public realm including enhanced pavements and road crossings may encourage more shopping activity, enticing both retailers and shoppers into the area.
- 4.1.25. Applications for major retail development within the Victoria area may be granted however any such proposal should not cause harm to the vitality and viability of existing shopping areas or those within the surrounding catchment area. One example of a shopping centre within the catchment of Victoria area is Warwick Way/Tachbrook Street. This centre has a „neutral’ economic health score in its most recent Shopping Health Check Survey Report<sup>29</sup>, which means that the centre is not performing as well as other similar centres in Westminster. The council seeks to maintain and enhance the range of local services it provides for residents and workers. To assess any impacts of retail development, the council requires any application for major increases in retail floor space to be accompanied by a Retail Impact Assessment.
- 4.1.26. Existing A1 retail uses will be protected throughout the area to ensure that customers and retailers needs are met. Though all shops are considered important, local convenience shops, including supermarkets are considered particularly important. Under UDP policy SS5 (B) when assessing whether the introduction of a non-A1 town centre use would have a detrimental effect on the vitality and viability of an area, or on an area’s character and function, the council will take into account whether the number and range of shops, particularly local convenience shops, is reduced.
- 4.1.27. Under UDP policy SS10 (B) the size and type of new retail units must be appropriate to the character and function of the street. Conditions may be applied to planning permissions to protect small shop units and prevent them from merging into larger units<sup>30</sup>.
- 4.1.28. Temporary farmers/seasonal markets may be acceptable in suitable locations to support the existing retail provision.

### Entertainment

- 4.1.29. Entertainment uses *may* be permissible so long as any associated impacts on residential amenity can be appropriately managed.
- 4.1.30. In considering what type of entertainment uses would be acceptable in the area applicants are advised to consider Core Strategy policies CS23 (entertainment uses)

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29 Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners, January 2007, Warwick Way/Tachbrook Street District Centre. Shopping Area Health Check Survey

30 WCC Planning condition C15AB March 2011

alongside UDP policies TACE 8-10 Entertainment Uses. The council will seek to control the location, size and activities of entertainment uses in order to safeguard residential amenity, local environmental quality and the established character and function of this part of the city. New large-scale late-night entertainment uses of over 500sqm floor space will not generally be appropriate within Westminster as they have the potential to create a disproportionate impact on their surrounding areas.

- 4.1.31. The impact of entertainment can vary widely and the council needs to carefully balance a fostering night-time economy with protection of residential amenity. For instance, nightclubs may have significant impacts on residential amenity and would need to be considered based on the nature of the site and surrounding uses<sup>31</sup>.

#### Theatres and Cinemas

- 4.1.32. The Victoria Palace Theatre and the Victoria Apollo, together with the New Westminster Theatre (currently subject to redevelopment<sup>32</sup>) do and will significantly contribute to the vitality of the Victoria area. Planning permission will not be granted for the change of use of theatres, and it is not considered that there would be exceptional circumstances that would warrant redevelopment of the operational theatres referred to above, especially given that both of them are listed. It is desirable for there to continue to be theatres of “west-end” importance in the area.
- 4.1.33. Notwithstanding this, proposals which seek to support the continued use of theatres will be considered in respect of adjacent development<sup>33</sup>. Furthermore, development proposals could support the existing theatres through planning benefits instead of providing new entertainment uses. Any planning benefits would need to respond to a clear demand, be clearly quantifiable, transparent and accepted by all parties.
- 4.1.34. Consultation has indicated much public support for a new cinema in the Victoria area. A cinema within the area around the station would be likely to have relatively little negative impact on amenity and would therefore be encouraged by the council provided all other policies within the UDP were met.

#### Hotel and conference facilities

- 4.1.35. There is a wide range of hotels within the Victoria area. These range from purpose built major tourist hotels, through to smaller bed and breakfast hotels converted from former residential premises. There may be opportunity to expand existing hotels, and proposals to improve the quality and range of hotels in Victoria will be encouraged. In line with Core Strategy policy CS22, the council will consider proposals for new hotels and conference facilities; however given the existing concentration in the area and the impact of lorries, taxis and coaches servicing any new hotel, the council will only consider them where they do not have an adverse effect on residential amenity or upon the character and function of residential areas.

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31 Nightclubs are sui generis uses. Proposals for nightclubs will be considered under policy TACE 10 of the UDP, which sets out the criteria under which such a use may be acceptable.

32 Application 00/02723/FULL was permitted in March 2003 for the redevelopment of this site to provide a replacement theatre, ancillary uses, residential and car park spaces. Although work has commenced on site, the theatre remains undeveloped.

33 Policy TACE 6 of the UDP sets out the considerations that the council will look at when determining planning applications that affect theatres.

- 4.1.36. Existing hotels will be protected where they do not have significant adverse effects on residential amenity<sup>34</sup>. The council may consider the loss of a hotel in Victoria if it is proposed as part of a comprehensive scheme that addresses the problems of the area, accords with other planning policies and provides for appropriate planning benefits as specified in this brief.
- 4.1.37. The Victoria Business Improvement District (BID) (see Section 7 below) will look at assisting hotels by offering package deals to assist with capacity throughout the year.
- 4.1.38. The council is keen to ensure that existing Conference Centre facilities are retained as they are an important Central Activity Zone use for central London. The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre (QEIIICC), in particular, makes an important contribution to Westminster's 'world-class city status' and there is a lack of comparable other facilities within central London. An ancillary hotel use here could be considered subject to the usual policy considerations. More information on this site is included in section 6 below.

#### Petrol filling station

- 4.1.39. The petrol filling station at the corner of Semley Place and Ebury Street is a protected filling station that the council will require to be replaced in any redevelopment of that site<sup>35</sup>. This is the only filling station in Westminster that supplies liquefied petroleum gas and the council will require the replacement filling station to continue to supply this fuel. The council would actively promote facilities for electric and other alternative fuel vehicles on any redevelopment of this facility.

#### Community facilities and open space

- 4.1.40. New social and community facilities will be encouraged throughout Westminster. The provision of community facilities will be sought on appropriate sites and large-scale developments will be expected to contribute to the provision of new social and community facilities so as to mitigate their impact on existing services. This extends to the provision of community facilities in new developments as well as securing the public use of private facilities. The council will expect to see a commitment from developers to ensure the long term viability of any community facility provided as part of major schemes.
- 4.1.41. There is a high concentration of social/hostel facilities within the Victoria area (see Figure 9). Proposals for additional hostels will be assessed against the existing concentration and potential impact on residential amenity. There may be potential to improve existing social facilities as one off schemes through pooling of funds from development (see Section 7 below).

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34 See Core Strategy policy CS22 Hotels and Conference Facilities

35 See UDP Policy TRANS 17.



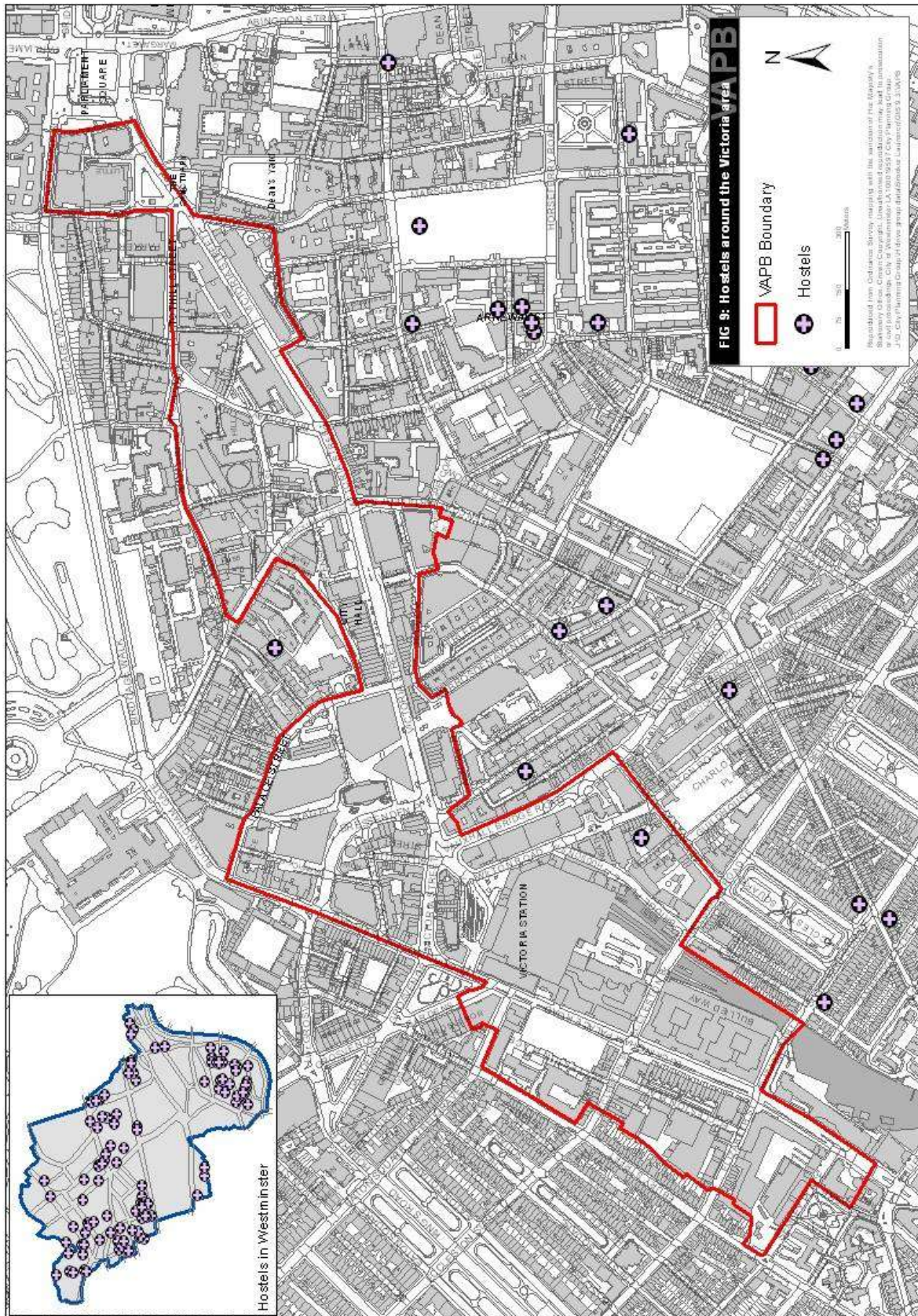


Figure 9: Hostels Map

- 4.1.42. The Victoria area is an area of open space deficiency<sup>36</sup>. All existing open spaces in Westminster are protected under Core Strategy Policy CS34 and additional public open space would be welcomed in the Victoria Area. In accordance with CS34 the council will seek to mitigate existing pressure on existing open spaces by securing new improved public open space in new developments. Spaces that only serve the interests of new developments through location, design or management are unlikely to meet the brief's aspirations in this respect. Walkways agreements will be secured where necessary to maintain public access to open spaces.
- 4.1.43. The covered areas of Cardinal Place and the major new mall approved in the VT12 scheme are considered to satisfy the need for enclosed retail areas. New public space proposals will be expected to be largely uncovered and enhanced through careful design to maximise access to sunlight and protection from wind.
- 4.1.44. Links to existing open spaces within and outside the Victoria area should be made – for example, through the provision of tree lined streets (see Public Realm/Trees section below) and other green infrastructure such as green roofs and walls where appropriate. Roof top gardens could expand the potential for amenity space as well as having habitat benefits and reducing the volume of water disposed through the sewer systems<sup>37</sup>. These should however be provided in addition to, and not instead of publicly accessible open spaces.

## 4.2 Design issues

### Architecture

- 4.2.1. The area is characterised by its diversity of form and architectural character. This diversity encompasses all periods of development with examples of the best and worst of each building period: from neo-classical through Edwardian Baroque to modern. The overall architectural quality of the area is variable with impressive landmark buildings and architectural gems set within a wider context of mediocrity. Many of the area's earlier surviving Victorian buildings are exuberant in their display of decoration, public art and detail.
- 4.2.2. Development must incorporate exemplary standards of sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS27. In the correct context, imaginative modern architecture is encouraged provided that it respects Westminster's heritage and local distinctiveness and enriches its world-class city environment.
- 4.2.3. It is not considered appropriate to exploit the use of predominantly glazed facades throughout the brief area. As such, the council will encourage a varied approach to façade design with a view to avoiding the potential for development of a monotonous glazed townscape extending throughout the area. Designs that instead demonstrate a commitment to primary, secondary and tertiary levels of façade design by way of developing a richness of detail and the use of high quality materials, texture, light, shade and colour to articulate building facades at the human scale will be required.

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36 Westminster Open Space Strategy 2007.

37 Please see [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/greenroofs](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/greenroofs) for more information

## Building Height

- 4.2.4. There is a diverse range in building height across the Victoria area. The tallest buildings in the area are Portland House and Westminster City Hall at 101.5 metres (27 storeys) and 76 metres (20 storeys) respectively. The location of these and other existing tall buildings are indicated in Figure 10. The Station buildings vary from four to eight storeys within generally prevailing ringing plateau of 7 storeys. In terms of height gradient, the tallest buildings are to the east of Bressenden Place, extending down Victoria Street to Windsor House. In different parts of the brief area, it is possible to appreciate its historical development through the change in scale. Whether or not an existing or proposed change in scale is positive will depend on the particular characteristics of the area, the nature of the view under consideration and the quality of the architectural design. These scale relationships are of importance in the townscape structure of the area and provide guidance on the appropriate scale of new development coming forward. Applications for tall buildings will be considered on a site by site basis so that the specific characteristics of the site and surrounding area and the design of the proposed building can be explored in depth.
- 4.2.5. In December 2010 the council commissioned a study into Building Heights in the Victoria area, to assess the existing range of building heights, the potential for new tall buildings and whether a reduction in existing building heights might be feasible. The study included a review of the advice given in Westminster's Draft „Victoria Area Planning Brief May 2010.
- 4.2.6. Tall buildings will only be considered where they would not have an unacceptably harmful impact on their surroundings and where they meet the requirements of all other relevant policy criteria.
- 4.2.7. General guidelines on maximum building heights (from ground level) likely to be acceptable to the council<sup>38</sup> were generated through careful appraisal of existing (and approved) building heights, view impacts<sup>39</sup>, strategic view implications and the desire to safeguard the backdrop and silhouette of significant landmark buildings. The initial guidance was reviewed in light of consultation responses to the draft Victoria Area Planning Brief May 2011 and an independent assessment based on site analysis and appraisal. Whilst some allowance should be made for the relative difference between residential and commercial storey heights this analysis provides a sufficiently useful indication of scale to guide the height of new developments.
- 4.2.8. Figure 10 provides general guidelines on maximum building heights likely to be acceptable to the council.
- 4.2.9. The significant development sites clustered around the Station and along Victoria Street offer the opportunity for development up to a level of the emerging height plateau of the existing post war commercial developments – these are in the range of between 8 to 10 commercial storey heights. Elsewhere development heights are dictated by the prevailing context of the immediate vicinity. The wider impact of taller buildings must be mitigated by planning benefits including transport and public realm improvements.

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38 Refer to DES 3 - the UDP policy on tall buildings.

39 View impacts were largely guided by the *City of Westminster High Buildings Study*, prepared by EDAW in association with BuroHappold Urban Projects, September 2000.

- 4.2.10. Any redevelopment scheme along Victoria Street should realise a significant reduction in the height of Westminster City Hall. There is potential for a build up in height from the existing parapet heights of Cardinal Place towards Buckingham Gate. However, Windsor House should be regarded as the tallest building in the townscape composition. Further, it will be important that the established townscape grain is reflected by the provision of spaces between buildings both at ground level and on the skyline where articulation of roof profiles will play an important part in ensuring new development is sensitively accommodated within the existing roofscape of Westminster and local views, particularly from the Royal Parks.
- 4.2.11. These guidelines on height have also been informed in part by the resolutions of the Planning and Development Committee in regards to the VTI and VTI2 schemes<sup>40</sup>. The council has adopted the following position in response to issues raised by these applications:
- No development should be visible over the roofline of the Palace of Westminster or Westminster Abbey or above the tree line as viewed from St Thomas' hospital and Westminster Bridge;
  - No development should breach the Threshold Plane of the viewing corridor in the protected linear view from King Henry's Mound in Richmond to St Paul's Cathedral; and
- 4.2.12. The height of buildings should be such that the setting of all listed buildings is respected.
- 4.2.13. The guidelines represented in Figure 10 are indicative. Computer modelled visual impact and visibility studies should be used to inform emerging proposals for significant new development, including tall buildings. These studies should define and identify heritage and townscape sensitivities as well as important views, and demonstrate through options analyses why a particular preferred option is being pursued and its relative merits in these terms, having regard to any adverse setting or skyline effects or to any potential benefits.
- 4.2.14. Accurate visual representations (AVRs) can then be produced to an agreed brief and level of render, having regard to accepted best methodology. Applications will be expected to be accompanied by independently verified AVRs showing that the proposed building heights will not adversely affect views. Further, it will be important that any spaces between new buildings, and their floor plates, facades and rooflines, are articulated so that these buildings do not give the appearance of a single building mass when viewed in the street scene or on the skyline, particularly where seen from or across the Royal Parks and other conservation areas.
- 4.2.15. In medium and distant views from sensitive open spaces, and in particular from St. James's Park, existing building heights are a material consideration for development management purposes; however, the promoters of development which would affect the setting of these sensitive spaces should consider the potential to ameliorate any harmful effects arising from existing tall development, by reducing height and architecturally, through design which is informed by an awareness of these sensitivities

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40 The resolutions on the VTI and VTI2 schemes were agreed by the Planning and Development Committee on 6 December 2007 and 5 February 2009 respectively.

and so addresses them by detailed design (silhouette, scale, materials, colour and so forth).

