

# CONSERVATION AREA AUDIT



SMITH SQUARE

21



City of Westminster

This conservation area audit is accurate as of the time of publication; 14 January 2005

Until this audit is next revised, amendments to the statutory list made after 14/01/2005 will not be represented on the map at Figure 10.

For up to date information about the listing status of buildings in the Smith Square Conservation Area please contact the council's South Area Planning Team on 020 7641 2681.

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This report is based on a draft prepared by Conservation Architecture and Planning.

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## **PREFACE**

Since the designation of the first conservation areas in 1967 the City Council has undertaken a comprehensive programme of conservation area designation, extensions and policy development. There are now 53 conservation areas in Westminster, covering 76% of the City. These conservation areas are the subject of detailed policies in the Unitary Development Plan and in Supplementary Planning Guidance. In addition to the basic activity of designation and the formulation of general policy, the City Council is required to undertake conservation area appraisals and to devise local policies in order to protect the unique character of each area.

Although this process was first undertaken with the various designation reports, more recent national guidance (as found in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 and the English Heritage Conservation Area Practice and Conservation Area Appraisal documents) requires detailed appraisals of each conservation area in the form of formally approved and published documents. This enhanced process involves the review of original designation procedures and boundaries; analysis of historical development; identification of all listed buildings and those unlisted buildings making a positive contribution to an area; and the identification and description of key townscape features, including street patterns, trees, open spaces and building types.

Given the number and complexity of Westminster's conservation areas the appraisal process has been broken down into three stages, the first of which is complete. This first stage involved the publication of General Information Leaflets or mini-guides for each conservation area covering in brief a series of key categories including Designation, Historical Background, Listed Buildings and Key Features.

The second stage involved the production of Conservation Area Directories for each Conservation Area. A Directory has now been adopted for 51 of the City's conservation areas and includes copies of designation reports, a detailed evaluation of the historical development of the area and analysis of listed buildings and key townscape features.

The City is now working on a programme to prepare Conservation Area Audits for each of its conservation areas. This will form the third and final stage of the appraisal process. As each audit is adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance it will incorporate the Directory for that conservation area.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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

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

1.3 The Audit describes both the historical development, and character and appearance of the conservation area. It is designed to identify and explain important local features such as unlisted buildings of merit, unbroken rooflines and local views. In addition the audit also seeks to apply relevant Unitary Development Plan policies to the local context in order to preserve and/or enhance the character and appearance of the area. The draft replacement Unitary Development Plan (RUDP), along with the UDP which was adopted in July 1997, is the statutory document setting out planning policies for Westminster.

1.4 The Audit for the Smith Square Conservation Area was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the Cabinet Member for Customer Services on 14 January 2005. Smith Square Conservation Area was first designated in 1969 as part of the larger Government Precinct Conservation Area. It was redesignated in 1987 as the Smith Square Conservation Area. The designation reports can be found in the first part of the Directory at the back of this document.

## 2 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

2.1 The area around Smith Square was first settled in medieval times, as the Westminster Palace and Abbey complex grew in importance and influence. The buildings serving the royal and religious centre at Westminster spread south over the southern branch of the Tyburn (approximately on the line of Great College Street) and into the northern part of the conservation area.

2.2 By the 1620's the population was expanding southward from Tothill Street. Great Peter Street, originally no more than a footway from St Peter's Abbey along Millbank, began to be bordered by houses and gardens. To the south of Great Peter Street, between Horseferry Road and the river, lay eight acres of the Abbey's vine gardens.

2.3 In 1621 Great Peter Street began to develop along with its eastern limb, Wood Street, which today runs through the Conservation area. This was named after the two Wood brothers who first built there. Gradually the neighbourhood around the horse ferry was also built over, east along the line of Market Street as seen on Morgan's map of 1682 (figure 1). During the 1700's the street was renamed Horseferry Road.

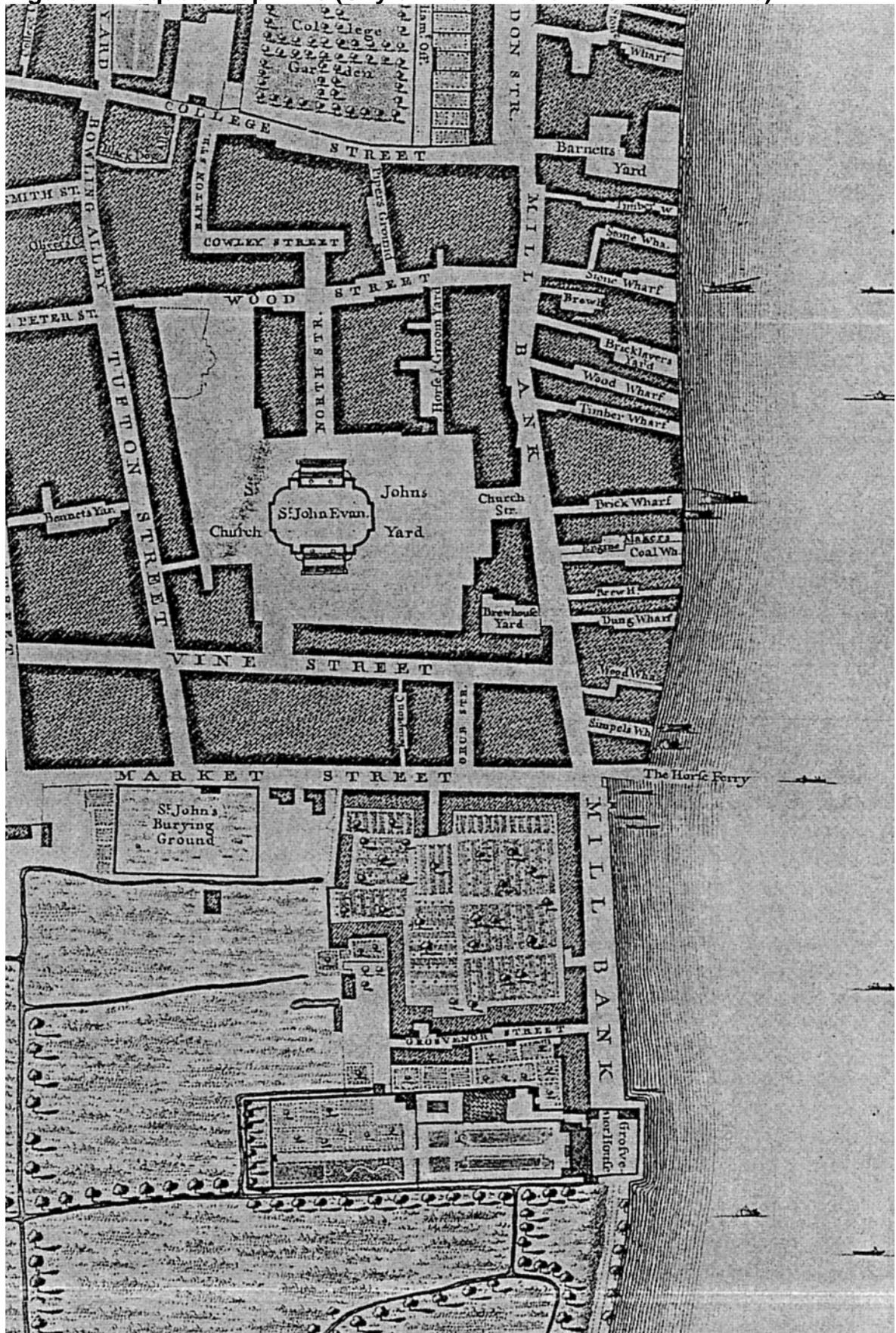
2.4 The land between Millbank and Tufton Street was acquired by Simon Smith and his son Henry, and the remainder passed onto the Marsham family of Mote, Maidstone. Throughout the period 1650-1670 the riverside became developed with barge-boarded buildings and wharf properties. The Abbey's vine gardens became market gardens, mostly remaining as such until the early nineteenth century. Housing began to be developed along the road sides which define the conservation area. Vine Street (now part of Romney Street) was described as a "pretty handsome open place" including a number of substantial houses. By the mid seventeenth century the area was still covered with trees apart from the reed beds on Millbank. In the 1680's Tufton Street contained a crop of indifferently built houses along its eastern side and Sir Robert Marsham was ready to let land to other builders.

