



GENERAL INFORMATION LEAFLET

WESTMINSTER 26 CATHEDRAL Conservation Area



City of Westminster

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND CITY DEVELOPMENT
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING SERVICES MAY 2004

TO VIEW CONSERVATION AREA MAP
[CLICK HERE](#)
FOR LINK TO
WESTMINSTER MAPPING SYSTEM

Designation: First designated in 1968; extended in 1977, and in 1993 to include the north part of Francis Street and Greencoat Place.

Historical Background: The site of Westminster Cathedral, known in medieval times as Bulinga Fen, was originally marshland reclaimed by the Benedictine monks of Westminster Abbey and used as a market. It was later used as a pleasure garden and a bull baiting ring. In 1826 a women's prison was built, the Middlesex County prison. The site was bought by Cardinal Manning in 1867 and the Roman Catholic Cathedral was subsequently constructed (Bentley, 1895-1903) along with associated residential buildings for the Clergy. Victoria Street was constructed in the 1850's and 60's through an area of slums and was quickly followed by the opening of Victoria Station in 1862. Victoria Street was remarkable in its time for the even height and scale of the buildings. The red brick mansion blocks to Carlisle Place, Morpeth Terrace, Ambrosden Avenue and Thirleby Road were constructed in the 1890's and early 20th century. They are amongst the earliest blocks of flats to be built in London. Westminster Cathedral was hidden from Victoria Street up until the late 1970's when a comprehensive development of the whole of the south side of the street from Vauxhall Bridge Road down to the Army and Navy Stores provided the opening up of a piazza in front of the Cathedral. The redevelopment of No. 46 Francis Street in 1993/94, has provided new facilities for the Cathedral.

Listed Buildings: Westminster Cathedral is listed Grade I; Cathedral Hall, Archbishop's House and Clergy House are listed Grade II*. The St. Francis Friary at 47 Francis Street is listed Grade II.

Key Features: The Conservation Area is dominated by the spectacular view of the Cathedral from Victoria Street across an open paved piazza. The Cathedral is in a Free Byzantine style of red brick with Portland stone bands and dressings with its campanile rising to some 284 feet in height. Adjacent in Ambrosden Avenue are further red brick buildings designed by Bentley as part of the Cathedral complex. The surrounding streets contain fairly uniform turn of the century redbrick mansion blocks with commercial, warehouse style red brick buildings to the north end of Francis Street. These include the Post Office sorting office, which is brick faced with mannerist decorations. In contrast, the modern office and retail development to the south side of Victoria Street comprises steel and smoked glass. The area contains a

substantial residential community and is a quiet backwater behind the busy traffic arteries of Victoria Street and Vauxhall Bridge Road.

Adjacent Conservation Areas: Vincent Square Conservation Area lies to the south east.

Strategic Views: Not affected.

Areas of Special Archaeological Priority: Not affected.

Article 4 Directions: None.

Regulation 7 Directions: None.

Planning Briefs and Design Guides: No guidelines specific to this area.

Spaces protected by the London Squares Act 1931: None.

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens: None within the Conservation Area.

Contacts:

Built Environment
Westminster City Council
City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP
Tel: **(020) 7641 2513**
PlanningInformation@westminster.gov.uk