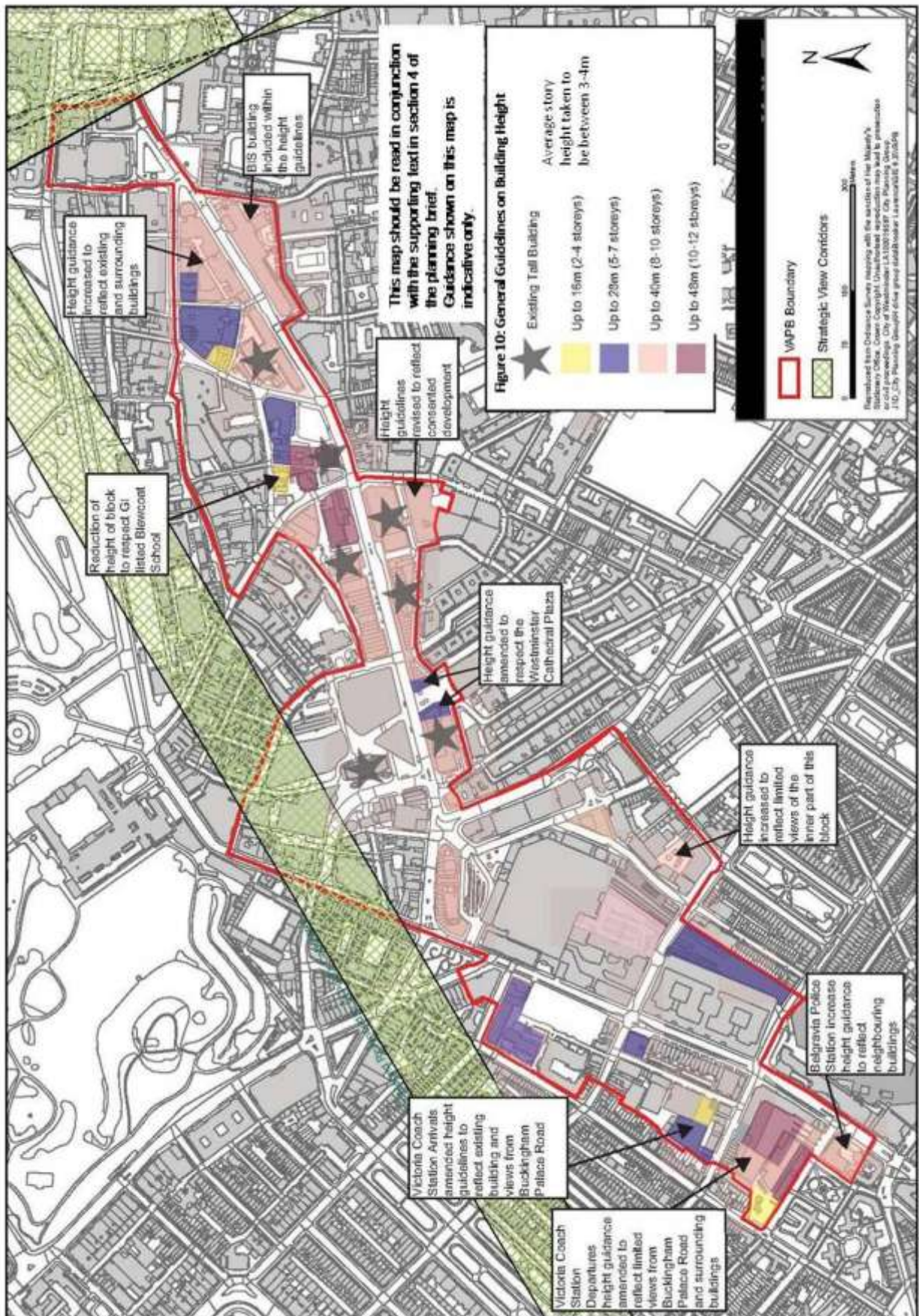


Figure 10: General Guidelines on Building Height

## Landmark Buildings

4.2.16. Several buildings in the Victoria area have unique qualities either in terms of their architectural quality, important townscape role and/or just due to their relative height. These are landmark buildings – a term which, whilst not necessarily conferring any particular architectural quality or intrinsic value – recognises how the building is seen in the context of its surroundings. Whether it be in design or scale terms (depending on what defines them as a landmark), future development should take account of and ensure a well managed relationship with the following landmark buildings:

- Westminster Cathedral;
- Victoria Palace Theatre;
- Duke of York Public House<sup>41</sup>;
- Victoria Apollo Theatre;
- Grosvenor Hotel;
- Victoria Station<sup>42</sup>;
- the corner block of Victoria Coach Station at 172 Buckingham Palace Road;
- National Audit Offices the former Airline Terminal (167 Buckingham Palace Road);
- Neathouse Place;
- Portland House; and
- Library, Buckingham Palace Road.
- The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre
- The Albert Public House

4.2.17. Where landmark buildings are not listed, redevelopment will be considered in line with the usual policy requirements. Although Victoria Station in its entirety is considered a landmark building, there are some elements particularly in relation to the deck area off of Elizabeth Street that could be sensitively developed and adapted which could serve to enhance the historical and architectural integrity of their surroundings and deliver significant improvements to the pedestrian and travelling experience for which the station was originally designed.

## Views

4.2.18. In July 2010 the Mayor adopted the London View Management Framework Supplementary Planning Guidance (LVMF SPG) as a replacement to the adopted guidance, July 2007. The 2010 SPG identifies a number of strategically important views in, out and across Victoria, many of which are based around views of the World Heritage site: The Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey. New development should make a positive contribution to the character and composition of the Designated Views as shown on Map 6 below.

4.2.19. The council's adopted conservation area audits and Westminster draft *Metropolitan Views SPD October 2007* also identify a number of significant and/or important views, some of which could be impacted upon by new development in the planning brief area. These are principally the views of Buckingham Palace from the Queen Victoria

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41 The Duke of York Public House is included on this list because of its key role in maintaining a meaningful historic and townscape setting for the Victoria Palace Theatre.

42 It is considered that Victoria Station as a whole is a landmark building, not merely its north front, although the front of the station is of particular architectural and historic importance.

Memorial and Westminster Cathedral from Victoria Street. The impact on views from the World Heritage Site and Conservation Areas such as Royal Parks, Birdcage Walk, Broadway and Christchurch Gardens, Grosvenor Gardens and Westminster Cathedral also needs to be carefully considered.

- 4.2.20. Views proceeding and along Victoria Street which reveal the west towers of Westminster Abbey and the adjacent structures of 1-6 Sanctuary, the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny Memorial and St. Margarets Church also need to be carefully considered and respected.
- 4.2.21. The view from the extreme eastern edge of the brief area back down Victoria Street needs careful consideration in order to improve the setting of the Victoria Street/Great Smith Street/Storeys Gate junction, the setting of the buildings referred to above as well as the QEII Conference Centre, UK Supreme Court and Methodist Central Hall.
- 4.2.22. The council also wishes to ensure that development on the opposite bank of the river does not harm key views from the Victoria area, for example from the west side of Parliament Square.
- 4.2.23. New development may affect views of the City of Westminster from neighbouring boroughs. Such potential view affects should be identified through visual impact and visibility analyses.





### **4.3 The public realm and use of public art**

- 4.3.1. Victoria Station and its surrounds are comprised of a sequence of indoor and outdoor spaces. Currently these are poor in legibility and connectivity. The quality of experience of these spaces (whether it be the main station concourse, the bus terminus or even public garden) is marred by inaccessibility, noise, vehicle movements and by confusing signage. More efficient operational use would liberate more space for the pedestrians. In accordance with the highest priority key principle of enhancing pedestrian movement the council will expect proposals for new links and spaces to redress these past failings and embed the groundings for a long term exemplary pedestrian/public realm.
- 4.3.2. New spaces will fail unless they connect coherently to pedestrian routes and other spaces and provide areas to rest or interact. They can be small or large, from intimate “break out areas” to formal squares but must in all cases be characterised by:
- A place and role within a network of linked spaces driven by proven pedestrian movement patterns;
  - A scale commensurate with the scale of surrounding buildings;
  - Vitality;
  - Airy, sunlit and free from wind;
  - Soft landscaping;
  - Safety;
  - Users must be able to delight in views in and out of the space and of the surrounding architecture.
- 4.3.3. There is also a fundamentally confusing range and layers of signage, information and street furniture types spread across the Victoria area. The lack of rational and coherent organisation causes problems in interpretation for pedestrians and drivers. In addition the strength of linkages between Victoria Station and the wider area is very poor. A co-ordinated approach by all agencies to manage and rationalise this visual chaos is essential, for example the City Council is committed to a phased programme of introduction of the TFL managed, Legible London signage strategy, and the council’s own de-cluttering initiatives in the Victoria area by means of programmes, such as Neat Streets, for dealing with street clutter removal.
- 4.3.4. Legible London is a map based way-finding system aimed at providing better information for pedestrians throughout London. Thirty new Legible London sign-posts are due to be installed in the Victoria area as a priority by the end of June 2011 (see Figure 12 below). Development should accommodate Legible London signage when and where considered appropriate by the council.

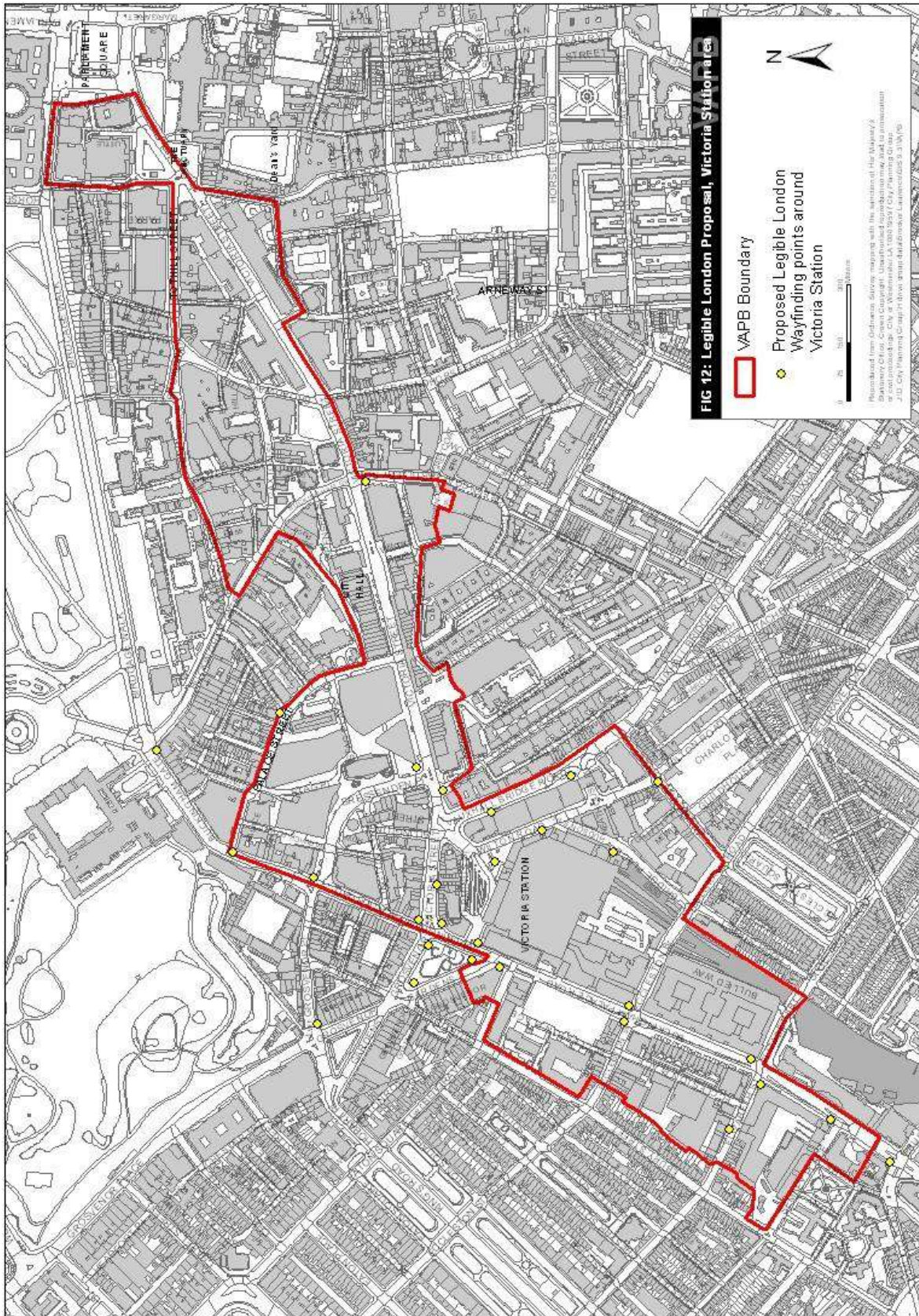


Figure 12: Legible London Sites

- 4.3.5. There is also a need for an improved pedestrian environment on Victoria Street, and consideration also needs to be given to improved crossings.
- 4.3.6. The improvement of the public realm is not only the key principle of this brief but also the top priority of Land Securities, the major landowner in Victoria. It would be expected that any new development should contribute to an improved pedestrian experience. Consideration will also need to be given to new/improved pedestrian crossings including and particularly across Victoria Street in conjunction with necessary traffic requirements.

#### Public Realm Contributions

- 4.3.7. The council's main priorities for the use of planning obligations include public realm improvements. Its Section 106 Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (also see paragraph 7.22) sets out a formula for contributions from development to provide public realm improvements.
- 4.3.8. The potential for pooling public realm contributions is being considered through development of the council's s106 Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), a draft of which is likely to be available for public consultation in 2011.

#### Public Realm Credits

- 4.3.9. The council's new 'Public Realm Credit System' is aimed at encouraging developers to provide money for, or provide on-site public realm improvements in advance of them bringing forward development planning applications.
- 4.3.10. Its Public Realm Credits SPD was adopted in May 2011 and sets out the protocol for establishing this system, which provide the council with greater financial certainty when planning its public realm projects in the future.
- 4.3.11. The protocol stipulates that if developers invest in public realm schemes independently and in advance of any development proposal by making a financial contribution or carrying out works to deliver the council's identified priority public realm projects, including Victoria Street and the Cathedral Piazza<sup>43</sup>, then under the proposed new system they will be eligible to apply for their investment to be registered as a 'public realm credit'. This credit may subsequently be used to 'offset' future requirements for s106 financial contributions for public realm improvements that would otherwise arise from developments within the Victoria and Belgravia area.
- 4.3.12. Allowing a worked-up scheme to improve Victoria Street could help deliver a significant public realm improvement scheme that otherwise may not be financially viable or achievable may be permissible as the proposed improvements are recognised as a priority by the council and appear to be deliverable by this developer.
- 4.3.13. Whilst improved connectivity between Victoria Street and the adjoining residential areas behind would be of benefit in urban design terms, any such linkages need to be balanced against the protection of residential amenity. The design of the rear elevation

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43 See Draft Public Realm Credits SPD for further details

of new development along Victoria Street should be given due consideration without eroding privacy or allowing intrusion by way of light, noise or smells.

#### Practical Guidance

- 4.3.14. The Council's soon to be adopted '*Westminster Way*' draft SPD January 2011, provides guidance on aspects of the design and management of the city's streets and open space. It sets out the way that the council expects change to happen in the spaces between the buildings in the city and frames a consistent approach to lighting, pavements, street furniture, way-finding, greening issues and street trading. *Westminster Way* should be considered when plans are made for works which affect the public realm.
- 4.3.15. English Heritage's '*Streets for All – A London Streetscape Manual*' (2000) provides further guidance for improving the street scape, to reduce clutter (signs, bins, bollards and street furniture), co-ordinate design (including through consideration of paving schemes) and reinforce local character. It contains practical on-site demonstrations set within the legislative framework.
- 4.3.16. Proposals for improvements to the public realm in the Belgravia area should also consider the guidance set out in the Gehl Architects study '*Places for People: Public Realm Strategy for Mayfair and Belgravia*'. This provides guidance relating to design, movement and street furniture and again highlights the need for pedestrian prioritisation, recognising that places are for people and that traffic should play a complementary role not a dominant one.
- 4.3.17. It specifically set out ideas for a number of streets in Belgravia, and suggested for example, upgrading Elizabeth Street's shopping function, widening its pavements and the reorganisation of its parking bays. In September 2010, a public-private partnership between Westminster City Council and property owner Grosvenor saw a redesigned Elizabeth Street unveiled with wider pavements, more trees, public seating and the introduction of York stone for the pavements and granite sets for parking areas, pedestrian crossings and main carriageway and granite kerbs.
- 4.3.18. Developers should consider implementing similar schemes elsewhere around Victoria.

#### Security and management of public spaces

- 4.3.19. The nature of uses in the Victoria area and the potential issues associated with them makes the implementation of counter-terrorism measures an essential part of the development process. Such measures need to be embedded in all development proposals at a very early stage and the council will fully expect this to be covered in all pre-application discussions.
- 4.3.20. The draft *Westminster Way* also sets out the council's approach to the public realm in areas surrounding high security risk buildings (for example government buildings). Whilst level access, direct approach paths and step free environments were once entirely desirable, heightened security concerns may result in the requirement for elevated ground floors and direct approaches blocked by landscaping details for these types of buildings. Step free access would still be required however the route may need to be more serpentine to thwart vehicle borne devices. Entrances should still be legible, obvious and welcoming.

- 4.3.21. Bollards should not be used for the prevention of footway parking as they provide unjustified obstructions for the visually impaired and regularly get uprooted from vehicle impacts causing undesirable additional costs. Where security issues dictate a need for a perimeter line of bollards, they should be in a logical and tidy line with a clear zone maintained and the concept agreed as a special project. Alternative devices, such as walls or balustrades within a line of bollards will be considered on their merits and may be preferable to an unrelieved line of bollards. In areas of very high concern, a cordon approach and extensive vehicle management may be required.
- 4.3.22. The provision of new public spaces in Victoria will be sought as part of appropriate development proposals. Where new public spaces are created they should be designed to minimise the opportunities for anti-social behaviour such as street drinking, street crime and unauthorised street trading.
- 4.3.23. Management arrangements for the public space should also be set out in a management plan which should also provide details of how the management arrangements are to be funded. As one of the council's main priorities is tackling crime and anti social behaviour, management arrangements should therefore reflect this priority and ensure adequate security and management of the public spaces in Victoria. Proposals for private management of publicly accessible spaces will be broadly welcomed as they are and were in the Cardinal Place development on the north side of Victoria Street. The council will expect to see enshrined in section 106 agreements a securable commitment to a tolerant regime of management comparable to the normal standards of stewardship of public places.
- 4.3.24. Where government offices are due to continue in operation there should be an emphasis on new landscaping to improve the public realm. This should be integrated from the outset with required security measures rather than being treated merely as a cosmetic addition. The council will also encourage the introduction of relief in the street façades by way of open spaces like Christchurch Gardens<sup>44</sup>.
- 4.3.25. Given the high volume of pedestrian movement throughout the area, attention should be given to the appearance and management of secure yards, forecourts, alleys and service roads, to ensure that as well as performing their main function, they also add to the area's overall appearance, sense of security and where desirable, public access.

#### Trees

- 4.3.26. The matrix of buildings, streets and squares is significantly enlivened by the presence of trees, individually and in groups. Trees, which are important in views in and out of the area and in its wider townscape setting, have been identified. The juxtaposition of colourful green mass and its associated movement and seasonal variation is extremely important in providing counterpoint to the hardness of buildings and street surfaces. These trees should be safeguarded and where appropriate enhanced. This is consistent with the recommendations of the council's soon to be adopted *Trees and the Public Realm* draft SPD January 2011, recently published for public consultation, which identifies Victoria as having opportunities for enhanced tree planting. The draft SPD seeks to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right locations. The council will proactively seek to identify suitable new tree planting locations that do not detract

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44 Christchurch Gardens is a formal London Square set back from Victoria Street at its junction with Broadway. It is included in the Broadway/Christchurch Gardens Conservation Area.

from existing amenity, townscape character or would have negative community safety implications.

- 4.3.27. The Trees and Design Action Group (TDAG), which includes representatives from the GLA, TfL and individuals and organisations from the public and private sector, recognises the benefits of urban trees. A new TDAG report offers developers, planners and architects guidance on incorporating large trees into new developments.
- 4.3.28. The Victoria Business Improvement District (BID)'s Green Infrastructure Audit seeks to identify appropriate locations for new trees and green roofs (see section 4 below).

#### Public Art

- 4.3.29. When integrated successfully, public art can help to create dynamic and stimulating environments and be used as a tool to interpret and inform. However, when incorporated as an after-thought and independent of any holistic strategy or assessment it can often appear idiosyncratic and at odds with the environment within which it sits.
- 4.3.30. Within the Victoria area public art manifests itself in many different forms. From traditional independent statements within the streetscape in the form of sculpture and monuments, to its integration within architecture and the creative interpretation of street furniture, art contributes to the appearance of a dynamic and stimulating environment.
- 4.3.31. However, 'artworks' must not increase the perception of clutter and confusion in the public realm. The council prefers public art to be integrated into the built environment (such as part of new buildings) rather than free standing pieces. In light of the pressure on the pedestrian public realm, particular emphasis should be placed on those sites forming gateway elements at approaches to the station rather than occupying space required for access and circulation.
- 4.3.32. There may be some exceptional circumstances where free standing pieces may be appropriate (such as in the creation and enhancement of any public spaces) however they should be integrated with new development. All public art must address issues of appropriateness and define high standards of design in order to ensure that public art enhances the appearance and experience of the public realm.