2.5 Towards the end of the seventeenth century, properties began to be developed on land belonging to Sir James Smyth, between the Abbey and Horseferry Road. These streets define Smith Square and this road layout remains discernible today, having been little altered since the late medieval period.

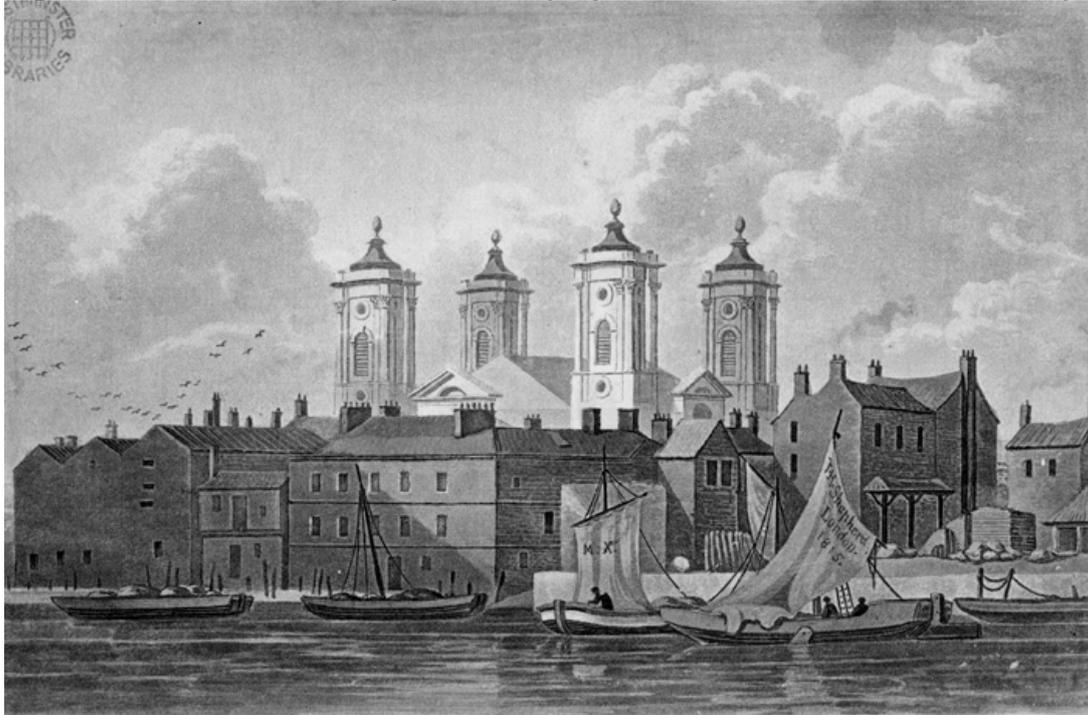
2.6 By the beginning of the 1700's the population of St Margarets' parish had been estimated at some 20,000. The Church Building Commissioners therefore identified it as a prime candidate for one of their intended 50 new publicly financed churches. They bought land between Tufton Street and Millbank from Henry Smith (who happened to be their church treasurer at that time) for the new church of St John the Evangelist. It turned out to be the most expensive of the new churches required by the act of Parliament in 1711 and cost £40,875.



Figure 2: Roque's Map 1746 (City of Westminster Archives Centre)