#### Advertisements

- 4.3.33. Advertisements should be well designed and relate to the character, scale and architectural features of the building on which they are to be fixed (in accordance with UDP policy DES 8). In considering applications for new advertisements, the council will take into account the number of advertisements which already exist on the building and on adjacent buildings. Further advice is given in the council's 'Advertisement Design Guidelines', 1992, and in its 'Shopfronts, Blinds and Signs' publication, 1993.

#### Provision of Public Toilets

- 4.3.34. The provision of public toilets will be required in association with large retail/entertainment developments and within the transport interchange. Because of the large size of the railway and coach stations, toilets (including those for disabled

people<sup>45</sup>) should be provided in more than one location. This should include facilities at ground floor level. Toilets should include baby changing and feeding facilities.

#### **4.4 Sustainable Design and use of energy**

- 4.4.1. Westminster City Council and the Victoria stakeholders want to deliver a destination that is well designed and sustainable. Addressing issues such as energy efficiency, air quality, high quality public space and that rises to the challenge that a changing climate will bring to the city.
- 4.4.2. Design quality is not just defined by how a building, space or place looks, but by how it functions, how it meets the social, economic and environmental needs of the people it serves, and how it can be managed and adapted as those needs change over time. CABE recognises the value of a ‚long life, loose fit, low resource use‘ philosophy and alongside Westminster City Council wants to adopt a standard that sees precedence given to retrofitting over demolition wherever practical<sup>46</sup>. There are a limited number of opportunities for large-scale redevelopments within the Victoria area and as a result, retrofitting existing buildings in Victoria is of crucial importance.
- 4.4.3. Energy generation and renewable and low carbon energy technology, including passive solar design, natural ventilation, borehole cooling, combined heat and power, community heating, photovoltaics, solar water heating, wind, fuel cells, will be required in all new developments, in accordance with the adopted policy framework. Biomass combustion plant will be appropriate only where particulate and nitrogen dioxide emissions levels are equivalent to or less than gas powered plant. With current technologies this is unlikely to be achieved, so biomass will not be appropriate.
- 4.4.4. The London Plan (2008) states that major developments should generate 20% of the site's electricity or heat needs from renewable energy. The Mayor's energy hierarchy states that essential energy needs should be met through (in order of preference):
  - using less energy;
  - using renewable energy; and
  - supplying energy efficiently.
- 4.4.5. An assessment of the energy demand of proposed major development should be submitted with applications. This should demonstrate the steps taken to apply the Mayor's energy hierarchy, and that the proposed heating and cooling systems have been selected in accordance with Policy 4A.8 of the London Plan<sup>47</sup> and Core Strategy policy CS39.
- 4.4.6. A toolkit has been produced to help developers, their consultants and planners implement relevant Mayoral and related borough planning policies to integrate renewable energy into new developments. The council encourages developers to follow the advice set out in the toolkit<sup>48</sup>.

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45 In prominent locations in Victoria, consideration should be given to provision of disabled facilities which provide enough space for disabled people and their carers, as well as equipment such as a height adjustable changing bench and a hoist. For more information see: <http://www.changing-places.org>.

46 In accordance with Section 4A of the Mayor's London Plan (2008).

47 February 2008 and subsequent amendments

48 Further information is available from [http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/environment/energy/renew\\_resources.jsp](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/environment/energy/renew_resources.jsp).



- 4.4.7. It is also important to include measures to minimise water use, such as systems that use grey water recycling systems and maximising rainwater harvesting opportunities and reaching cost-effective minimum leakage levels. This will not only minimise the waste of a resource, but rainwater harvesting can offer protection to the neighbourhood from localised flooding. All new commercial developments will be expected to incorporate and use movement sensitive internal lighting to minimise energy waste and to protect against night time glare. The adoption of the BREEAM 'excellent' standard should be applied to all newly built commercial properties wherever possible.
- 4.4.8. In addition to measuring the carbon compliance level of buildings the 'Code for Sustainable Homes' measures the overall sustainability of a new home against categories of sustainable design, rating the 'whole home' as a complete package. The Code uses a 1 to 6 star rating system to communicate the overall sustainability performance of a new home. The Code sets minimum standards for energy and water use at each level and, within England, replaces the EcoHomes scheme, developed by the Building Research Establishment (BRE).
- 4.4.9. On the 27 February 2008 the Government confirmed that a mandatory rating against the Code for Sustainable Homes would be implemented for new homes from 1 May 2008. All housing now must be built to Code 3. From 2013 the target is that all housing built will meet Code 4 as a minimum, and from 2016 all housing will need to meet Code 6.

#### District heating

- 4.4.10. Major developments should be designed to link to and extend existing heat and energy networks (see Figure 13 below). Where it is not possible for them to link to an existing network they will be required to provide site-wide decentralised energy generation that has the potential to be extended to serve other development sites in the vicinity. Smaller developments will be encouraged to be enabled to connect into heat and energy networks.
- 4.4.11. Extending the existing systems could usefully improve the efficiency of the existing systems by using spare capacity and by providing complementary heat demand load patterns, with commercial uses utilising the energy during the day and residential uses utilising the energy in the evening. The council has been involved in a heat mapping project with the London Development Agency, which will help to identify future opportunities for district heating networks.
- 4.4.12. The Pimlico District Heating Undertaking (PDHU) is the largest of four major community heating schemes in the UK and supplies constant central heating and hot water to more than 3,200 flats and private dwellings, schools and offices in the area, including 46 commercial properties. The draft replacement London Plan encourages the development of heating networks and the identification of linkages and, to this end, PDHU is undergoing complete renewal. It will soon have capacity to extend to more properties in SW1 including many within the planning brief area. PDHU and potential inclusion sites around the area have been shown in Figure 13 below.
- 4.4.13. Opportunities also exist for linkages with the Whitehall District Heating System. This system currently provides heat to 18 Government office buildings in Whitehall amounting to 270,000 square metres of floor space. Plans are in development to link the existing Whitehall and PDHU schemes, delivering improved operational efficiencies

and connecting central Government buildings. An interconnector could be built with the capacity to connect other Government departments, and other public and private buildings in the future. This would create the opportunity for new customers to connect to this low carbon heat supply infrastructure.

- 4.4.14. Scope has been provided as part of the VT12 development (see section 6 below) for a basement energy centre. This would supply the scheme's own requirements and allow heat to be exported to the Pimlico network and to nearby residential developments. There could be potential to link the VT12 scheme energy centre via a 1.5km transmission line to the Whitehall/Pimlico scheme. This would allow waste heat to be exported, extending the operational efficiency of the CHP or CCHP (Combined Cooling, Heat and Power) scheme and providing added resilience to the wider area network. Additional customers situated nearby or along the proposed connection route could join the scheme under such an arrangement. Alternatively, a Combined Heat and Power centre could be located at Moreton Street and be connected to surrounding buildings via a pipeline along Wilton Road. The feasibility of this latter arrangement needs to be examined further.
- 4.4.15. Source Heat pumps or other deep intrusive works may increase the risks to groundwater flooding and the use of open loop Ground Source Heating and Cooling will require a licence from the Environment Agency.

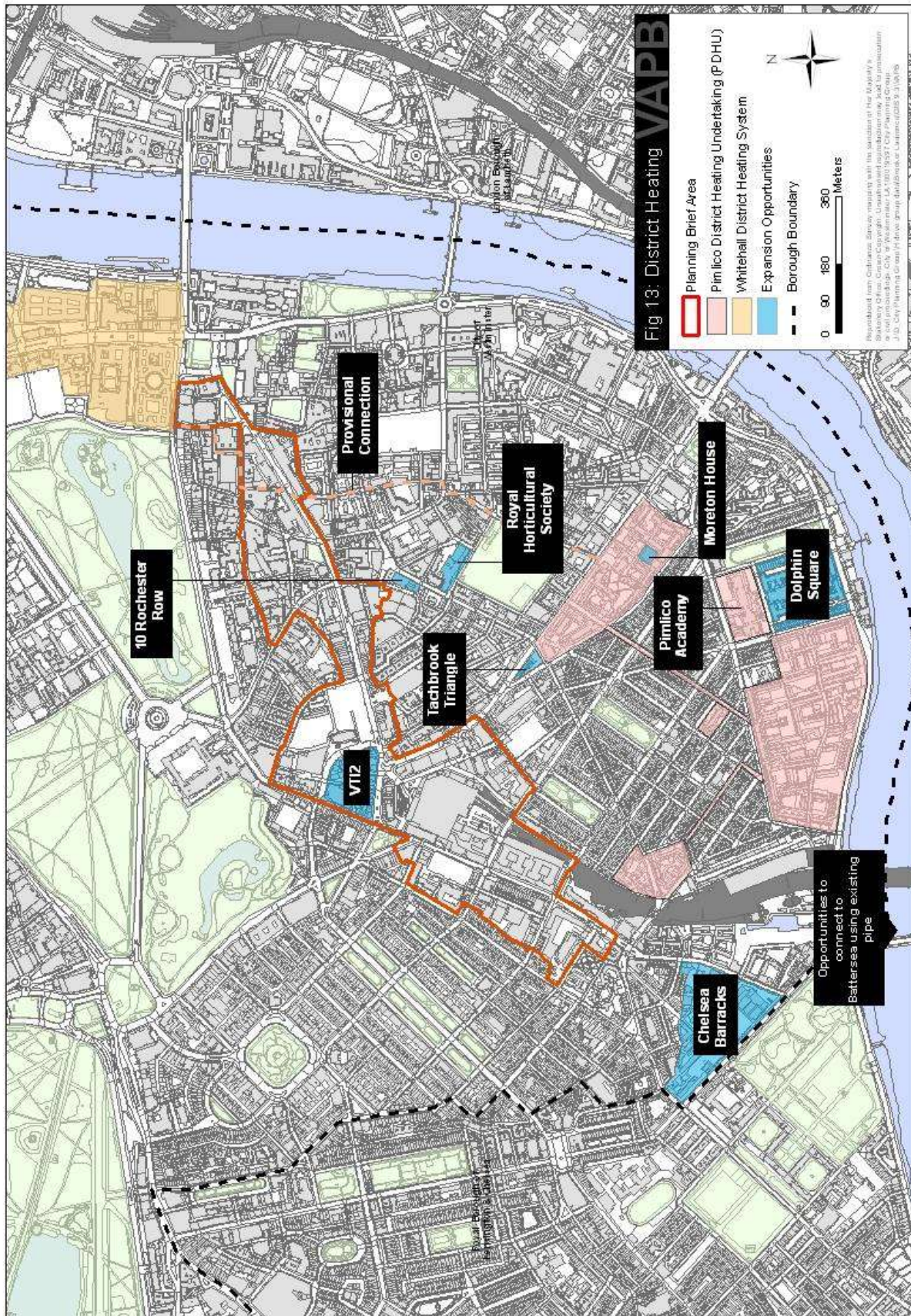


Figure 13: District Heating Sites

## Nature Conservation and Biodiversity

- 4.4.16. Planning policies in the UDP, Core Strategy, the London Plan and Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy recognise the potential for the built environment to support biodiversity and encourage good sustainable design, and set out specific requirements to achieve this.
- 4.4.17. A biodiversity assessment will need to be carried out prior to any work starting on site, including demolition, to investigate the impact (with particular attention to the presence of protected species, including UK Biodiversity Action Plan, Westminster's Biodiversity Action Plan and London Biodiversity Action Plan species). Biodiversity information is a material consideration in a planning decision and will therefore need to be submitted at the same time as an application.
- 4.4.18. The council will expect development to increase the overall biodiversity value of sites and therefore features that protect and enhance biodiversity should be integral to the design of the development. Measures to provide habitats that will encourage local biodiversity will be encouraged. Green or brown roofs may have a role in relation to managing run off and attracting local biodiversity. They can provide important habitats for wasteland flora, invertebrates and birds. It is recommended that developers consult the following documents and guidance in developing schemes for the site:
- English Nature report Green Roofs: their Existing Status and Potential for Conserving Biodiversity in Urban Areas (Report Number 498).
  - Design for Biodiversity<sup>49</sup>
  - Biodiversity by Design: A Guide for Sustainable Communities
  - Improving Londoner's Access to Nature
  - Right Trees for a Changing Climate
  - Westminster Tree Strategy Draft SPG January 2011
  - Adapting to Climate Change: A Checklist for Development
  - Victoria BID Greening for Growth in Victoria
  - Further information and guidance on providing green roofs with multiple benefits can also be found at [www.livingroofs.org.uk](http://www.livingroofs.org.uk)
- 4.4.19. All newly landscaped areas should be made up of native species where possible.

## Green Infrastructure

- 4.4.20. „Green Infrastructure' is a strategically planned and delivered network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. They should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green Infrastructure within Westminster includes parks, open spaces, and city squares and avenues which are very well used during the summer months.
- 4.4.21. Green Infrastructure can provide many social, economic and environmental benefits close to where people live and work including:
- Places for outdoor relaxation and play;

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49 <http://www.d4b.org.uk/index.asp>

- Space and habitat for wildlife with access to nature for people;
- Climate change adaptation - for example flood alleviation and cooling urban heat islands;
- Surface water retention within the local area at times of heavy rainfall;
- Improved health and well-being – lowering stress levels and providing opportunities for exercise and relaxation from the office environment.

4.4.22. The Victoria Business Improvement District (BID)'s Green Infrastructure Audit seeks to identify appropriate locations for new trees and green roofs. Their ground breaking study includes a wealth of information about existing trees, green spaces and biodiversity, along with an opportunity map identifying areas with future greening potential. Their vision is to retrofit the Victoria BID area with green infrastructure, for example green roofs and walls, to improve air quality, mitigate flood risk and visually enhance the area for the local community.

4.4.23. Developments within the Victoria area will be expected to develop Green Infrastructure as an integral part of all new development, alongside other infrastructure such as utilities and transport networks.

#### Noise

4.4.24. The Westminster Noise Strategy has identified that Westminster has exceptionally high noise levels, particularly from traffic and plant on buildings. Design of residential and commercial property will be expected to both protect residents and users from excessive noise and vibration and to keep noise emissions low.

#### Air Quality

4.4.25. The main sources of pollution in Victoria are road transport (including lorries, buses and cars) and emissions from boilers burning gas for heating. Since the 1980's the council has been working to improve air quality in the area and has developed a number of projects to reduce pollution in the City.

4.4.26. An 'Air Quality Management Area' has been designated covering the whole of Westminster. Within this area the council will require a reduction in air pollution to meet the objectives for pollutants set out in the national strategy and to meet the requirements of Core Strategy policy CS30, which requires developments to minimise emissions of air pollution from both static and traffic generated sources.

4.4.27. All new developments are required to submit an 'Air Quality Impact Assessment' to establish how they intend to mitigate against the detrimental effects on air quality that their developments may bring. Developers should consider air pollution in the building design stage and use appropriate technology to mitigate against it as this is the most effective way of achieving a reduction in non-road transport emissions. All new plant will be expected to be highly efficient to contribute to reduction of local air pollution.

4.4.28. The Council's draft Air Quality Action Plan was published for public consultation in May 2011. It sets out the council's commitment to improve air quality and thus people's health and provides a focused set of measures that target the most polluting sources to bring about a reduction in pollutants and to minimise exposure to those pollutants.



## 5. Transport

- 5.0.1 This section provides an overview of the council's objectives in regards to transport provision and sets out what is required. This has been informed by the Mayor, TfL and other transport providers as well as residents and major developers in the area.
- 5.0.2 The Victoria area contains one of the busiest transport interchanges in London. It supports both a rail and Underground station, which in turn accommodate 136.8 million and 80 million passengers per year respectively<sup>50</sup>. The Victoria area also has a strategic position on the road network and is a key node for bus routes across the capital. Figure 14 provides an overview of transport within the Victoria area.
- 5.0.3 However, the Victoria area is under significant stress, with Victoria Station one of London's most important transport hubs, currently operating in excess of its capacity. The station has been identified by TfL as one of the most in need of improvement<sup>51</sup>. Critical issues include the following:
- there is insufficient space for pedestrian movement, leading to considerable conflict with other road users;
  - the Underground station is regularly closed for short periods during the morning peak and increasingly at other times due to excessive demand;
  - the existing bus station cannot adequately accommodate all bus stops and stands required for Victoria, and it provides no scope to cater for further frequency increases;
  - the movement of coaches in and around the coach station impacts on local residential amenity; and
  - the Inner Ring Road is operating near to capacity and is sensitive to any disruption.
- 5.0.4 The Victoria Transport Community Liaison Group' meets on a bi-monthly basis, keeping local residents and businesses informed about the transport developments at Victoria Station, including upgrade works and provides an opportunity for residents to raise matters of interest or concern. Representatives from local residents' groups, businesses and Westminster City Council attend each meeting.

### 5.1 Objectives

- 5.1.1. The objectives of the council and TfL relating to the provision of transport in the Victoria area are as follows:
- To create a coherent sense of place and urban quality appropriate for an international interchange including improved and more legible street design;
  - To improve walking and cycling networks and facilities to promote these as attractive transport options;

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50 LUL, 2007, Victoria Station Upgrade Environmental Statement: Non-Technical Summary. Network Rail website, 2009. (<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/947.aspx>).