**Figure 3: St Johns Smith Square 1816 (City of Westminster Archives Centre)**



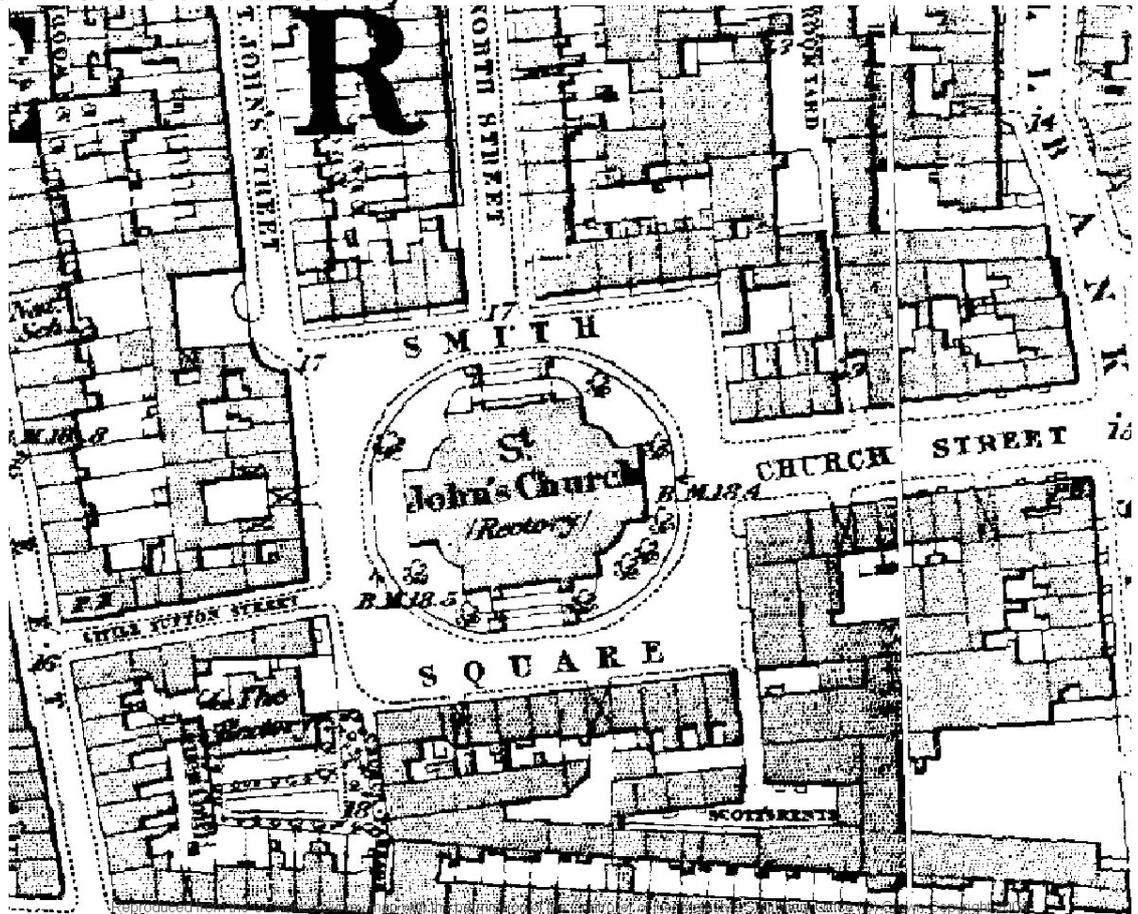
2.7 Unforeseen difficulties with the foundations meant that the church took 15 years to complete but was eventually consecrated on 20 June 1728. It was originally built between 1714-1728, upon a baroque design by the architect Thomas Archer. The four towers of his original design were to have had pinnacles but the plans were altered without his knowledge and the towers given cupolas, possibly for reasons of economy or because of trouble with the foundations. After a serious fire in 1742 the interior was reconstructed by James Horne and then later refurbished by William Inwood in 1824-5.

2.8 Around the same period, possibly encouraged by the building of the church, new residential development began to take place within the existing street layout. More land had been acquired from Henry Smith, this time by Barton Booth, a successful actor. He owned a country residence at Cowley, near Uxbridge and in 1722 he built up part of Great College Street, which he named Barton Street and Cowley Street.

2.9 The eighteenth century street plan remains virtually intact with only minor deviations. Smith Square itself has contracted around the church as more houses were built. Roques map of 1746 (figure 2) shows the church in a large open square with Horse and Groom yard leading to the northeast corner. In the Ordnance Survey map of 1870 (figure 4) a large portion of the square has been developed, so that Horse and Groom yard now leads onto Church Street (now Dean Stanley Street).

2.10 The next major phase of development saw the replacement of many domestic buildings with larger commercial or office buildings at the start of the twentieth century. The northern end of Tufton Street, the river frontage along Millbank and the south and east sides of Smith Square were all redeveloped between the end of the nineteenth century and the start of the Second World War. These buildings represent the last significant phase of development within this area.

Figure 4: 1870 Ordnance Survey



2.11

### 3 BOUNDARIES OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

3.1 Smith Square Conservation Area is located immediately to the south of the Palace of Westminster Conservation Area. It covers a mixed commercial and residential enclave centred on St Johns Smith Square and bounded to the south by Millbank, taking in an area of the embankment to the south of Lambeth Bridge.

Figure 5: Smith Square Conservation Area



### 4 CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

#### GENERAL

4.1 The character and hierarchy of spaces seen in Smith Square today is the result of complex historical processes. However the basic structure of the conservation area is defined by the underlying late medieval/early modern street pattern and the irregularly developed but formal quality of much of the post eighteenth century development superimposed on top of this.

4.2 The underlying late medieval structure can be seen most clearly in the northern part of the conservation area. Here the irregularly shaped Tufton Street, Millbank and Great College Street with their mixture of building types and scale reveal the older street layout on which the present houses were built. Along Great College Street, a length of medieval wall remains defining the northern boundary of the conservation area

4.3 Eighteenth century development is well represented on Lord North Street at the centre of the conservation area with its crisp building edge and consistent building height to street width ratio.

3.4 At the centre of the conservation area is Smith Square, the focal point and the most important public space in the conservation area. The square is almost filled by the former Church of St John the Evangelist at its centre. The dominating presence of the church is softened by the presence of informal mature gardens around its base and large London Plane trees. Today the four short streets giving onto the square have the feeling of a set piece, with each focusing on the centre of the church. In fact only Lord North Street and part of Dean Stanley Street are truly contemporary with the church.

Figure 6: St Johns from Lord North Street



The draft replacement Unitary Development Plan (RUDP) as agreed by full Council 13th December 2004, along with the UDP which was adopted in July 1997, is the statutory document setting out planning policies for developing land, improving transport and protecting the environment in Westminster. Relevant policies from the replacement UDP are referred to throughout the audit.

## HIERARCHY OF STREETS & OPEN SPACES

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

4.6 For the purposes of the conservation area audits the council has defined 3 categories of routes or spaces according to a combined analysis of their scale, level of enclosure and the function they perform within the area. These are:

Primary routes and spaces  
Secondary routes and spaces  
Intimate routes or spaces