51 TfL, 2006, Transport 2025.

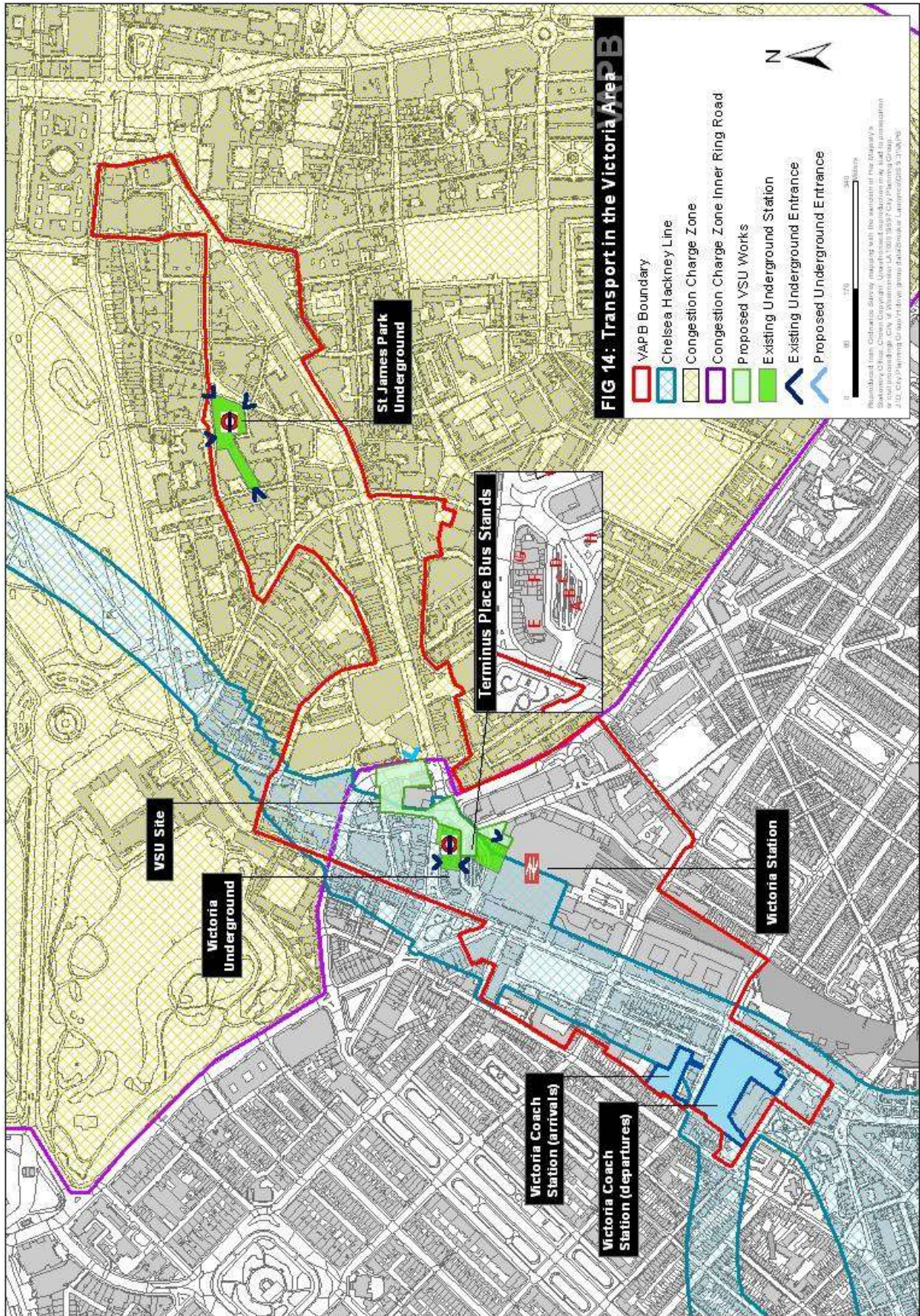


Figure 14: Transport Map



- To create a seamless transfer of people between all modes, including reducing walk distance between modes where possible;
  - To improve user assurance through journey certainty<sup>52</sup>, safety, ambience, environmental quality and shelter from adverse weather;
  - To provide ease of passage for non-passenger pedestrians through an improved environment which makes walking easier, more direct and attractive;
  - To promote an equal and inclusive transport network accessible to all;
  - To provide adequate capacity to cater for future demand requirements for transport and pedestrians;
  - To provide flexibility and safeguarding to accommodate future transport developments; and
  - To support intensification of the Victoria area through sustainable development;
  - To provide high quality bus facilities that are appropriate to one of the principal gateways to London;
  - To improve or maintain journey times and reliability for buses and general traffic.
- 5.1.2. English Heritage's long-term transport policy vision is set out in their 'Transport and the Historic Environment' (2004) policy statement. In this they set out their aim to ensure that when transport schemes are designed, their impacts on the historic environment are fully assessed with the necessary steps taken to avoid or at least mitigate any adverse effects.
- 5.1.3. They seek to:
- encourage a switch to less damaging forms of transport and to reduce the need to travel;
  - seek imaginative solutions to transport problems that will cause less damage to the historic environment;
  - ensure that transport appraisals properly assess the impacts on the historic environment to an appropriate level of detail;
  - encourage recognition of the wider social and economic benefits of the historic environment;
  - promote good design that recognises local and regional distinctiveness;
  - and encourage innovative transport management strategies.
- 5.1.4. Victoria Interchange is heavily constrained and it may not be possible to meet all of these objectives. As such, any proposed scheme needs to be assessed on an individual basis, and a balance struck between transport benefits in the Victoria area as well as other benefits (for example improvements to the public realm). Notwithstanding this, pedestrian movement around sites and within the transport interchange should be given the highest priority. Proposals should also take account of both the on-street

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52      Such as through the provision of signage including real-time travel and service disruption information.

operation of buses as well as road network capacity forecasts and the cumulative impact on all transport modes.

## 5.2 Requirements

5.2.1. This section provides a summary of transport required in the area and is largely based on information provided by TfL. These requirements will be taken into account in considering the acceptability of development proposals in the area covered by this brief.

5.2.2. All applications for major development must include a transport assessment consistent with TfL guidelines<sup>53</sup> and assess development impacts against appropriate demand forecasts. All scheme proposals will need to be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act requirements<sup>54</sup> and meet relevant safety considerations. All applications for major development should also be accompanied by Travel Plans, Construction Logistics plans and Delivery and Servicing Plans, in accordance with TfL guidance. These plans should be co-ordinated with each other.

### Pedestrians

5.2.3. Pedestrian movements within the Victoria Station area are generated by three distinct groups:

- Passengers interchanging between the various public transport services;
- Passengers arriving or departing via public transport and walking to/from the interchange;
- Pedestrians not using public transport but passing through the area, comprising local residents or people attracted to the numerous commercial, retail and leisure activities surrounding the interchange.

5.2.4. There is significant conflict of movement documented on the footpaths and crossings around Victoria and the main pedestrian demand is between Terminus Place and Victoria Street east. A proportion of those trips will be redistributed via the new Underground ticket hall at Bressenden Place by the VSU project, (see section 6.3 below), however, pedestrian flows are expected to increase generally mainly because of the predicted growth in Network Rail passengers of at least 20% by early 2020. Hence it is necessary to maintain and improve all existing crossing facilities and footpath capacities within five minutes walk of the station (as shown in Figure 15).

5.2.5. There also exist a number of opportunities to improve the public realm. Some of these arise from strategic interventions into the existing fabric, however some are contingent upon the wider reorganisation of traffic in the area. Such opportunities include:

- enhanced paving and surface treatments to facilitate better and safer pedestrian movement;
- Improved permeability on main pedestrian routes by reducing conflict between crossing facilities and bus and taxi operations, appropriate for the setting of a station of international importance and the wider area;

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53 Reference should be made to TfL Transport Assessment Best Practice Guidance and TfL DTO-UTC Modelling Guidelines.

54 DfT guidance on 'Inclusive Mobility' should be used for any dimensions.

- de-cluttering of street furniture including the removal of guardrails in appropriate locations;
- renewal of external Underground entrances to improve visibility and provide clear and direct way-finding that follows desire lines,
- strategic tree planting; and
- improved lighting to ensure greater safety and legibility/way finding<sup>55</sup>.

5.2.6. The first two opportunities listed above only become realistic with the wider reorganisation of traffic movement throughout the area. These opportunities would also provide potential for future provision of a city scale square in Terminus Place – the public benefits accruing from which would be significant.

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55 The roll out of Legible London to the Victoria Area would be an advantage in this respect.

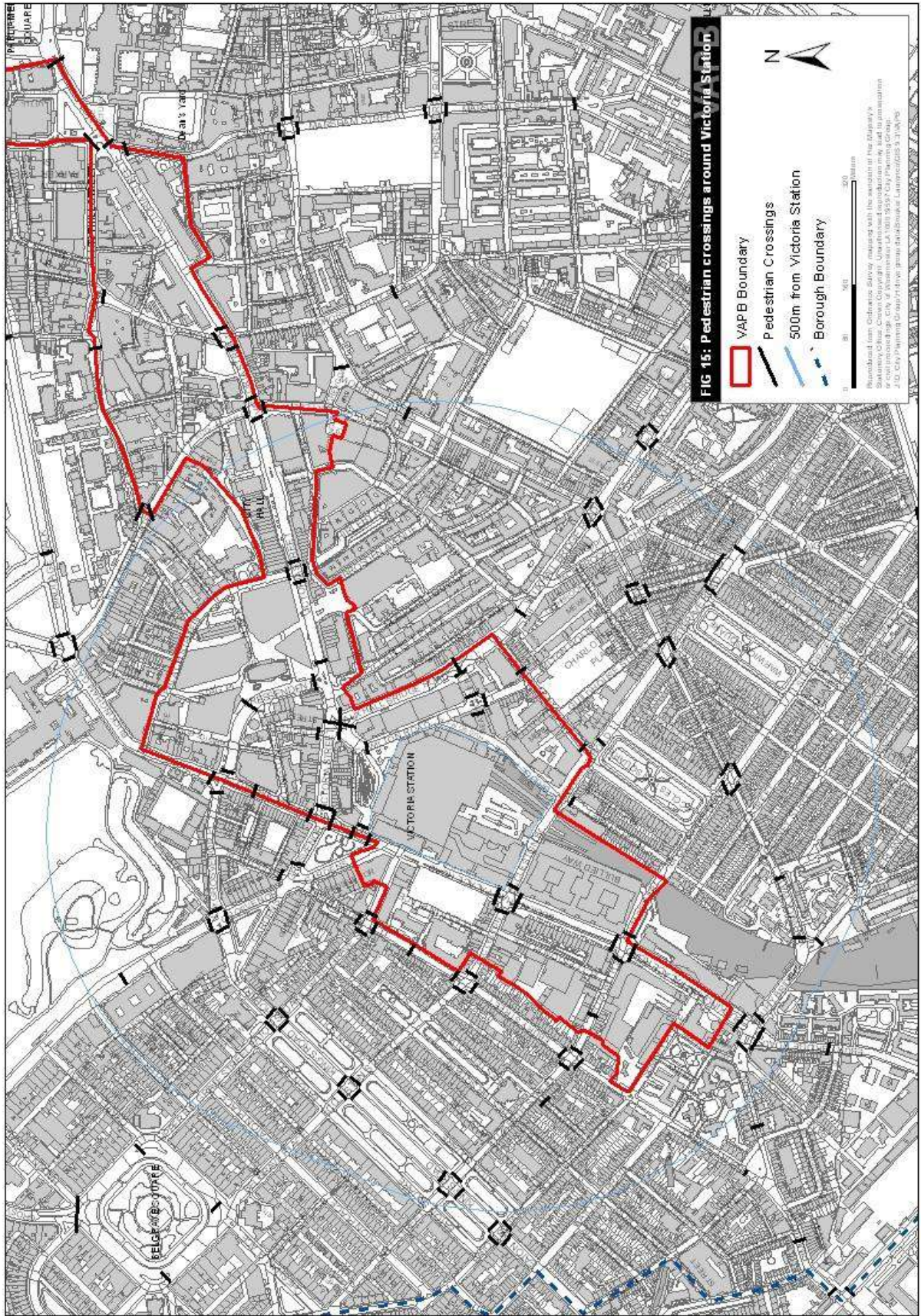


Figure 15: Indicative Pedestrian Crossing Plan

## Cycling

- 5.2.7. The Mayor's Transport Strategy May 2010 supports improvements to infrastructure to make it easier, safer and more attractive to travel by bike, with the aim of achieving a 5% modal share for cycling (currently 2%) by 2026, which equates to an approximate 400% increase compared to 2000. This is intended to build upon previous TfL initiatives such as the London Cycle Network (LCN) route which in part includes routes along Vauxhall Bridge Road and Buckingham Palace Road towards St James's Park. TfL's Cycling Revolution document, also May 2010, sets out how TfL and its delivery partners will be working towards the Mayoral targets. This includes projects such as the London Cycle Hire Scheme and Cycle Superhighway.
- 5.2.8. Cycle access around the Victoria area should be improved to provide safe and clear routes through, and to, the area. This can be achieved by continuing to work towards completion of the networks shown in Figure 16 and by considering the needs of cyclists in any changes to the highway network/layout. The current TfL Cycle Superhighways scheme<sup>56</sup> may provide scope for providing a fast, direct route into Victoria however it will need to minimise conflict with the number of other competing transport and public realm demands placed on Victoria.
- 5.2.9. Westminster City Council continues to work with the Mayor and TfL to implement London's Cycle Hire Scheme. Launched in July 2010 the scheme currently includes a number of docking stations within the Victoria Planning Brief area (see figure 16 below). Whilst there are limited opportunities for additional facilities in the public realm in Victoria, there may be scope for placement of additional docking stations in or adjacent to new and/or recent major development. However any new stations must be publicly accessible 24 hours a day.
- 5.2.10. The impact that such cycle facilities may have on pedestrians will be taken into account when considering proposals for them.
- 5.2.11. The Victoria BID will look to actively promote TfL's London Hire Scheme to assist in the decrease of vehicle usage in the area.
- 5.2.12. It is also important to provide high quality cycling parking to support visitors and cyclists interchanging with other modes. The Mayor aims to increase the number of cycle parking spaces by 66,000 by 2012. Network Rail' has identified Victoria, St. Pancras and Waterloo as the 3 London stations (of 10 stations nationally) that are earmarked for cycle hub facilities where high numbers of cycle parking spaces will be available to encourage cycling to and from these interchanges. Additionally, new development will be required to provide cycle parking and associated facilities such as showers and lockers as set out in the council's UDP and LDF policies.

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56 For more information please see: [www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/cycling/11901.aspx](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/cycling/11901.aspx)

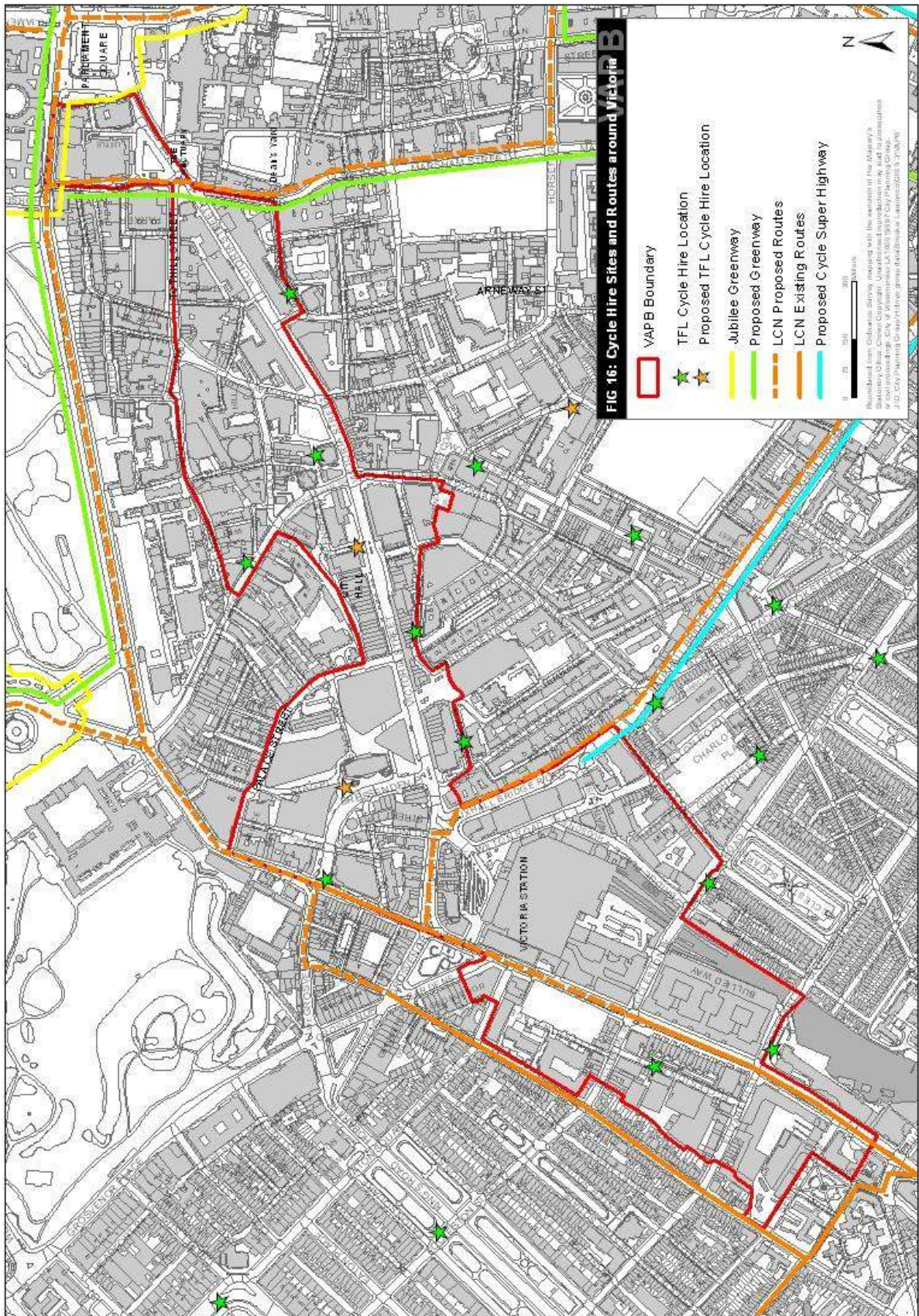


Figure 16: Cycle Hire Sites and Cycle Routes

## Rail

5.2.13. TfL London Rail anticipates the number of passengers at Victoria Station to increase by at least 20% by 2020 and hence supports all initiatives that increase concourse and circulation space as well as additional and more direct access to the Underground. Further discussion on the rail station is provided in Section 6 of this document.

## Chelsea Hackney Line

5.2.14. A route for a new railway line across central London, known as the Chelsea Hackney Line has been safeguarded by the Department for Transport (DfT) since 1991, following its recommendation in the 1989 Central London Rail study. The safeguarding was refreshed in 2008, but in 2010 the DfT asked the Mayor of London to undertake a review of the route, allowing 5 years for the process, in order to consider the safeguarded route and other potential options to best suit London's future needs.

5.2.15. In considering the revision of the existing safeguarding, the following should be borne in mind:

- Need to minimise blighting of development sites;
- Access required for construction;
- Public realm associated with any station entrances;
- Safeguarding existing buildings and existing residential and commercial uses;
- Need for and location of vent shafts and their visual and other impacts;
- Need to maximise integration with other transport activities and schemes.

5.2.16. The safeguarding for the potential construction of the Chelsea Hackney Line is based around a new route in tunnel from Parsons Green to Leytonstone, via Victoria and King's Cross and or/Euston. However, given the review is at an early stage, detailed information on above and below ground structures, such as vent shafts is not currently available, and will not be available until planning work is resumed at a date in the future yet to be determined. Potential locations of such structures in the Victoria area and the safeguarded route are shown in Figure 14.

5.2.17. It is necessary to safeguard and consider the impacts of any proposal which affects the safeguarded route to ensure either the Chelsea Hackney Line or other transport improvement schemes are not unduly prejudiced. Further information is required however on the potential location of the station box, entrances, interchange, vent shafts and other surface and subsurface infrastructure as the design process for the scheme evolves.

5.2.18. The Direction requires local planning authorities to consult with Crossrail regarding planning applications within the limits shown on the safeguarding plans before granting planning approval as they may conflict with the proposed route.

## DLR

5.2.19. A number of options for extending the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) have been considered, including the potential for a corridor between Charing Cross and Victoria with an alternative corridor towards Euston and St. Pancras. Although it now seems

unlikely, if the former were to be pursued, the council would raise the following concerns:

- route impacts from Charing Cross;
- construction sites;
- station ticket hall and vent shaft locations;
- potential to add to existing congestion at Victoria interchanges and at street level; and
- Potential clash of operations and construction with the Chelsea Hackney Line.

5.2.20. Until these issues are adequately addressed by TfL, the extension beyond Charing Cross appears to cause more problems and blight than deliver significant improvement to Victoria. As set out in the Mayor's Transport Strategy<sup>57</sup>, further work is required to identify the most effective role and therefore route of any future DLR extensions.

#### Network Rail Route Utilisation Strategy

5.2.21. In December 2010 Network Rail published the draft London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) for public consultation. The RUS represents Network Rail's latest analysis with respect to an appropriate strategy to for the South East England railway network as a whole up to 2031, over which time it forecasts an increase of over 30 per cent in the numbers of commuters using National Rail services into London during the weekday morning peaks.