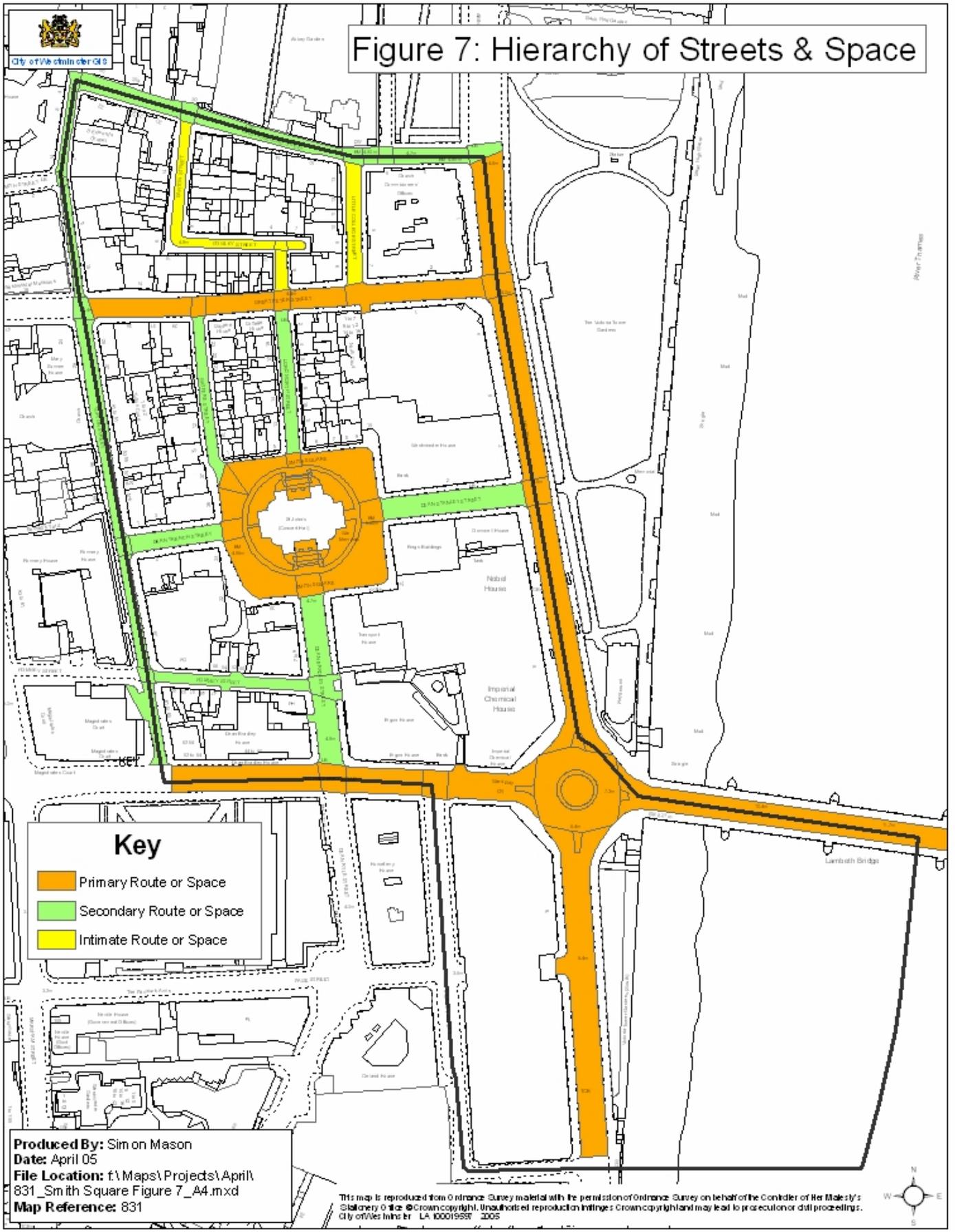
4.7 Given the prominence and importance of St Johns as a landmark and the larger scale of the buildings around the square, Smith Square is identified as a primary space. Primary routes also define the edges of the area and are busy traffic arteries. These are wider roads with a larger scale of development and include the portion of the River Thames within the conservation area, Millbank, Horseferry Road and Great Peter Street.

4.8 Within the Conservation Area, routes are more enclosed and the area has a quiet and intimate atmosphere. Romney Street, Gayfere Street, Tufton Street, Dean Bradley Street, Dean Stanley Street, Dean Trench Street, Lord North Street and Great College Street are identified as a secondary routes.

4.9 Smaller, primarily residential streets including Barton and Cowley Streets and Little College Street are identified as intimate routes.

4.10 The hierarchy of routes and spaces is shown on Figure 7.

Dominant patterns should be respected and where historic patterns remain these should be protected and reflected in any proposed schemes. Policies DES1 A 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and DES 12 should be consulted.



## **ARCHITECTURE**

### **Overview**

4.11 All of the buildings in Smith Square are characterised by high quality traditional materials and fine craftsmanship. Brick and Portland stone dominate the area, although there is some stucco. The 18<sup>th</sup> century houses are typified by Flemish bond brown brickwork, which contrasts dramatically with the Portland stone ashlar masonry of St John's Church. The large buildings to the south east are faced with stone, differentiating them from the smaller scale brick residential buildings further from the river.

4.12 Many of the 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings are constructed in fine hand made red and brown bricks in a variety of bonds with stone dressings. A group of houses in Gayfere Street is in yellow stock brick.

4.13 Roofs on the larger commercial properties are typically covered in natural slate, although ICI house on Millbank has an interesting lead roof and Westminster House on Dean Stanley Street has a green glazed tile roof. The eighteenth century residential properties to the north of the conservation area have predominantly tiled roofs.

4.14 Many buildings in the conservation area retain original, ornate rainwater goods, particularly the in the area of residential development to the north of Smith Square. These are found both in cast iron and lead.

### **Eighteenth Century**

4.15 The Smith Square Conservation Area contains an exceptionally well preserved enclave of early eighteenth century terraced town houses, part of the development of the area by Sir James Smyth. The north side of Smith Square, Lord North Street, Cowley Street, and Barton Street are all characterised by very similar development. This consists mainly of three storey brown brick terraces with mansards and basements, dating from c.1722-26. Roofs are tiled, some with dormers, and windows are timber sash throughout the area, often under flat gauged brick arches. Most of the terraces have fine cast iron railings to the basement lightwell, many with flambé torch finials. Some parts of the development have stucco to the ground floor and there are a variety of interesting door hoods and door cases. The importance of these properties is recognised by their status as grade II\* listed buildings. The general appearance, materials, roof form and height of the terraces on these roads is consistent, though there is some variation of details between individual builds. The area as a whole retains a sense of unity and architectural coherence.



Figure 8: 18<sup>th</sup> century properties on Smith Square

### **Early Twentieth Century**

4.16 The late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a spate of new buildings in the Smith Square area, in a range of styles most notably neo-Georgian. These are generally of a larger scale than the 18<sup>th</sup> century development. The block of eighteenth century residential properties bounded by Millbank, Great College, Little College, and Wood Streets was replaced in 1903 by the offices of the Church Commissioners. Designed by W.D. Caroe in a 'Free Renaissance' style, the grade II\* Church Commissioners building is a 6 storey red brick building with Portland stone dressings. The building features corner towers with pyramidal roofs. The doors and windows are enriched with a variety of decorations.