5.2.22. The strategy includes: an assessment of demand into each of London's stations and proposed interventions to meet these demands; and the need for synergy between High Speed 2 and other committed rail schemes such as the Chelsea-Hackney Line. The latter of which would help reduce demand on some of the most congested sections of the Underground, including the Victoria line. Network Rail expects to publish the final RUS in summer 2011.

#### High Speed rail line (HS2)

5.2.23. „HS2 Ltd' was created in January 2009 to look at the feasibility of a new high speed rail line between London and the West Midlands. Studies indicate a preference for a central London terminus on, or near, the Circle line. Although there is no realistic prospect of such a terminus being within Westminster (not least due to a planned requirement of 14 x 400m long straight platforms serving the A1/M40 corridor), there is a need to ensure that sufficient interchange capacity exists for Underground and other services.

5.2.24. Euston appears to be a potential location and in this instance, the existing LUL services, most notably the Victoria line, could not be expected to meet the likely demand. Therefore, in considering the Chelsea Hackney line, consideration should be given to its potential to relieve any additional demand which would otherwise be generated by HS2.



5.2.25. On 20th December 2010 DfT announced the HS2 proposed line of route between London and the West Midlands for public consultation. Detailed maps of the proposed route are available on their website: [www.dft.gov.uk/highspeedrail](http://www.dft.gov.uk/highspeedrail).

### Buses

5.2.26. Bus travel in the brief area is centred around Victoria Station. This is in part because the majority of bus passengers originate from rail and Underground, and the majority of bus routes head towards the northwest (i.e. Hyde Park Corner). Bus routes within the area are summarised on the image below (Figure 17).



Figure 17: Indicative Bus Route Plan

5.2.27. The existing bus station is located immediately in front of the Network Rail station on Terminus Place and is accessed from Buckingham Palace Road, with exit onto Victoria Street. On street bus stops and stands are also located on streets in the surrounding area, including Victoria Street, Wilton Road, Vauxhall Bridge Road, Buckingham Palace Road and Grosvenor Gardens. Any redevelopment of the bus station should be considered in a similar prominent location, in close proximity to Network Rail.

5.2.28. A new or improved layout should aim to reduce modal conflicts with road users and pedestrians as well as giving assurance through a perception of certainty, safety and security. In a totally unconstrained scenario and assuming all buses are 12m standards, thirty-one stand spaces would be required by TfL. Ideally the majority, if not all, would be provided within a single bus interchange.

- 5.2.29. Bus stops should be grouped close together to serve routes in similar directions, together and bus facilities should be upgraded to full TfL accessibility standards. This includes raised kerbs, shelters and real time information, where possible given other site constraints. To help reduce congestion bus routes should not begin and/or end at common nodal points such as Victoria Station. Their termination points should be staggered where possible to avoid congestion. Additional bus mileage should be minimised to maintain or improve bus running time, minimise emissions, and maximise junction capacity in Victoria and surrounding area.
- 5.2.30. The operational efficiency should be maintained if not improved considering cost of energy, staffing, staff accommodation, maintenance/ cleaning, CCTV, and flexibility to meet unplanned/temporary demand increases and future requirements.

#### Other road traffic

- 5.2.31. The existing highway network is relatively complex in operational terms, largely due to the conflicting transport demands placed upon it by the various modes. It is imperative that all traffic flows on the surrounding road network are managed efficiently and safely, including the movements of buses, pedestrians, cyclists and motor cyclists. The network should be regularly reviewed to determine whether improvements can be made which benefit the significant bus and pedestrian movement which takes place in the area.
- 5.2.32. In October 2010, the Mayor announced his decision to remove the Western Extension of the Congestion Charging zone reverting back to its previous smaller area (see Figure 14) and to introduce a number of other changes to the remaining scheme, with effect from January 2011. This has implications on the movement of traffic through the Victoria area, and particularly on Vauxhall Bridge Road, Wilton Road, Grosvenor Place and the streets surrounding the station which all formed part of the Free Through Route. Any other changes to the highways will have to take account of the resulting forecast increase in traffic flows. These issues will be kept under review.
- 5.2.33. The resilience of the TfL and Strategic Road Network must be maintained (or preferably, improved), so that incidents or demand increases do not cause adverse disruption. There is scope for realignment of key roads although the view of TfL and City of Westminster is that Victoria Street should remain open. It is understood that TfL will consider opportunities for redirecting northbound lanes on the Inner Ring Road.
- 5.2.34. Other key traffic objectives include the following:
- To maintain the level of service for road traffic on the Congestion Charge Boundary routes;
  - To maintain existing highway capacity and not to increase journey times for any transport mode using the station area;
  - To reduce the number of casualties;
  - Any redevelopment proposals must take account of the requirements that the Traffic Management Act and the Network Management Duty place on the council and TfL.
- 5.2.35. It is also imperative that access is ensured for emergency vehicles; and that the “Queens/Kings” routes are maintained as these are used for Royal processions and

state occasions. The implication of which is that street furniture lining these streets must be removable to allow the safe passage of such processions.

### Coaches

- 5.2.36. The Victoria area, with its concentration of hotels, theatres and tourist attractions, is a major draw for coaches. It is expected that there will be approximately 500,000 coach movements per annum in the Victoria area by 2026<sup>58</sup>. Over £300 million a year contributed to London's economy from coach tourism alone<sup>59</sup>.
- 5.2.37. Although the Victoria Coach Station<sup>60</sup> is the principal hub of Express coach services, the Bulleid Way/Green Line facility also plays an important role in accommodating national and international services, with over 210 coach departures a day, including high frequency 24 hour services to Luton and Stansted Airports. These services generate significant passenger interchange for onward travel.
- 5.2.38. Coach and bus tours are also prominent in the Victoria area. Most operate under a „London Service Permit' issued by TfL. These services are classified as local and use bus stop infrastructure in the same way as the local bus network. Along with coaches, these are an important part of the transport mix in Victoria and as such, their operational needs in terms of kerbside space and standing requirements, should not be overlooked.
- 5.2.39. The Council will encourage better co-ordination and interchange of buses with coach travel.
- 5.2.40. The council recognises that coaches play a significant role in the provision of long distance travel and commuter services and in the provision of specific groups such as educational parties, theatre visitors and people with mobility difficulties. However, the local impact on the traffic network as well as residential and business amenity is a longstanding and continuing concern to the council. Further discussion on the coach station and its operations is provided in Section 6 below.

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58 ARUP London Coach Terminal Review 2007

59 London Tourism Action Plan – LDA

60 See section 6 below

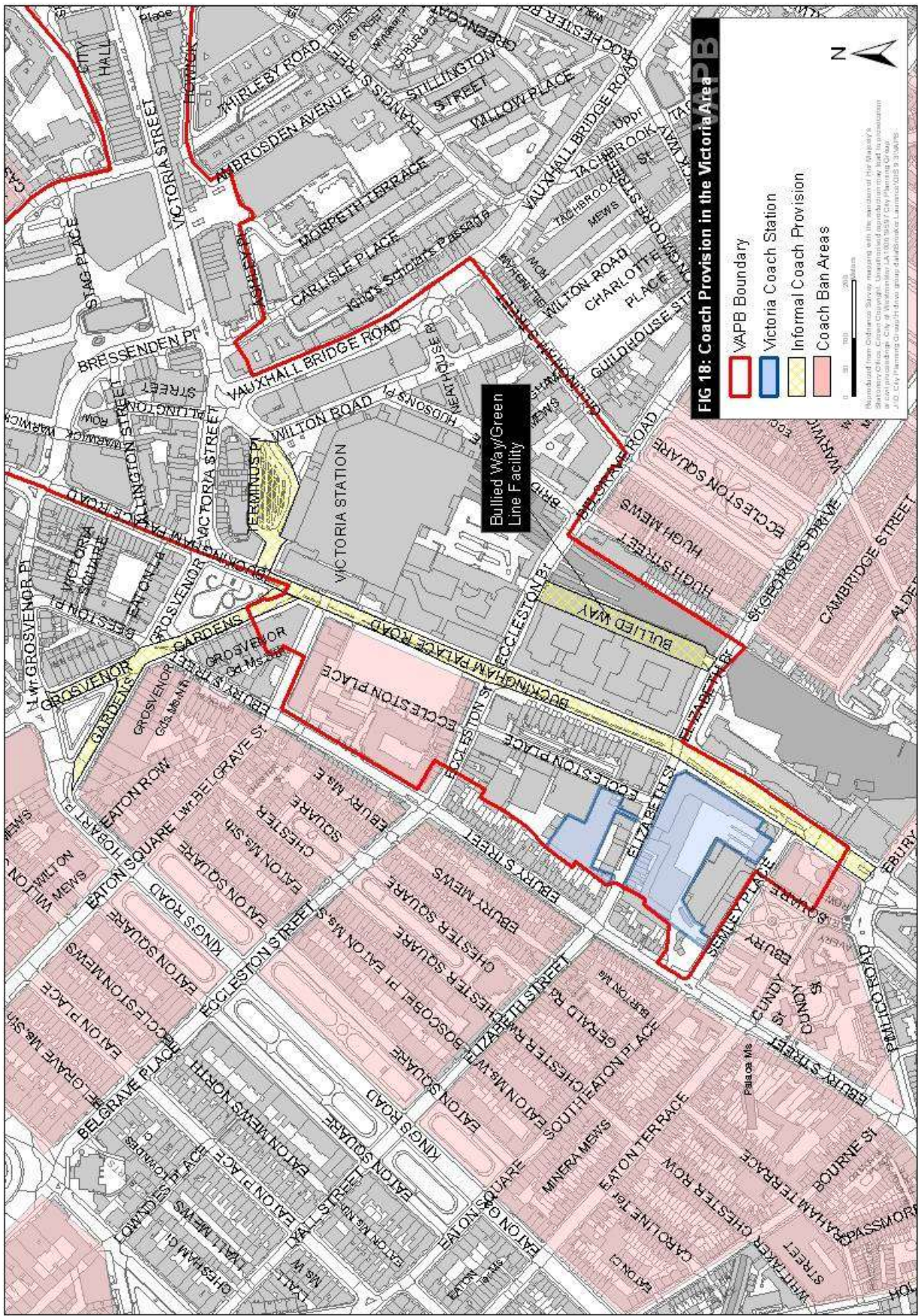


Figure 18: Coach Provision

## Servicing

- 5.2.41. The high concentration of commercial activity interspersed with residential development and particular characteristics of the area's dense, historic urban fabric create challenges in relation to servicing and deliveries. Existing servicing and parking provisions should be maintained or improved.
- 5.2.42. Under Core Strategy policy CS41 Servicing and Deliveries, developments must demonstrate that the freight, servicing and deliveries required will be managed in such a way that minimises adverse impacts, reducing traffic as well as emissions and not compromise the safety of other users of the public highway or public realm.
- 5.2.43. This could include a local servicing/freight consolidation hub, where freight journeys could be combined and reduced and onward distribution could be by sustainable modes such as cycle and walking thus reducing traffic and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

## Parking

- 5.2.44. Although there is limited on-street parking available, the Victoria Planning Brief area is extremely well-served by public transport. This juxtaposition is one which should be balanced in the provision of parking in any new development.
- 5.2.45. Residential development intended or designed without onsite parking provision may be acceptable where:
- A surplus of on-street parking is available;
  - and the development is extremely well-served by public transport;
  - and onsite parking provision is physically impossible but key UDP objectives (and subsequent LDF objectives) would be put at risk if the development were not permitted.
- and where the impact of additional cars on the street is mitigated by either:
- a financial contribution towards the costs of parking improvements;
  - and/or provision of off-street parking in the vicinity.
- 5.2.46. Table 6.1 of the Draft Replacement London Plan sets out parking standards for different types of development, including retail, employment and residential schemes. The Plan also requires the provision of disabled parking as well as 20% provision of all car parking to be for electric vehicles, with further spaces for passive provision for future use<sup>61</sup>.
- 5.2.47. To date, 23 dedicated on-street electric vehicle charging spaces have been provided in 13 locations in Westminster and secured funding in 2011/12 will allow for installations at 5 more locations based on a demand and request basis, providing some 10 to 15 new spaces.
- 5.2.48. There are some sites in the area where underground constraints mean that it is difficult to provide parking. This is likely to be the case in the area to the north of the National Rail Station, where the presence of two Underground lines and an underground sewer, mean there is limited scope for substantial underground car parking as well as acceptable servicing provision for uses on the site.

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61 Draft Replacement London Plan Table 6.1 Car parking standards

5.2.49. In January 2011 the Department for Communities and Local Government removed the requirement for local authorities to set maximum parking limits for residential development with regard to the need to promote sustainable transport choices<sup>62</sup>. Revisions to PPG13<sup>63</sup> state that applicants for development with significant transport implications should show (where appropriate in the Transport Assessment) the measures they are taking to minimise the need for parking. This issue will be considered further in development of the council's City Management Plan in 2011.

### Taxis

5.2.50. Licensed taxis and mini-cabs form an important and flexible component of the public transport system. However, the recent significant congestion of taxis on streets around and to the south of the station is a concern due to their impact on the network of other road users. The Victoria area may see a rise in waiting taxis in the future. This situation requires consideration of short term management measures, including enforcement, as well as a review to see if other options could be used. The impact of the Victoria Station Upgrade (VSU) construction (see section 6 below) will require further assessment, liaison and management.

5.2.51. The primary taxi point in the planning brief area serves railway passengers and is centred on Terminus Place. The journey for taxis to the head of the rank in Terminus Place is somewhat lengthy and convoluted and they have to thread through the traffic flows. In addition to this, the feeder rank is currently made up of four portions, which often results in a shortage of taxis.

5.2.52. Ideally, taxi set down and pick up should be in a prominent position, preferably immediately adjacent to the National Rail station and close to the National Rail ticket office. The pickup should also be visible from the front of the taxi rank. Taxis should easily be able to access the whole network from the exit, and ideally the back of the taxi rank should be easily accessible from the set down area. Lastly, the passenger waiting area should be covered, large enough to cope with demand, and designed to avoid the need for management intervention.

5.2.53. Network Rail however advise that it would not be appropriate to locate the taxi set down and pick up areas on Hudson's Place, either on a temporary or permanent basis, due to the impact this would have on the operation of Victoria Station.

5.2.54. In review of these conflicting concerns it will be necessary for the City Council, TfL and Network Rail to keep the operation of taxis, delivery vehicles, buses and other traffic associated with the rail and coach stations under review with the aim of:

- Improving pedestrian access to and through the stations;
- Decreasing impacts on residential amenity;
- Improving efficiency of stations;
- Easing movement of general road traffic;
- Effectively managing the road network.

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62 As announced by the Rt Hon Greg Clark MP Minister for Decentralisation on 3rd January 2011  
63 Paragraph 54 of revised PPG13 January 2011

- 5.2.55. The relatively recent problem of large numbers of taxi's queuing on street south of Victoria, around Wilton Road, Vauxhall Bridge Road and Gillingham Street for example, is a continuing concern for the impacts this has on other traffic, pedestrians and especially those residents and businesses which have this activity outside their premises on a daily basis.
- 5.2.56. Management by TfL's Public Carriage Office in the first instance should address this but the City Council will continue to press for measures to remove the impacts that this activity has on the area.





## 6. Key Sites and Projects

6.0.1. A number of major proposals have emerged in recent years which will have a significant impact on the nature of the Victoria Planning Brief area. The council wishes to see the momentum of these changes continue. These proposals are summarised below.

### 6.1 Victoria Railway Station

6.1.1 Victoria Station, whilst being of modest size, is the second busiest Network Rail managed station in London and is one of the capital's most important transport hubs. Over 136.8 million people pass through the station each year. The station is currently operating in excess of its capacity and there is frequent peak period congestion on the concourse, platforms and around the ticket barriers. The congestion is often so severe that sections of the station, particularly the connections to the London Underground in Terminus Place are regularly closed during peak periods. The station facilities are dated and the passenger experience is generally very poor. Many of the problems can be attributed to the layout of the concourse and platforms and the fact that the Kent and Sussex sections were separately constructed by two railway companies. This is still evident in the planning and architecture of the station and, to a degree, in its current operations. The Kent side provides services to Medway towns and the Kent coast and the remainder serves routes to Sussex.

6.1.2 Network Rail's objectives for the development of the station are as follows:

- To relieve concourse congestion and improve the operation of the station to meet operational requirements for forecast growth;
- Take the lead in facilitating a legible transport interchange which blends well with the townscape and eases interchange between different modes of transport and particularly public transport and pedestrians and cyclists;
- Sustainable development above and around the station;
- Improved permeability of the station site and improved connectivity with the surrounding areas where operationally and physically possible;
- A phased approach that leads eventually to an improved operational station;
- To ensure that third party initiatives are fully safeguarded.

6.1.3 Design proposals should aim to improve the passenger experience and support a clear and logical organisation of uses in the station. Passenger congestion is high at Victoria in specific areas and development proposals consider improvements that could be made to passenger flows, dwelling areas, access and egress and easing general station operations.

6.1.4 Network Rail has indicated that commercial viability will need to be maximised in order to support the aspirations above. The council will require this to be reconciled with the planning and heritage requirements for a development at the station.



Figure 19: Victoria Station: Development is highly constrained by operational railway and listed building issues on the yellow shaded areas. The area's shaded blue are priorities for further change on the airdeck and inside the retail area above the platforms of the Victoria Plaza. The red shaded building is presently owned by a third party but could form part of an integrated development (source of main photograph from Network Rail)

- 6.1.5 Large numbers of passengers already pass through the station and to meet the increased demand for rail travel Network Rail who own and manage the station have indicated that the capacity of the station concourse will need to be increased which will require its redevelopment. Victoria Station is a Listed Building, adjacent to a listed hotel and English Heritage will strongly resist proposals that seek to „redevelop’ the station, however development that respects the listed status of the station may be acceptable subject to it satisfying the usual policy requirements.
- 6.1.6 Network Rail is a publicly funded company limited by guarantee and its financial structure is quite different from its predecessor (Railtrack) and from other regulated businesses in the UK. In order to fund the required development Network Rail will need to maximise its commercial receipts, which will be reinvested back into this and other improvement projects.
- 6.1.7 Development at the station also needs to provide an appropriate mix of uses, though site constraints will determine the most suitable use and a major development could include offices, residential and retail, though other uses may be considered. However, the need to improve the transport capacity of the concourse will be taken into account when considering these proposals.
- 6.1.8 There are 3 main potential locations for development at the station:
- Hudson's Place potentially in conjunction with Stockley House and part of Bridge Place;

- the rail-air deck and Kent side airspace; and
- airspace above part of the Sussex Side concourse.

6.1.9 Hammerson and Network Rail are continuing to progress discussions in respect of the regeneration of Victoria Station and Stockley House.

6.1.10 In addition, there may be scope to sensitively refurbish and develop part of the Wilton Road face of the Southern Railways building, depending on the resolution of constraints and the impact on the listed building. Access to each development location will determine the most suitable use and a major development would be likely to include offices, residential and retail, though other uses may be considered.

6.1.11 Key development constraints at Victoria station include:

- Structural - preserving the recently repaired barrel vault roofs and the Victoria Line;
- Heritage – grade II listed;
- Railway – maintaining station operations during construction, safeguarding future track requirements, platform configuration and servicing of the station; and
- Third party initiatives – coordination with VSU, TfL and safeguarding for the Chelsea Hackney Line.