4.17 The second area of early twentieth century development is at the northern end of Tufton Street and parts of Great Peter Street. On Tufton Street the grade II listed Faith House by Edwin Lutyens dates from 1907. It is built in narrow brown brick with stone dressings. The ground floor has three

large arched stone openings containing a timber shopfront and upper floors have timber sliding sash windows within stone corniced architraves.



Figure 9: 6 Cowley Street. (Horace Field, 1904-5)

4.18 Adjoining Faith house to the north is the grade II listed Chapel for St Peter and St John, 1903-1905 by Edward Burgess. Built in a Tudor Gothic style in Flemish bond red brick with stone dressings, the building is four storeys with a 5 storey projecting crenellated tower. The windows have stone mullions and the gabled roof is in slate. Above the Tufton Street entrance is a statue of St. Edward the Confessor within a Tudor arch. This is the only Anglican Monastery left in central London and is now the mother house of the oldest Anglican Order of Monks.

4.19 Other buildings in this stretch include the gothic 5 storey former Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, a missionary society founded in the early eighteenth century. Built in English bond red brick with stone dressings the façades are highly decorated and feature a statue of St Peter on the corner of Great Peter Street. Above the Tufton Street entrance is

a stone seal showing a ship arriving on distant shores and inscribed with the name of the society. A foundation stone dates the building to 1907. Adjoining this is a three-storey Edwardian building (number 11) with a fine timber shopfront to the ground floor.

4.20 On the south side of Great Peter Street are the grade II listed North House and Gayfere House, 1930-35 by Oliver Hill. These are in red brick and Portland stone in a Queen Anne style. Adjacent to these over Gayfere Street are number 31 (1929) and Central Africa House (1928-29).

### **Twentieth Century Massive**

4.21 The river frontage at Millbank contains a range of large twentieth century buildings, ranging from Westminster House to the north, to Thames House at the south via the former Imperial Chemical House. Thames House (north and south) and Imperial Chemical House by Sir F. Baines form a matching pair (1928) and are both listed grade II. These are of a larger and grander scale. Both are 7 storeys in Portland stone, and splayed at the corner of Horseferry Road. Both buildings have steeply hipped roofs and very regular patterns of fenestration. Specific decoration varies between the two buildings; Norwest House is decorated with busts of important chemists by Jagger, and has decorated doors, while Thames House has a simpler, more functional façade.

4.22 The buildings to the north along Millbank and to the west behind Imperial Chemical House are slightly subordinate in scale to the largest buildings, but follow the same simple and powerful style.

### **St John's Church and Concert Hall**

4.23 St John's Church is now primarily used as a concert hall. It was built between 1713 and 1728 to a design by Thomas Archer. A masterpiece of English Baroque architecture, the plan form represents a Greek cross with unique circular towers at each corner. The north and south façades have giant Tuscan columns, while the east and west fronts have large Venetian windows. The hall is built in Portland stone and is roofed with lead. St John's was gutted by fire 1742, struck by lightning in 1773 and seriously damaged by a German bomb in 1941. In 1965-69 the church was refurbished by Marshall Sisson for use as a concert hall. St John's is grade I listed.

Any proposal should take into account the character of its context. Policies, DES1 A 3 and 4 and DES4 should be consulted on the Principles of Development and DES5 A and B should be consulted on alterations and extensions. DES4B should be referred to for scholarly replica buildings within terraces of unified townscape and/or DES4A in terms of respecting adjoining buildings in areas of varied townscape.

Policy DES 9C states that the council will not allow schemes which involves the loss of original features and where these are missing their reinstatement to the original design details and materials will be encouraged.

## Unlisted Buildings of Merit

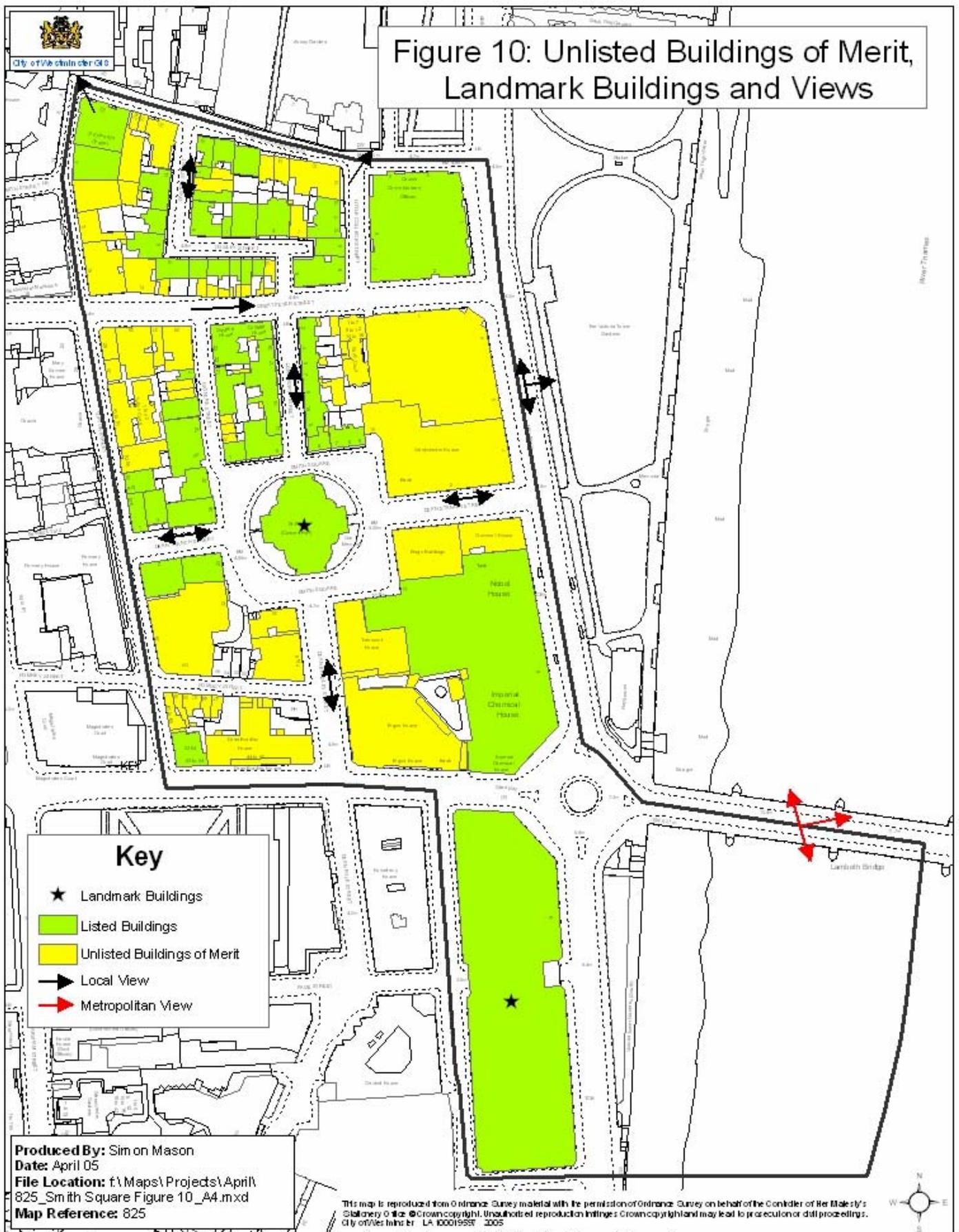
4.24 The vast majority of the buildings are in keeping with the character of the conservation area or the respective sub-areas within, most contributing in a positive manner. There are numerous unlisted buildings or groups of buildings that are considered to be of merit. This may be due to their townscape or group value, their architectural qualities or interesting historic or cultural associations. They are defined in the Audits as 'unlisted buildings of merit' (see fig. 6). By definition these properties are of particular value to the character and appearance of the conservation area and their demolition or unsympathetic alteration will be resisted.