## 6.2 VT12

6.2.1. On 9 October 2009 the council granted planning permission for the development scheme known as the Victoria Transport Interchange, (VT12). Comprised of three planning applications, this scheme proposes the comprehensive redevelopment and regeneration of a 2.5 hectare site bounded by Victoria Street, Buckingham Palace Road, Bressenden Place and Allington Street, to the north of Victoria Station.

6.2.2. If constructed in its entirety, VT12 will provide over 80,000 square metres of office space, over 12,000 square metres of retail and 205 residential units. The scheme contains a number of buildings up to 16 storeys in height and provides for the redistribution of bus stops from Terminus Place. Two images of the proposed scheme are provided below.



Figure 20: VT12 Proposals Source: Land Securities

- 6.2.3. VT12 is intended to be constructed in three phases, in order to take into account the Victoria Station Upgrade works on the eastern side of the site. Phase One will comprise three new buildings with a mix of offices, retail, 170 residential units, a two-level basement for car parking and servicing and new pedestrian routes. The council has endorsed the use of a Compulsory Purchase Order to facilitate the scheme.
- 6.2.4. Sites within Phase One are subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) that was made in January 2011<sup>64</sup> (see Section 7.2 below). If confirmed by the Secretary of State the Order will enable the council to acquire compulsorily land/properties required to facilitate development of the VT12 scheme. The council is satisfied that Phase One of this development is of sufficient scale and character that it will significantly improve the wellbeing of the area. Single ownership and control of the Order Land is necessary to enable Phase One to proceed. More information relating to the use of Compulsory Purchase powers is set out in Section 7 below. A map showing the 3 approved phases of development is included below in Figure 21.

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<sup>64</sup> Under section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.



6.2.5. The listing of Sutton House, 156-158 Victoria Street as a building of special architectural historic interest, subsequent to the granting of planning permission, led to an application being submitted for its demolition by Land Securities (the VT12 Site Developer) to make way for the development of the first phase of the VT12 scheme. On 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2010 a report was presented to Westminster's Planning Applications Committee in relation to the partial demolition and partial dismantling of the Grade II Listed Building (see planning application number 09/10493/FULL). Committee concluded that although the loss of the building in its current location was regrettable, that given the overwhelming benefits of the wider VT12 scheme, that its removal be approved, subject to approval for its relocation to another site. A planning application for the relocation of Sutton House from its Victoria Street location to an alternative site within the VT12 site boundary was submitted to the council in June 2011.

### **6.3 Victoria Underground Station**

6.3.1. In August 2009, the Secretary of State for Transport granted LUL planning permission for the Victoria Station Upgrade (VSU) project, as part of TfL's investment programme. VSU includes the construction of a new Underground northern ticket hall under Bressenden Place (partly within the boundary of the VT12 development as shown in Figure 21), increased capacity of the existing southern entrance, new escalators to serve the Victoria line platforms and improved access throughout the existing underground station.

6.3.2. The principal objective of VSU is to increase capacity and improve passenger flow between Underground services, street level and the National Rail station to meet both current and forecast passenger demand. In addition to the new northern ticket hall the scheme will also include widened gate lines, additional escalators, improved access to Network Rail, and step free access throughout the station. Improvements will also be made to the Victoria Station forecourt (see Figure 22 below).

6.3.3. Both the council and the Secretary of State acknowledge the clear benefits of VSU, particularly in regards to encouraging economic growth and regeneration in Victoria. In this respect, the decision supports the objectives of this brief and is also consistent with the designation of Victoria as an Opportunity Area within the Core Strategy.



Figure 22: Victoria Station Upgrade

Source: London Underground impression of the station forecourt on completion of the VSU scheme

- 6.3.4. An order was made under the Transport and Works Act 1992 on 18 September 2009 to facilitate the scheme and the TfL Board approved full funding for the scheme on 21 October 2009. At present, the project is intended to be constructed in two phases, with the Northern Ticket Hall scheduled to open in July 2016 and the full VSU project due to be completed in late 2018.
- 6.3.5. London Underground Limited (LUL) awarded the design and build contract for the VSU scheme to VINCI Bam Nuttall Joint Venture (VBN) in 2010 and utility diversion works have already been carried out.

#### **6.4 Terminus Place**

- 6.4.1. Development at Terminus Place, to the north side of the station, along with other parts of the transport interchange, must balance competing pressures for development growth, public realm improvements and improved public transport provision.
- 6.4.2. TfL is still reviewing options for medium and long term public sector opportunities for transport and development at Terminus Place. The main objective for their study is to improve the overall pedestrian environment and permeability of the area. One conclusion of their previous study was that the most significant improvements to the operation of the bus station would require demolition of the buildings on the western corner of Terminus Place, however a business case for the demolition of these buildings could not be made. No funding is available for this scheme through the current TfL Business Plan meaning that the ability to meet transport and urban design objectives are largely subject to development feasibility and s106 monies.
- 6.4.3. The council shares the aim of improving the setting of Victoria Station and creating a much needed gateway to Victoria. In this respect the council would fully support a significant intervention on the site over a minimalist option – the replacement of the existing buildings in their present footprint would arguably represent a lost opportunity.
- 6.4.4. Any scheme must respect the historic context of the area, and utilise opportunities that existing buildings present for sensitive regeneration. A revised built form here could provide revitalised accommodation and the opportunity for an enhanced townscape setting as well as transport and public realm benefits.
- 6.4.5. Although Terminus Place lies outside of any conservation area and does not contain listed buildings, the site does lie within the safeguarding area for the Chelsea-Hackney Line and above the District and Circle underground lines and a substantial electrical substation, all of which must be taken into account when future redevelopment schemes are considered, as well as the setting of Victoria Station and the Grosvenor Gardens Conservation Area.
- 6.4.6. The street block comprising „Terminus Place’ highlighted in yellow in the following photograph (Figure 23) needs careful consideration in terms of:
- Integration of LUL/bus operations including the bus station;
  - The potential development of the Chelsea-Hackney line through Victoria;
  - Pedestrian access and environment;
  - Impact on the setting of the Grosvenor Gardens Conservation Area, listed railway station and hotel.

6.4.7. These matters require comprehensive consideration to bring about a policy compliant scheme. Co-operation would be needed to allow any viable scheme to go ahead.



Figure 23: Terminus Place as viewed from the south. (Source: aerial photo from bing.com).

## 6.5 Broad Sanctuary and surrounds

- 6.5.1. Broad Sanctuary at the other end of Victoria Street is dominated by the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre (QEII CC) which contains 7 floors of conference and event space and is currently operated by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG). It was designed by Powell and Moya in concrete and steel and features full height glazing and slatted aluminium screens. The northern side of Broad Sanctuary was similarly designed by Powell and Moya and features a raised lawn with battered granite perimeter wall.
- 6.5.2. The Government announced that it was to sell the QEII Conference Centre (QEII CC) in its Pre-Budget Report April 2009 and the site is now subject to a Drivers Jonas Deloitte planning study.
- 6.5.3. DCLG is pursuing a Certificate of Immunity from listing to seek immunity against the Centre's listing for a 5 year period. This is currently being considered by English Heritage. The building is within a Conservation Area, and any plans brought forward by a prospective purchaser will be subject to the full planning controls in place and will require planning permission from the council.
- 6.5.4. Conference facilities are only appropriate in those areas that are very commercial in character as they generate significant activity. Should the Conference Centre come up for redevelopment in the future, then the site could be considered appropriate for the provision of an additional mix of uses under Core Strategy policy CS1, to support the



Conference Centre's function. An ancillary hotel use *could* be considered at this site subject to the usual policy considerations, however the council would expect the existing conference centre to be maintained as it is protected as a use of national importance under Core Strategy policy CS26.



Figure 24: The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre as viewed from Victoria Street (Source: WCC iLookAbout January 2011).

- 6.5.5. Taking into account the significance of Parliament Square as a political and symbolic focal point for the country, the surrounding public realm is of a relatively poor standard. The council would like to see an improvement in the quality of the public realm, and to this end has identified five separate areas, studies and design works which may be taken further at an appropriate time. These areas are shown on the image below.
- 6.5.6. Generally speaking, any works around the QEICC have to be deferential to the role and significance of this area. This includes the setting of Westminster Abbey and the rest of the adjoining World Heritage site. The council is of a view that the present use of the QEICC should be maintained, particularly in respect of the identified lack of similar facilities in Central London and to encourage Westminster's own World class city status. It should also be noted that QEICC is noted as an Unlisted Building of Merit in the conservation area Audit for Westminster Abbey and Parliament Square.
- 6.5.7. Any public realm works should also tie into the adjacent UK Supreme Court project and consider pedestrian crossing issues at Parliament Square as well as Victoria Street.

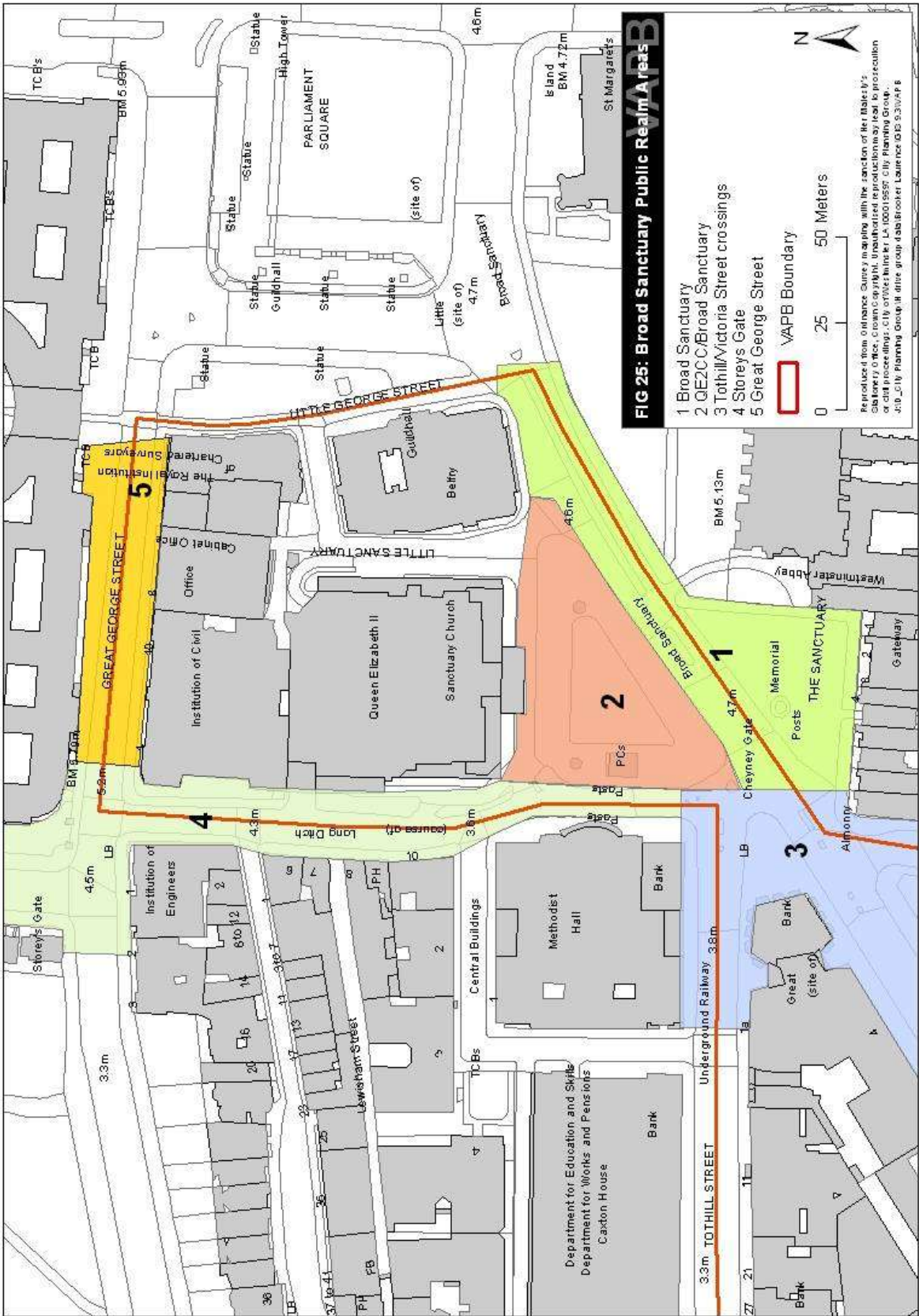


Figure 25: Broad Sanctuary Public Realm Areas

## 6.6 Broadway

- 6.6.1. This area is dominated by St James's underground station which has a number of entrances on Broadway, Petty France and Palmer Street. The station itself opened in 1868 and has since been reconstructed twice – the latter of which was in 1929 when the above building at 55 Broadway was built. A map of Broadway and surrounds is provided below in Figure 25.
- 6.6.2. Improvements to the public realm here have the potential to visually and functionally link these currently fragmented areas, enhance the sense of place and deliver much-needed improvements to the pedestrian environment.
- 6.6.3. 55 Broadway is a Grade I Listed Building and any proposals that affect the building or its setting must assess the impact on the significance of this building.
- 6.6.4. TfL are currently investigating the potential to redevelop the station building itself at 55 Broadway, although any potential to do so is considerably limited by heritage considerations, structural constraints of the District and Circle Line, fragmented surrounding land interests and also demanding construction arrangements.
- 6.6.5. Lying outside any Conservation Area or strategic view, the areas to the south of Petty France between Buckingham Gate and Broadway also have redevelopment potential.
- 6.6.6. There is a need to improve access to St James's Park's Palmer Street entrance and pedestrian crossings to the 55 Broadway entrance of the main ticket hall. The key opportunity area is the double triangular space on the two frontages of 55 Broadway created by the east-west arm and the northern end of the north-east/south-west arm of Broadway. Development schemes in the vicinity will be encouraged to deliver public realm schemes in this area or contribute towards enhancements through planning obligations.

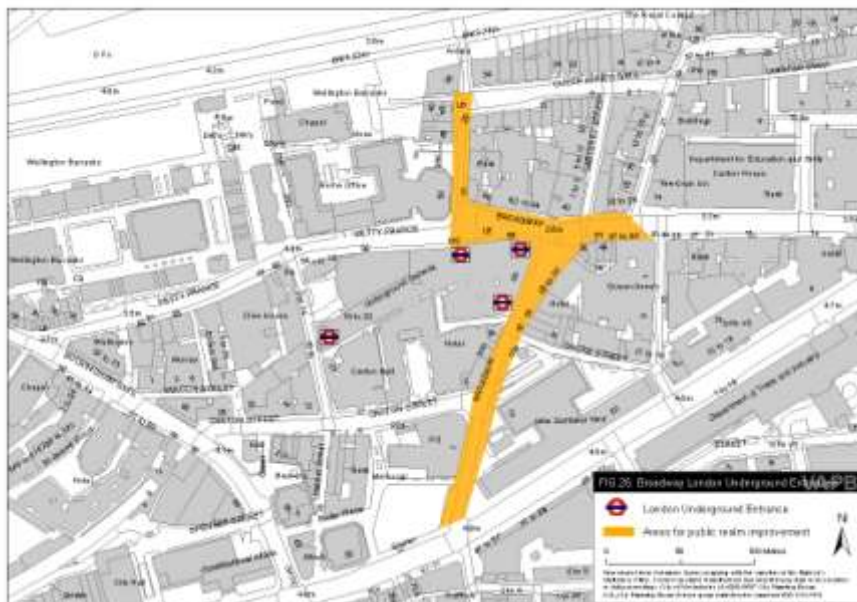


Figure 26: Broadway Tube Entrances.

## 6.7 Victoria Coach Terminal

- 6.7.1. The Coach Station is located to the south west of the Network Rail Station in the street blocks bounded by Semley Place, Ebury Street, Eccleston Place and Buckingham Palace Road. It has occupied its current site on the corner of Buckingham Palace Road/Elizabeth Street since 1932, with an expansion into the old Samuelson's Coach Garage in Eccleston Place at the beginning of the 1980s. It is a national coach station, served by national and international coaches from all over the UK and Europe. 12 million passengers use Victoria Coach Station every year<sup>65</sup>.
- 6.7.2. The Victoria Coach Station site is a complex building with important public transport interfaces (see Figure 27 below). Since January 2005, TfL has been reviewing options for Victoria Coach Terminal. In March 2007 TfL advised the council of the progress of a three part study to review the capability of Victoria Coach Station to meet projected national demand and options for alternative sites. As a result of the study it was deemed appropriate to develop the current site. However, these plans are currently not being pursued. Grosvenor, who owns the freehold of part of the Coach Station departures terminal and the adjoining land constrained by the Coach Station, has also expressed an interest in pursuing a full-scale, mixed-use redevelopment of the site. Despite this, the likelihood and viability of a comprehensive upgrade of the coach terminal is unlikely in the near future.
- 6.7.3. The Central London Sub-Regional Transport Plan<sup>66</sup> sets out the Mayor's commitment to work with all relevant partners to investigate the feasibility of developing a series of coach hubs or the potential for alternative locations for coach facilities and for the capacity and demand for coaches at Victoria Coach Station to be monitored to determine the likely timescale for this work.



Figure 27: Victoria Coach Station as viewed from Elizabeth Bridge

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65 Central London Sub-Regional Transport Plan December 2010  
66 December 2010

- 6.7.4. Any further growth of the station itself will generally be resisted by the council. Opportunities to review how the coach station operates on a regional as well as local level should be pursued, and further studies should be carried out into how its operations can reduce impacts – both on the traffic network and residential and business environment. High priority should be given to resolving the problems of capacity at and around the Coach Station, to addressing poor links from there to other transport modes, and to making adequate and convenient taxi provision at the coach station. The primary objectives for the Coach Station at present should be focused on improving the pedestrian links between the Victoria Interchange and the Coach Station through provisions of wider pavements, step free access and more direct junctions and crossings and improved way finding. Legible London should be used to link the coach station to the rest of the Victoria transport interchange.
- 6.7.5. Coaches offer the potential to move large numbers of people at the budget end of the market, however, the detriment to the amenity and environment caused by unnecessary coach journeys into Victoria should not be overlooked, nor should the burden it places on the local road network and the council would welcome the relocation of the coach station to a more appropriate location, where it would have less of an impact on residential amenity. The Council will work with Grosvenor and TfL to review how best to improve the coach station site and its operation.
- 6.7.6. Should the Coach Station be relocated, then the site could be considered appropriate for mixed residential use under Core Strategy policy CS1.
- 6.7.7. Current coach provision is also provided informally in and off Bulleid Way and in streets such as Buckingham Palace Road, Grosvenor Gardens and Terminus Place (see Figure 18). Solutions need to address and resolve the problems related to coaches in their entirety.

#### Other schemes under consideration

- 6.7.8. Ebury Gate on Lower Belgrave Street is bounded by 2 Conservation Areas and falls within the safeguarding route of the Chelsea-Hackney Line (see Section 5 above). Although not listed, there are a number of listed buildings in the vicinity of this site. The building has planning permission for a roof level extension to create additional office floor space and 2x self-contained residential units (see application number 07/08295/FULL). British Land Plc is considering a number of options for the building including a major refurbishment to increase the amount of commercial floor space or a complete redevelopment of the site.
- 6.7.9. In March 2009 the council approved the redevelopment of the former Selborne House (currently known as 62 Buckingham Gate at 54-60 Victoria Street) and Wellington House both of which have now been demolished. Ageing buildings such as City Hall are likely to be the subject of planning proposals in the near future. Redevelopment plans are already being considered for Kingsgate House, 66-74 Victoria Street. Recent changes in ownership of other key sites arising from the potential relocation of Transport for London away from sites in the Victoria area may also stimulate change along Victoria Street and in the wider area.
- 6.7.10. The ground floor layout of New Scotland Yard on all of its 3 sides could be significantly improved as regards its appearance and measures to achieve this would be welcomed, without prejudicing the need for security and operational access.