4.25 In general the buildings within the Smith Square Conservation Area are characterised by their high quality, traditional materials and detailing and the majority of these are therefore identified. The following unlisted buildings are considered to be of merit:

Ergon House, Horseferry Road	14 Great Peter Street
Dean Bradley House, Horseferry Road	29-35 Great Peter Street
Transport House, Dean Bradley Street	8 & 9 Gayfere Street
7-9 (odd) Dean Bradley Street	14-16 (Consec.), Gayfere Street
Kings Buildings, Dean Stanley Street	61-65 Tufton Street
Cromwell House, Dean Stanley Street	29 & 37 Tufton Street
50-56 (even) Romney Street	9, 11, 15 Tufton Street
47-55 (odd), Romney Street	20, 21, 21a Great College Street
4 & 5 Millbank	10-15 Great College Street
Westminster House, Millbank	13 Little College Street
North Court, Great Peter Street	2 Barton Street
	7 Cowley Street

These are shown on the map at Figure 10.

Policy DES9 2 states that permission will not normally be given for proposals which involve the demolition or partial demolition of buildings which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Permission will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the existing building cannot be repaired or adapted so as to extend its useful life and that the proposed development will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. This requirement may be balanced against the City Council's other policy objectives, for example the provision of affordable housing or small office accommodation.



## **Landmark buildings**

4.26 St John's Concert Hall is identified as the main landmark building within the conservation area as it forms the focal point for the view from Victoria Tower Gardens down Dean Stanley Street. This Grade I listed building is also visible down the other three roads radiating from Smith Square.

4.27 The grade II listed Thames House north and south buildings form a prominent landmark in vistas up and down the Thames, and as such this is also a landmark building.

## **Roof Profiles and Extensions**

4.28 Roof profiles have a significant influence on the character and appearance of the conservation area. As a result roof extensions and alterations are not always acceptable as they can have a negative impact on the local roofscape.

4.29 Policy DES6C highlights instances where roof extensions would not be acceptable. This includes terraces where the existing roofline is largely unimpaired by any extensions or alterations; buildings that are significantly higher than their neighbours; buildings or terraces which are complete compositions or which have existing roof extensions; where there is an unbroken line of butterfly roofs; and where a roofline is visible in long views of public spaces. The policy acknowledges that there are some instances where additional storeys may be acceptable, notably when the extension would not harm the proportions or the architectural integrity of the building or terrace. Policy DES6 states that a roof extension should always compliment the appearance of the existing building and should not adversely affect the character and appearance of the conservation area.

4.31 Of the Georgian buildings in Smith Square many already have mansard roofs. A large proportion of these are listed and with listed buildings there is a presumption against alterations to historic roof forms and fabric. Most of the later nineteenth century and twentieth century buildings are complete architectural compositions, designed from the start with roof storeys many with which do not easily admit of upward enlargement. These buildings are also larger in scale than the Georgian properties and where buildings are already out of scale with the streetscape, then further extension to height will not be acceptable.

4.32 As such the majority of the buildings in the conservation area retain historic roof forms, have already been extended or are completed compositions in their own right. In this context there is very little scope for alterations or extensions at roof level within this conservation area.

4.33 The properties identified as likely to be unacceptable for roof extension without proper justification are shown in Figure 12.