6.7.11. If, in some future time, the opportunity arises to redevelop all or part of the existing buildings, the provision of active frontages and uses and suitability laid out pedestrian facilities on Victoria Street and Broadway would be welcome improvements.

## 7. Implementation

7.0.1 Implementation of the objectives of this brief is largely subject to the aspirations of transport providers and major landholders/developers. However, the council has a framework in place to work with both of these parties to identify and secure improvements to the Victoria area. This section provides an overview of this framework.

### 7.1 Partnership

7.1.1. The council is one of a number of organisations working to manage and deliver change in the Victoria area. The council has a strong record of effective partnerships and works closely both formally and informally with other government departments and stakeholders.

#### Victoria Station Review Group

7.1.2. The Victoria Station Review Group (VSRG) is an officer-level group established in December 2005 and is comprised of representatives from TfL, GLA, Westminster City Council, LUL, the Victoria Coach Station (VCS), Network Rail and specific developers involved. Primarily, VSRG provides an inter-agency forum for discussion of projects, programmes and priorities which affect the Victoria area. Where appropriate, VSRG can inform the planning application process, however the council and GLA retain all statutory planning powers and responsibility for decision-making and probity.

7.1.3. In addition to this, VSRG could potentially provide the forum for commissioning a surface level study to provide options for improving public realm and pedestrian movement at Victoria. The study could take into account ground level transport modes such as buses and taxis and the below surface pedestrian movement generated by proposed Underground schemes at Victoria such as VSU and the future Chelsea Hackney Line using the existing TfL 'Legion' models as a basis for analysis. The study could have the following outputs:

- identifying pedestrian crossing and footway improvements;
- cycle access and cycle parking;
- street furniture audit and de-cluttering;
- way finding signage implementation (including Legible London);
- revised station servicing and taxi location and movement; and
- options for the location of bus stops, stands and services.

7.1.4. Land Securities are in discussions with the council in relation to their plans for public realm improvements in Victoria Street that are likely to take many of these issues into account.

#### Cross River Partnership

7.1.5. The Cross River Partnership is a public, private and voluntary sector run regeneration agency that has been working to spread physical, economic and social wealth across the boroughs of Westminster, the City, Lambeth and Southwark since 1995. The Cross

River Partnership is represented on the South Westminster Steering Group which oversees the delivery of the renewal plan for the area. As well as its physical environmental and transport regeneration programmes, Cross River Partnership runs a number of highly successful economic and social programmes. These are targeted at increasing employability, improving skills, strengthening business and education links, supporting businesses, and fostering start up enterprise.

#### Victoria Partnership Limited/Victoria BID<sup>67</sup>

7.1.6. Victoria Partnership Limited was set up in 2007 as a public/private sector led strategic regeneration partnership created by landowners and developers to secure Victoria as a destination of choice.

7.1.7. The aim of the partnership was to ensure that the benefits of regeneration were captured and invested locally to the advantage of the wider community. The partnership was committed to encouraging sustainable development in Victoria and commenced initiatives to improve waste management and energy efficiency for commercial occupiers in the area to encourage carbon reduction in Victoria.

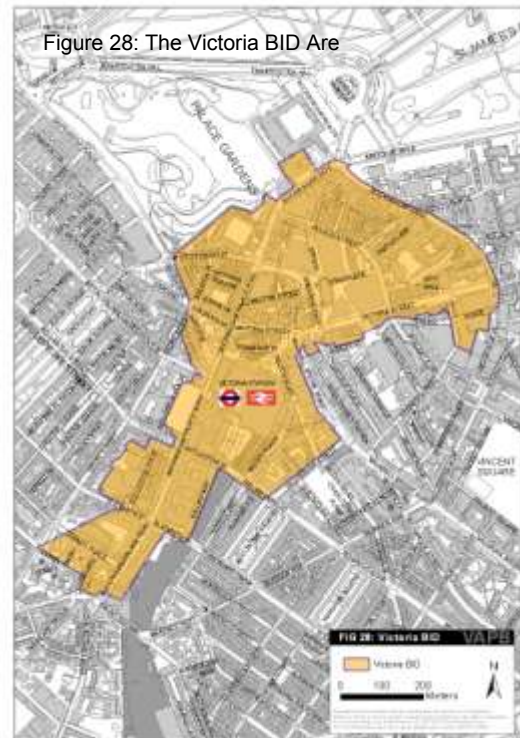
7.1.8. Following a successful vote amongst businesses in November 2009, the Victoria Partnership transformed into a Business Improvement District (BID) in April 2010. The BID's purpose is to bring together the business community to help shape and influence Victoria's future development and infrastructure, positioning Victoria as a vibrant and thriving destination.

7.1.9. The BID provides a flexible funding mechanism to improve and manage a clearly defined commercial area. It is based on the principle of an additional levy on all defined ratepayers following a majority vote.

7.1.10. After being endorsed by the council earlier in the year, the Victoria BID was passed in a ballot on 29 October 2009 and went live at the start of April 2010. The Victoria BID levy will raise approximately £7.8 million (inclusive of landlord contributions) to be spent exclusively in the BID area over its 5 year life. A levy of 1% will be applied to the rateable value of each defined ratepayer<sup>68</sup> in the BID area, raising approximately £1.5million per year (inclusive of landlord contributions).

7.1.11. The BID will seek to change the perception of the BID area as merely a transport hub to one of a cosmopolitan business district.

7.1.12. A map of the BID area is provided in Figure 28.



67 For further information on Victoria BID see: <http://www.insw1.com>.

68 With a rateable value equal to or greater than £100,000.



7.1.13. The Operating Agreement that sets out how the council will collect the BID levy was signed by the Victoria BID in early 2010.

## 7.2 Funding mechanisms<sup>69</sup>

7.2.1. These funding mechanisms are based in part on those already in use at the former Paddington Special Policy Area. At Paddington these have helped ensure satisfactory development, co-ordinated development and activity whilst mitigating impacts on the local community.

### Planning obligations

7.2.2. The council's SPG on planning obligations<sup>70</sup> provides guidance on the securing of planning benefits from development. Some examples of the benefits intended to be secured in the Victoria area are likely to include:

- affordable housing;
- in kind works or financial contributions towards public transport requirements;
- new public and private open spaces and accompanying management;
- in kind works or financial contributions towards social and community facilities;
- contributions towards the Environmental Inspectorate;
- facilitation/contribution of employment and training initiatives;
- improvements to theatres within the brief area; and
- provision and management of public toilets.

### The impact of Crossrail Funding

7.2.3. The Mayor of London published London Plan alterations: „Use of planning obligations in the funding of Crossrail' in April 2010 and these are now part of the current London Plan. The associated Supplementary Planning Guidance was published in its final form in July 2010 and sets out a requirement for financial contributions from commercial uses over certain thresholds in London, This planning obligation tariff is intended to raise a sum of £300 million for Crossrail.

7.2.4. The Victoria Planning Brief area is within the „central London charging area' defined in the Mayor's SPG and as such a charge will apply to commercial developments over the defined thresholds. The charge ranges from £60 to £137 per square meter (with 20% discount applied in the period to March 2013). Developers should refer to the SPG to establish how these requirements will apply to any commercial element of their proposals

7.2.5. In January 2011, the Mayor published proposals for a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which is intended to raise a further £300 million towards the delivery of Crossrail. It is anticipated that the CIL will be payable on most new developments with 100 sqm or more gross internal floor space and one or more residential dwellings from spring 2012. A public examination on the Mayor's proposals for a CIL is expected in autumn 2011. At this stage the Mayor is proposing (and is legally able to) charge the CIL *in*

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69 Note that this section should be read in conjunction with the s106 SPG and Policy STRA 7 of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). Note that the ODPM Circular 05/2005 issued in July 2005 supports the approach set out in this brief in regards to planning obligations.

70 City of Westminster Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning Obligations. Adopted January 2008.

*addition* to the planning obligation payment described in paragraph 7.24 above. However, the Mayor has indicated that where CIL is payable this can be deducted from the amount that would normally be sought under the requirements of his SPG.

#### Victoria Area Transport Schemes

7.2.6. Victoria Area Transport Schemes (VATS) is a mechanism for identifying opportunities to improve public transport in the area. It also provides a means of assessing the transport requirements of new development and includes provision for a fund or provision of in-kind works provided through section 106 planning obligations to address the transport requirements at Victoria. The role of VATS includes the following:

- Maintain a short, medium and long term list of required transport improvements and projects of varied scales.
- Consider the scale of financial contribution (or type of in-kind benefit) appropriate for proposed development, taking into account the extent to which individual proposals directly address the identified transport requirements at Victoria.
- Consider which transport improvements should be funded by financial contributions from each development.
- Consider how and when contributions should be spent

7.2.7. This mechanism will be established and operated by the VSRG. As the Statutory Planning body with the powers to enter into section 106 agreements, any financial contributions collected towards VATS will be paid to and held in account by the council. The council will be responsible for monitoring the expenditure of this money, and will have the final say over issues of probity. The council will also monitor the in-kind benefits provided as part of development proposals to make sure that the section 106 obligations are fulfilled.

#### Victoria Area Traffic and Environmental Management Schemes

7.2.8. Victoria Area Traffic and Environmental Management Schemes (VATEMS) are similar to VATS. However rather than focusing on transport projects themselves, it instead aims to address the street level relationship between traffic/parking pressures and both the street environment and amenity. In the short and medium term, VATEMS would be likely to concentrate on a range of actions to support and develop the more strategic and longer term projects, for example:

- Agree and implement an incremental de-clutter strategy for the public realm
- Review all parking, loading, bus stop and stand provision
- Review traffic/pedestrian signing strategies and signs
- Review all street lighting
- Review traffic signal timings for vehicles and pedestrians

7.2.9. It is intended that the VSRG will also operate this program, once established. It is expected that site specific programmes to address the above will be developed and priority will be given to those affecting schemes linked to VATS. Westminster Way will guide the implementation of this scheme.

7.2.10. Notably, a financial contribution towards VATS/VATEMS and substantial in-kind improvements has already been negotiated at Abford House („The Peak’, at the junction of Victoria Street/Wilton Road).

#### Victoria Social and Community Fund

7.2.11. The aim of the Victoria Social and Community Fund is to facilitate the integration of developments with the local community. The needs of the community have already been identified to some extent by existing studies carried out in South Westminster<sup>71</sup>. This work will be used to identify whether in-kind contributions towards community benefits or financial contributions from developments will be required.

7.2.12. The Victoria Social and Community Fund would operate in a similar way to the successful fund in Paddington. Here the owners and developers of the major development sites around the former Paddington Special Policy Area make financial contributions towards a fund, with each contribution prescribed in legal agreements. A number of local community groups and voluntary organisations have been granted money from the Social and Community Fund, with nearly £3 million allocated so far to social and community projects in the area.

7.2.13. As mentioned in Section 4 above, there may be potential to improve existing social facilities as one off schemes through the pooling of funds from development. For example, financial contributions could be used to secure improvements to voluntary sector day centres, to increase the amount of special needs and affordable housing on the site and upgrade the existing housing provision.

7.2.14. In such a case, the estimated capital cost of redeveloping and improving a facility and services offered by that facility where there is an established/recognised need for improvement, could be converted, using the council’s affordable housing financial contribution formulae, into a specified number of affordable housing units/floor space/„credits’, that could be purchased by developers and used to offset the requirement for affordable housing as dictated by the council’s planning policies for future residential developments over a specified size, in the vicinity in Victoria.

7.2.15. This approach would not automatically be appropriate elsewhere and should not be taken as setting precedence for future schemes. There is still clearly a need for the council to require new residential units and floor space to meet current and anticipated future demand for housing, including affordable housing.

#### Compulsory purchase

7.2.16. Compulsory purchase powers<sup>72</sup> are an important tool for local authorities to use as a means for assembling the land needed to help deliver social and economic change. The council normally uses these powers in support of its duties either under the housing legislation, in order to remedy poor housing conditions or in order to overcome problems of use, such as in Soho.

7.2.17. In October 2009, the council resolved to make a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) to facilitate the VT12 development scheme on the grounds that there was a compelling

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71 For example, the South Westminster Renewal Plan and South Westminster Steering Group

72 These powers are provided for under Section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 99 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). Other powers to override easements are provided under Section 237 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

case in the public interest to allow such a significant development to proceed. Land Securities are already the owner of the greater part of the site and have also been developing proposals over the last decade to bring forward a comprehensive scheme to realise both the council's and Mayor's policy aspirations.

- 7.2.18. A CPO was deemed to be required in respect of VT12 to ensure that the few remaining properties could be acquired and to bring in issues of wayleaves, leases, craneage rights and other issues necessary for the construction of the scheme. No other area in the city currently has an opportunity to deliver such a range of benefits in terms of policy and the creation of such a mix of uses (including a library/community facility<sup>73</sup>) on one major site over the next five to seven years, linked as it is to the LUL VSU scheme and adjacent to future development and transportation projects elsewhere in the Victoria area.
- 7.2.19. The VT12 CPO notice was served in January 2011. Further discussion of the CPO for VT12 is provided in the Cabinet Member reports, from September 2009 and October 2009 respectively, on the matters which have been attached to this brief as an appendix.
- 7.2.20. It should be noted that the adjacent Victoria Station Upgrade (VSU) scheme also provided LUL with CPO powers, as approved by the Secretary of State in the same way.

### **7.3 Local initiatives**

#### SW1st and local employment

- 7.3.1. The local community should be able to benefit from the employment and training opportunities presented by major developments at Victoria. To achieve this, the council established „SW1st'. This is an employment agency which seeks to place local people into jobs with both existing employers and those created by the construction and subsequent occupation of the new developments. SW1st is funded through a mix of developer and public contributions and is similar to Paddington First (which was established by the Paddington Waterside Partnership).
- 7.3.2. SW1st is intended to work with new and expanding employers in the area to fill vacancies arising from surrounding development. They provide recruitment services, matching and screening candidates prior to interview, help with Modern Apprenticeships and an outreach team to support local jobseekers<sup>74</sup>. Given the high number of people already employed in Victoria the agency would also work with existing businesses to fill vacancies with residents drawn from the South Westminster and nearby North Lambeth and Wandsworth areas.
- 7.3.3. The council will want developers to require their contractors to participate in the Building London Creating Futures scheme, to directly employ local people during the construction of developments through the use of Workplace Co-ordinators. There is also potential synergy with the work of Westminster Adult Education Service and other Cross River Partnership projects. In particular, the Adult Education Centre site at Ebury

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73 The VT12 CPO scheme includes library provision on the site, in Phase 3, or a financial contribution in lieu of the library provision if it subsequently can not be provided on site.

74 For further information on SW1st see: <http://www.sw1st.org.uk/>.

Bridge, which is likely to be redeveloped, may provide for further employment opportunities (see the adopted Ebury Bridge Planning Brief 2009).

#### Westminster Cathedral Piazza Draft Action Plan

- 7.3.4. In July 2009 the council adopted its Action Plan for Westminster Cathedral Piazza. This set out a vision for the piazza, as well as the council's proposals for short, medium and long term improvements and was developed in collaboration with the local community, businesses and other organisations (such as the Cathedral and The Passage).
- 7.3.5. The Action Plan contains a number of projects, schemes and initiatives that will help to deliver the vision for the area. Through these actions, the council aim to provide a well-managed, high quality public realm and a clean, safe environment for all those who live, work and visit the area. This will help promote the area and its unique features, whilst recognising its special significance as a place of worship, residential enclave and conservation area.
- 7.3.6. In 2010 the council considered a number of concept proposals for public realm improvement within the piazza, although these are not now being pursued. Any future schemes here will have to address the colonnades and the anti-social behaviour that they facilitate in the context of the grade I listed cathedral and the active use of its setting.
- 7.3.7. The council's Rough Sleeper Delivery Plan 2010/2011 seeks to deliver and sustain a reduction in the number of rough sleepers by 2012, to help the homeless and protect the community from anti-social behaviour associated with rough sleepers.

#### Westminster Howick Place Action Plan

- 7.3.8. A further action plan considers the redevelopment potential of Howick Place, opposite Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria Street.

## 7.4 Managing change

### Phasing of development

- 7.4.1. The potential scale of development at Victoria means that change will not happen all at once. Some of the projects already referred to in this planning brief have a long timescale for completion. For example, the VSU project is not programmed to be finished until 2016 and has a significant overlap with VT12 for which construction is expected to extend beyond 2018. Furthermore, work is unlikely to begin on the design of the Chelsea-Hackney Line until construction of Crossrail Line 1 is finished in 2017. Another significant consideration is the impact of the 2012 London Olympics (discussed separately below).
- 7.4.2. The phased construction of major developments will be controlled through Codes of Construction Practice through section 106 agreements, to ensure that:
  - the associated planning benefits are delivered in phases appropriate to the phases of development completed;
  - the construction impact of development can be effectively managed; and

- that uses are delivered sequentially in accordance with planning policy - for example, residential uses are available for occupation before or at the same time as offices.

### Codes of Construction Practice and Environmental Inspectorate

- 7.4.3. To deal with the impact of construction on the amenity of the area and the environment in general, (particularly for residents), the council will require, (through s106 agreements) developers to produce and for them and their contractors to comply with codes of construction practice. These will define environmental standards and outline procedures pertaining to construction works.
- 7.4.4. The codes will clarify both the developers' and their contractors' responsibilities and requirements, as well as providing assurances to residents, businesses and the general public about the standards that they can expect during construction. This includes environmental, public health and safety aspects affecting interests in the vicinity of the proposed construction sites. Activities and impacts covered by the codes will include site set-up and servicing arrangements, management of construction traffic and highway works, site management, public safety, noise and vibration, hours of working, dust and air pollution, land contamination, waste disposal and protection of water quality and urban ecology.
- 7.4.5. A site specific code of construction practice would be written for each development, with the primary aim being to protect residential amenity. Under Core Strategy policy CS28 the council will resist proposals that result in an unacceptable material loss of residential amenity and developments should aim to improve the residential environment. The phasing of works would also need to be carefully considered, particularly in respect of the various other developments taking place in the area.
- 7.4.6. Funding towards the actual cost of using the council's Environmental Inspectorate to monitor the work will also be required<sup>75</sup>. This has already been required of the recent developments a Cardinal Place, Abford House and Wilton Plaza. The council has also required that the VSU project also adopt the council's construction management standards.
- 7.4.7. The council takes this issue very seriously. Its Planning officers will continue to work with Environmental Health officers to minimise the impact of noise, vibration and air pollution caused by demolition and construction works and they will continue to engage with developers to see what measures can be implemented to limit the impact of all construction activities. LUL have agreed to give the council access to their real-time air quality data so that mitigation measures can be put in place should dust levels be increasing. The council expect all developers to follow good practice regarding the impact of construction and will be emphasising this point through development of policies in the forthcoming City Management Plan.

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75 See Policies ENV 5-6 of the UDP.

### Impact of the 2012 Olympics

- 7.4.8. The impact of the Olympic Games on the Victoria area is considered by TfL to be manageable. Though the District line provides direct access to both the Olympic Park and Wimbledon venues, it is considered that increases in demand can be managed at an operational level and a budget allocation has been provided for additional crowd management, information services and temporary measures.
- 7.4.9. Cultural and outdoor events associated with the Olympics in the immediate surrounding area (particularly Hyde Park, Green Park and St James's Park) may attract large numbers of pedestrians to the Victoria area. Enhanced streetscape and public realm management regimes are likely to be required.
- 7.4.10. The council however would expect further consideration of these impacts. Furthermore, any proposals for major development in and around Victoria will need to take account of the need to retain maximum flexibility and full operation capacity of the surrounding road network and the rail and Underground and bus facilities during 2012 itself. It is likely that there will be additional restrictions on construction programmes and works between April to November 2012.

## 7.5 Consultation

- 7.5.1. The council has a statutory duty to consult on planning applications. However, because of the likely scale of development the council will also endeavour to involve the local community in discussions where appropriate, and keep everyone informed about the progress of development proposals. Residents, businesses and visitors are all important stakeholders who should be consulted from the start about any significant development in the Victoria area. Large scale development proposals should ideally be supported by a Stakeholder Consultation Strategy, the purpose of which is to provide a consistent mechanism to inform external stakeholders.
- 7.5.2. Below are three key organisations within south Westminster that developers should consult on planning applications in order to understand the views of local residents and business.

### South Westminster Action Network (SWAN)

- 7.5.3. The South Westminster Action Network (SWAN) comprises a number of networks embedded in the heart of SW1 including the follow:
- South Westminster Neighborhood Network;
  - South Westminster Learning and Employability Network;
  - South Westminster Housing Network;
  - South Westminster Youth Providers Forum;
  - South Westminster Health Network.
- 7.5.4. SWAN has replaced the grant funded South Westminster Local Area Renewal Partnership (LARP) operating as a self-funding social enterprise within the structure of The Abbey Centre. The spirit of the LARP remains and SWAN will continue to campaign for the community of south Westminster by maintaining the LARP's unique programme of community and resident engagement along with the valuable partner

networks as set out above, through which they can build partnerships between services, residents and the wider community.

7.5.5. SWAN continues to identify need in south Westminster whilst raising awareness of major planning applications, community events, activities, new services, funding opportunities and forums to discuss ideas to improve the area.

7.5.6. SWAN has various mechanisms for engaging the community including the following:

- SW1 Neighbourhood Champion Scheme;
- Community Forum lunches;
- SW1 Community Newsletter (delivered to over 17,000 households);
- Community website ([www.southwestminster.org.uk](http://www.southwestminster.org.uk)).

7.5.7. It provides a genuine platform for organisations who want to get to the heart of the community quickly. They will work closely with any developer seeking to add social and economic value to their planning proposals. They can ensure that developments benefit: a) residents by addressing their genuine needs and b) developers by providing a framework for companies who seek to innovate through adding social value to their projects.

#### Victoria Interchange Group (VIG)

7.5.8. Formed by residents, the Victoria Interchange Group Ltd (VIG) is an unpaid umbrella group open to membership from Residents' and Tenants' Associations in South Westminster and to affiliates who share the same aims. Over thirty groups, including the Cathedral Area Residents' Group (CARG), the Belgravia Residents' Association, FREDA (Pimlico residents) and Westminster Cathedral are involved in, or working with, VIG.

7.5.9. VIG has responded to a number of planning and other applications in the vicinity of Victoria Station, with the aim to provide the relevant authorities with a co-ordinated and detailed residents' response. Most recently, VIG submitted a comprehensive response to the VT12 planning application and was an active party at the public inquiry into the VSU proposal.

#### The Westminster Society

7.5.10. The Westminster Society is a registered charity and is an amenity society for a substantial part of the southern half of Westminster. Its principal objective is the enhancement and conservation of the amenities of the City of Westminster, this being achieved by stimulating interest in its beauty and historical features, considering new architecture and encouraging the preservation of the river frontage, representing the interests of the residents of Westminster and similar activities.



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# Glossary

This glossary contains words, phrases and names of organisations that are mentioned in this brief and are relevant to the planning process.

## **Affordable housing**

Subsidised housing at below market prices or rents intended for those households who cannot afford housing at market rates. The accommodation is usually managed by a registered social landlord (RSL).

## **Business Improvement District (BID)**

Area defined under Part 4 of the Local Government Act 2003 where businesses, through a partnership arrangement, contribute by means of an annual levy over a period of up to five years, to provide funds to secure environmental improvements, to enhance local services such as street cleaning, and to carry out economic development activities within that area.

## **Central Activities Zone (CAZ)**

Area described in the UDP and LDF Core Strategy and shown on their respective Proposal Maps where the council envisages the maintenance or growth of Central London Activities. In the Core Strategy the CAZ comprises 8 locally distinct designations including the Victoria Opportunity Area which lies inside the „Core’ Central Activities Zone<sup>76</sup>.

## **Central London Activities**

Those uses listed in Chapter 1 of the UDP and suitable in the CAZ and CAZ Frontages including: shopping, tourism facilities, arts culture and entertainment uses, centres of excellence in higher education, medical facilities, diplomatic uses, the state and government, national and international headquarters, professional institutions and associations, media and publishing, fashion trades and other particular specialist industrial activities.

## **Central London Forward (CLF)**

The CLF comprises six of the boroughs in the Central Activities Zone (as defined in the London Plan), being: City of London, City of Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, Camden, Islington, and Southwark. Set up during 2007, the initiative emerged from the growing need to promote and make a case for Central London.

## **Character**

The distinctive or typical quality of an area as described by its historic fabric; appearance; townscape; and other land uses.

## **Circulars**

Government publications explaining procedural matters and legislation.

## **Code of Construction Practice**

A code of practice setting out environmental standards and constructions procedures for major developments.

## **Commercial floor space**

Floor space utilised by the following uses: offices, industry, warehousing, showrooms, hotels, retail, entertainment and private educational, health and leisure facilities, other than social and community uses that are principally provided by the public sector. This does not include residential use.

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<sup>76</sup> Planning applications referring to Core Strategy policies will be assessed against the Core Strategy’s CAZ definition and CAZ boundary designation.

### **Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) 2011**

Between 1999-2011 CABE was the government's advisor on architecture, urban design and public space. As a statutory body, it was funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

### **Committee**

This includes Westminster's Planning and City Development Committee and its Planning Applications Sub-Committee. These have powers to make most decisions in respect of planning applications and other development control matters. The Committee are made up of elected councillors who are not bound to follow the recommendations of planning officers when taking their decisions.

### **Commuted sum**

A financial payment made, in accordance with a planning agreement, by a developer towards the provision of, for example, affordable housing.

### **Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)**

Compulsory purchase powers are provided to enable acquiring authorities to compulsorily purchase land to carry out a function which Parliament has decided is in the public interest.

### **Conditions**

A restriction or qualification imposed when planning permission or other consent is granted under the Planning Acts. Conditions are required in law to be (i) necessary, (ii) relevant to planning, (iii) directly related to the proposed development, (iv) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development and (v) reasonable in all other respects.

### **Conservation Area**

An area of special architectural or historic interest designated by the local planning authority under the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

### **Core Strategy**

The core strategy is the principal development plan document contained within the Local Development Framework (LDF). It sets out the general spatial vision and objectives for delivery of the LDF and is a crucial part of it in that it positions the council as both a strategy maker and a deliverer of outcomes.

### **Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG)**

CLG was established in 2006 and is responsible for policy on local government, housing, urban regeneration, planning and fire and rescue.

### **Department for Transport (DfT)**

DfT was established in 2002 and is responsible for determining overall transport strategy and to manage relationships with the agencies responsible for the delivery of that vision.

### **Development**

The carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under the land; or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land, as defined in the Town and County Planning Act 1990 as amended. Unless it is defined under the Act as 'permitted development', planning permission is required for the carrying out of any development of land.



### **Development Plan**

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, in Greater London the development plan comprises the spatial development strategy prepared by the Mayor of London (known as the London Plan) and until they are replaced by development plan documents prepared under that Act (for Westminster these will comprise the Core Strategy and subsequent City Management Plan (CMP)), the unitary development plans prepared by the London Boroughs. If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### **Entertainment**

Uses which fall within Class D2 of the Revised (2005) Use Classes Order 1987. This includes cinemas, music and concert halls, dance, sports halls, swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums, other indoor and outdoor sports and leisure uses, bingo halls and casinos. It does not include theatres.

### **Environmental Inspectorate**

The council Inspectors operating in relation to the construction of major developments, to agree routine working arrangements for individual sites and ensure compliance with the Code of Construction Practice.

### **Greater London Authority (GLA)**

The GLA is part of the strategic government of London established in 2000. It is made up of a directly elected Mayor of London and a separately elected Assembly. In addition to the Mayor, the Assembly is also able to investigate other issues of importance to Londoners, publish its findings and make recommendations.

### **Gross Floor space**

Method of assessing the extent of building (or land) occupied by a use. This should be measured to include the overall dimensions of the building on each floor both above and below ground, including the thickness of all internal walls, half the thickness of party walls and the full thickness of external walls. If a site covers more than one property, party walls should be measured as internal walls except those party walls to properties not falling within the site.

Gross floor space should include all the following:

- stairs and lift shafts (to be measured for each floor);
- lobbies, corridors, reception areas;
- cloakrooms and toilets;
- storage and roofed plant areas (but see below);
- kitchens, cafeterias etc;
- operational voids e.g. for air conditioning ducting (to be measured for each floor);
- vaults.

Gross floor space should exclude all the following:

- voids in atria;
- internal light wells;
- double or triple height areas should be measured only once e.g. conference halls, theatres;
- screened but unroofed plant area or plant areas and other operational voids which are not reasonably capable of commercial or residential use;
- car parking space, loading/servicing bays and areas exclusively reserved for refuse storage.

In assessing entertainment uses against UDP Policies TACE 8, TACE 9 and TACE 10, gross floor space will be taken, in addition, to include open areas within the curtilage of the premises, such as forecourts, which are to be used for the positioning of tables and chairs for customers'

use. Such open areas will be excluded from the calculation of gross floor space under Policy CENT 3.

### **Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU)**

HUDU was established in 2004 with the principal role to support all of the 31 NHS Primary Health Care Trusts across London. A part of the NHS that has developed a model for calculating developer contributions for health facilities from new residential development.

### **Land Securities**

Land Securities are a Real Estate Investment Trust which owns a number of sites throughout the Victoria area.

### **Listed building**

A building contained in a list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest prepared by the Secretary of State for the Environment. Before any work can be carried out which affects the character or appearance of a listed building, inside or out, listed building consent is required.

### **Local Development Framework (LDF)**

The plan-making system introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to prepare a local development framework, which will comprise development plan documents, which will form part of the statutory Development Plan and supplementary planning documents (such as this planning brief) which will provide additional detail. The framework will also include the statement of community involvement, the local development scheme and the annual monitoring report.

### **The London Plan**

The spatial development strategy for Greater London. This was prepared by the Mayor of London under Part VIII of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 and was originally published by the Greater London Authority in 2004. Further alterations to the London Plan were published in 2006 and 2008, the latter which consolidated all alterations since 2004. A revised draft was consulted on in October 2009 and subjected to Examination in Public in summer 2010. It is anticipated that the revised draft will be adopted by the Mayor in late 2011.

### **London Underground Limited (LUL)**

LUL are a subsidiary company of TfL responsible for operating the London Underground train network. LUL owns in whole or in part more than 250 Underground stations.

### **Material considerations**

A factor which a local planning authority may take into account in making a decision on a planning application. In certain circumstances, such a factor, or a combination of them, may be sufficient to lead the authority to determine the application other than in accordance with the provisions of the development plan. Where that occurs, the factor or factors involved must, by law, be genuine planning matters relating to the development and use of land and must fairly and reasonably relate to the application concerned.

### **Mayor of London**

In addition to producing the London Plan, the Mayor prepares plans on issues including transport, environment, culture and land use. The Mayor directs the GLA and sets budgets for the GLA, Transport for London, the London Development Agency, the Metropolitan Police and London's fire services.

### **Mayors Transport Strategy**

This document was first published in 2001 and details the Mayors proposals for improving transport in London. This was subsequently updated in 2004 and 2006 and most recently in May 2010.

### **Network Rail**

In 2002, Network Rail took over the running of Britain's rail infrastructure. Network Rail is a private not-for-dividend company which is accountable to members drawn from the rail industry, the public and DfT.

### **Open Space**

Includes all parks and gardens, regardless of size (whether public or private); the River Thames and the canals and their towpaths; civic spaces; children's playgrounds, including school playgrounds; ball courts and other outdoor sports facilities; amenity green spaces, such as open spaces on housing estates; churchyards; and community gardens.

### **Opportunity Areas**

London's few opportunities for accommodating large-scale development to provide substantial numbers of new employment and housing, each typically more than 5,000 jobs and/or 2,500 homes, with a mixed and intensive use of land and assisted by good public transport accessibility. Opportunity Areas are identified conceptually in the London Plan and more specifically in local policy.

### **Permitted development**

Some development does not require planning permission from the council. Blanket permission is given to certain forms of development by the General Permitted Development Order.

### **Pimlico District Heating Undertaking (PDHU)**

PDHU is a community heating scheme where heat is generated at a central boiler house and distributed through a neighbourhood using a network of highly insulated underground pipes. PDHU was established in 1950 using waste energy from Battersea Power Station and became the first combined heat and power system in the United Kingdom. Further information is available at this web address: <http://www.cwh.org.uk/pdf/PDHUbrochure.pdf>.

### **Planning agreement**

See planning obligation.

### **Planning Brief**

A form of supplementary guidance that sets out the council's preferred development options for a site. Also known as development briefs.

### **Planning obligation**

A form of planning benefit secured through a legal agreement or undertaking within the provisions of s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This may be either an agreement between a local planning authority and an organisation or individual having an interest in land; or a unilateral undertaking given by an applicant for planning permission. An obligation usually involves a restriction on the use or development of land; or a specific requirement about an operation or activity to be carried out on land; or a requirement that land should only be used in a specified way; or the payment of a sum or sums of money.

### **Planning permission**

A written consent to the carrying out of development issued by a local planning authority or, on appeal, by a Planning Inspector or the Secretary of State. The permission is normally subject to conditions and will lapse if the development is not started within a stated period of time.

Planning permission for buildings may be in outline where the principle is approved, subject to the later submission of further applications for the approval of reserved matters.

**Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG)**

Government policy containing advice on planning issues. These are being replaced by PPSs (see below).

**Planning Policy Statements (PPS)**

Government policy containing advice on planning issues.

**Public Art**

Permanent or temporary works of art visible to the general public, whether as part of a building or freestanding: can include glazing, freestanding or relief sculpture, facade interventions, water features, lighting, performance, or any other artist intervention in the built environment.

**Public Open Space**

Land used by the public for recreation or as gardens which enjoys special protection. The loss of public open space is generally not permitted.

**Public Realm/Public Space**

Public realm (in its broadest definition) relates to all those parts of the built and natural environment - public and private, internal and external, urban and rural - where the public have free, although not necessarily unrestricted, access, including streets, squares and parks. For a more detailed description please see the glossary of the council's Westminster Way publication.

**Registered Social Landlord (RSL)**

Organisation registered with the Housing Corporation under the provisions in Chapter 1 of the Housing Act 1996. The organisations concerned may be housing associations which are registered charities, or non-profit-making provident societies or companies. They must provide housing kept available for letting, and meet other requirements set out in the Act.

**Residential Use**

As set out in the Use Classes Order (C3) Dwelling Houses unless otherwise stated.

**Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS)**

RUSs are used by Network Rail to analyse the future requirements of each rail route. These seek to balance capacity, passenger & freight demand, operational performance and cost, to address the requirements of funders and stakeholders. An RUS is being prepared for Kent and Sussex routes (the two routes which depart from Victoria Station), and are both awaiting establishment.

**Section 106 agreement**

An agreement or undertaking made under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure planning obligations.

**Social, Community and Cultural Facilities**

Most social, community and cultural facilities are in classes C2, D1 and D2 of the Use Classes Order. Such facilities can include social service uses, health facilities, some leisure and recreation facilities such as libraries, theatres and general social uses such as community meeting facilities and community halls etc.

**Social and Community Fund (S&CF)**

A fund set up to support the local community in the designated area through s106 contributions.

**South Westminster Renewal Partnership (SWRP)**

South Westminster Renewal Partnership is one of Westminster's five Local Area Renewal Partnerships (LARPs). These were set up in Westminster's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, funded by the Westminster City Partnership in 2004.

**Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

Formally adopted policy statements that either elaborate key policies set out in the UDP/LDF or set out how policies apply to a particular site. They are prepared to cover particular development topics, or area-based issues, such as planning briefs. SPDs, such as planning briefs, are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. These documents were formally known as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG).

**Transport for London (TfL)**

TfL is a statutory corporation which was created in 2000. It is a functional body of the GLA, accountable to the Mayor, and is the integrated body responsible for the Capital's transport system.

**Transport Interchange**

In the context of Victoria, 'transport interchange' refers to the station and area immediately surrounding the mainline railway station, including over ground and underground train stations, bus terminus and coach station, and sites for proposed new tube station entrances.

**UDP (Unitary Development Plan)**

Plan prepared under Part II, Chapter 1 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 by a local planning authority for its area. Every London borough was required to prepare a unitary development plan for its area under the provisions of that Act. Unitary development plans will be replaced by a Local Development Framework (see LDF). Westminster's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted by Full council on the 24 January 2007. The majority of Part 2 UDP policies (those that have not been replaced by the Core Strategy) will remain current until they are formally deleted and/or replaced by other policies and should therefore be used alongside the Core Strategy and London Plan policies.

**Victoria Area Traffic and Environmental Management Schemes (VATEMS)**

Victoria Area Traffic and Environmental Management Schemes is similar to VATS (see below). However rather than focusing on transport projects themselves, it instead aims to address the street level relationship between traffic/parking pressures and both the street environment and amenity.

**Victoria Area Transport Schemes (VATS)**

Victoria Area Transport Schemes is a mechanism for identifying opportunities to improve public transport in the area. It also provides a means of assessing the transport requirements of new development and includes provision for a fund or provision of in kind works provided through section 106 planning obligations to address the transport requirements at Victoria.

**Victoria Coach Station (VCS)**

VCS provides an arrival and departures facility for coaches in London. It is operated by Victoria Coach Station Limited, a subsidiary company of TfL.

**Victoria Interchange Group (VIG)**

Formed by residents, the Victoria Interchange Group Ltd is an unpaid umbrella group open to membership from residents' and tenants' associations in South Westminster.

**Victoria Opportunity Area (VOA)**

The Victoria Opportunity Area broadly aligns with and covers a significant proportion of the Victoria Planning Brief area including Victoria Station and the VT12 site. Opportunity Areas provide London's principle opportunities for accommodating large-scale development with substantial numbers of new employment and housing opportunities in areas of good public transport accessibility.

**Victoria Social and Community Fund**

The aim of the Victoria Social and Community Fund is to facilitate the integration of developments with the local community.

**Victoria Station Review Group (VSRG)**

VSRG was established in December 2005 and is comprised of representatives from TfL, GLA, City of Westminster, LUL, VCS, Network Rail and specific developers involved. Primarily, VSRG provides an inter-agency forum for discussion of projects, programmes and priorities which affect the Victoria area.

**Victoria Station Upgrade (VSU)**

The VSU project proposes significant improvements to Victoria Underground Station and is a key part of TfL's investment programme.

**Victoria Transport Interchange (VT11/VT12)**

These were two major development schemes proposed by Land Securities. The Planning and Development Committee provided recommendations on VT11 and VT12 on 6 December 2007 and 5 February 2009 respectively, with the conditional planning permission granted for the latter. VT12 was subsequently fully approved in October 2009.

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