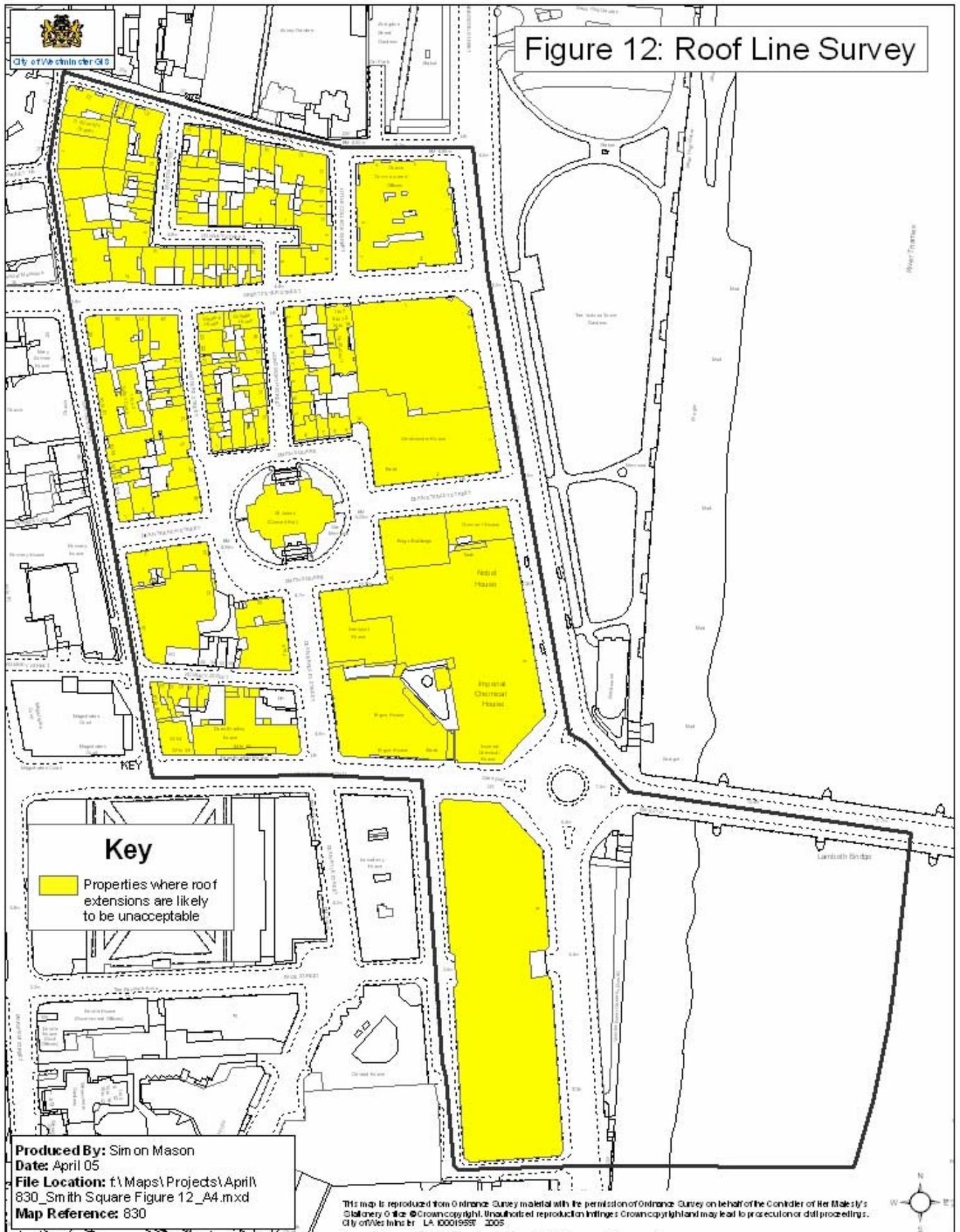
Figure 11: Smith Square Roofscape

4.34 Clutter such as antennae and satellite dishes can also have a significant and detrimental impact on the roofscape and character of the area affecting both short and long distance views. Careful consideration should be given to the siting of such equipment to minimise its visual impact. It should be located away from the front façade of buildings and from locations such as roofs or chimneys where it would be highly visible.

Policy DES6A highlights instances where roof extensions are likely to be unacceptable in townscape terms without proper justification.

Further advice is given in the publication 'Roofs, A Guide to Alterations and Extensions on Domestic Buildings' (1995).

Figure 12: Roof Line Survey



## METROPOLITAN AND LOCAL VIEWS

4.35 Policy DES15 in the Unitary Development Plan defines two categories of views which contribute to Westminster's townscape and historic character.

- **Metropolitan Views** include both views from Westminster to other parts of London and views from other parts of London into Westminster, such as views along and across the river Thames. They also include views within and across Westminster, particularly views of landmark buildings.
- **Local Views** are by definition more localised and can be of natural features, skylines, smaller landmarks and structures as well as attractive groups of buildings and views into parks, open spaces, streets and squares.

4.36 The following section of the audit identifies local views in the conservation area and provides a preliminary list of views which are considered to be of Metropolitan importance. A separate Borough wide document will be produced identifying views of Metropolitan Importance which will undergo full consultation before being adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. There are no strategic views across the conservation area.

## METROPOLITAN VIEWS

4.37 One preliminary metropolitan view in the conservation area has been identified, originating on Lambeth Bridge. This panoramic view takes in vistas along the Thames, the Westminster Palace and Abbey World Heritage site and views of Lambeth to the east. (see figure 10) The exact viewing point and extent will be identified in the Metropolitan Views Supplementary Planning Guidance Note.

## LOCAL VIEWS

4.38 Specific views from major spaces within the conservation area and of buildings important to the character of the conservation area include:

- Views of the grade I listed St John's Church down Lord North Street, Dean Trench Street and Dean Bradley Street.
- Views away from St Johns Church along Dean Stanley Street, Lord North Street, Dean Trench Street and Dean Bradley Street.
- Views both north and south along Barton Street.
- View east along Great Peter Street towards Victoria Tower Gardens.
- Views both east and west along Horseferry Road.
- Originating in Victoria Tower Gardens, towards St John's Church to the west, and the second is in a southerly direction down Millbank, toward Vauxhall Bridge
- View of Victoria Tower across Abingdon Gardens from the north end of Little College Street.

4.39 There are panoramic views of the Thames from Millbank outside Westminster House and the southernmost point of Victoria Tower Gardens.

4.40 There are interesting glimpses of the Abbey and Victoria Tower from Smith Square and the north end of Gayfere Street. From the northern end of the tightly enclosed Tufton Street there is an interesting view into Deans Yard.

These views are shown in figure 10.

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

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

## **LOCAL TOWNSCAPE DETAIL**

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

### **Railings, Boundary Walls & Enclosure**

4.43 Railings and boundary walls can contribute significantly to the character of a conservation area. They add interest and richness as well and provide a sense of enclosure, separating areas of differing character and often marking the boundaries between public and private spaces. The City Council considers that they should be protected and properly maintained and has, in some cases, control over their removal or alteration.

4.44 The conservation area is well provided with mid nineteenth century railings to basement lightwells in a variety of traditional forms. These can be found in the following locations:

- The north side of Smith Square
- Lord North Street (west side, and north part of east side) – cast iron railings with javelin heads and urn finials, supported by wrought iron supports
- Cowley Street (both sides) – wrought iron railings with a combination of urn and flambé torch finials, some ornamented with scrolled wrought iron.

- West side of Barton Street – wrought iron railings with flambé torch and urn finials
- South side of Great College Street, between Barton and Little College Streets
- Millbank frontage of Church Commissioners Buildings
- North part of east side of Little College Street

4.45 Other significant boundary treatments are the wall, steps and railings to the southern portion of Victoria Tower Gardens.

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

### **Historic Shopfronts**

4.46 Shopfronts, including well-designed non-original ones, can be of great importance in contributing to the character and appearance of both individual buildings and the wider conservation area and can also be of historic and architectural interest in their own right.

4.47 Smith Square Conservation area contains a number of fine historic shopfronts. The northern section of Tufton Street contains a row of three Arts and Crafts shopfronts, one of them listed, and all connected with the sale of religious items. 7 Tufton Street is a grade II listed building dating from 1907 and built as the St. Johns Institute by Lutyens.

4.48 Number 11 Tufton Street contains a fine shopfront with paired shallow bowed windows and two unusual low relief figurative panels coupled with brass tablets bearing the street number.

4.49 The City Council seeks to retain original shopfronts wherever possible. Alterations and signage should be carefully designed and use materials and detailing to match the age and style of the parent building. Unsympathetic alterations, signage and security shutters will be resisted.

The relevant City Council policies concerning historic shopfronts and the design of new ones is DES5 C, and the policy relating to signs and advertisements is DES8. Reference should be made to the design guides 'Shopfronts, Blinds and Signs: A Guide to their Design' (1990) and 'Advertisement Design Guidelines' (1992).

## Public Art

4.50 While there is not a great deal of freestanding public art in the conservation area, many of the buildings around Smith Square are endowed with carved relief sculpture.

4.51 The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts boasts a carved relief panel showing a missionary arriving on tropical shores in a ship under sail. Similarly Thorneycroft House on Dean Bradley Street has relief panels advertising the activities in which the original occupants were engaged; carvings show lorries, trains, steamers and warships superimposed upon an image of Vulcan, god of smiths.

4.52 Characteristic of the area is an association with the church and church administration. This is reflected in a life size statue of St Peter in a corner niche at the junction of Tufton and Great Peter Streets, part of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Further north along Tufton Street, set into a niche between two windows is a statue of Saint Edward the Confessor above the door of St Edwards House.

4.53 Along Millbank Thames House and ICI house are decorated with figures of St George and Britannia, and with sculpted heads of scientists respectively.

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



Figure 13: Examples of Townscape Detail

## Street Furniture

4.54 Westminster has an outstanding heritage of interesting and historic street furniture, many of them listed. The appropriate maintenance and protection of these is important as is the need to prevent modern street clutter from detracting from their setting.

4.55 Smith Square has an abundance of listed street furniture, which extends into the surrounding streets. A group of fourteen grade II early-mid nineteenth century lampstandards throughout the square and adjoining streets have square bases with battered corners to shafts with tulip heads and are individually numbered. Further lamps extend on wrought iron brackets from the buildings at the corner of Cowley and Barton Streets, the corner of Lord North Street and Smith Square, and from Gayfere House on Great Peter Street.

4.56 Surrounding the Concert hall are thirteen octagonal tapered stone bollards from c1726-28 which form part of Sir James Smith's original layout of the square, also grade II listed. There are a further two bollards at the entrance to Lord North Street.

4.57 The Lambeth Bridge, a part of which is included in Smith Square conservation area, is endowed with distinctive lampstandards in the form of squat stone obelisks supporting a pair of lanterns on brackets. The obelisks rest on recessed seats decorated with relief carvings of dolphins or sturgeon and the arms of the London County Council.

4.58 There are two blue plaques in Barton Street commemorating the homes of T E Lawrence and Sir Walsham Reith at numbers 14 and 6 respectively.

4.59 Lord North Street contains some rare surviving examples of painted WWII air raid shelter directional signs. These are painted directly onto the brickwork of the buildings in black and white, and are beginning to grow quite faded.

4.60 Also of interest are the oval-sectioned 1958 double aperture post-boxes which occur at the corner of Horseferry Road and Dean Bradley Street, Tufton Street and the west side of Smith Square.

Policy DES7 C & F intends to protect these historic and characteristic features of the street scene.

### **Historic Floorscapes**

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

4.62 This conservation area is characterised by predominantly hard landscape surfaces, much of it of high quality. Of these the best examples of quality paving are represented by the York Stone pavements which surround Smith Square. These are edged with granite kerbs. The same treatment can

also be found in Dean Trench Street, Gayfere Street, Lord North Street, Cowley Street, Barton Street and Little and Great College Streets.

4.63 Some properties in the area retain bootscrapes set into walls, and where the front lightwells are set beneath the pavement, many properties also have cast iron grilles over these (for example in Gayfere Street). A relatively common feature throughout the conservation area are cast iron coal hole covers. A distinctive pattern is that produced by 'A. Smellie, Rochester Row, SW'

4.64 There is an area of granite setts to the south west side of the church.

For guidance on best practice relating to both street furniture and public realm works, the Westminster way is the council's emerging public realm manual.

### **Trees and Soft Landscaping**

4.65 Trees provide significant amenity value in an urban environment in both visual and environmental terms. They are important elements in the character and appearance of a conservation area contributing to the townscape in many ways. This can range from a single specimen providing a focal point, a group of mature trees forming part of an historic planting scheme or street trees forming an integral part of an estate layout. Trees within conservation areas are protected and anyone who wants to cut down or prune a tree in a conservation area must give the council six week notice of their intention to do so.

4.66 The gardens surrounding St Johns Church provide a welcome green space in the conservation area, softening the predominantly hard landscape. Mature London plane trees in and around the church includes species such as magnolia and mulberry, and provide added visual interest.

4.67 Short avenues of London planes such as those on Dean Trench Street and Dean Bradley Street frame views out of the Square and continue the verdant appearance of the surrounding streets.

4.68 Plane trees in Victoria Tower Gardens South form part of the important and characteristic riverside planting throughout the city.

4.69 More recent street tree planting is becoming established within the conservation area, such as recently planted pear trees on Tufton Street. These trees help to soften the strong building line and create a visual link to St John's Garden in the south. Within the private realm, a protected London plane and golden false acacia at the rear of Cowley Street are clearly visible for a considerable length of Great Peter Street, and serve as a focal point in views up and down the street.

4.70 Trees outside the conservation area such as those in St Johns Gardens, and Victoria Tower Gardens serve to define the boundaries of the conservation area in views along Great Peter Street and Tufton Street.

4.71 The visual impact of these plantings is fundamental in defining the character of the area.

UDP policy ENV 14 seeks to protect trees which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area. The appropriate care and management of trees will be encouraged. Advice on trees and their protection is given in the City Council design guide, 'Trees and Other Planting on Development Sites'.

## **CHARACTERISTIC LAND USES**

4.72 Land uses also contribute to the character and appearance of conservation areas. This will not only have a direct influence on the building typology or make-up of an area but also on the nature and use of the public spaces and streets. Particular uses may be of historic or national importance and will have influenced the evolution of an area.

4.73 Overall the conservation area has a peaceful atmosphere dictated by the mixture of residential and office uses and lack of traffic. The predominant land use in most of the conservation area is commercial office use. The principal exceptions are St John's Church, now a concert hall and the remarkable surviving residential terraces in Lord North Street, Cowley Street, Barton Street and Gayfere Street. These areas of residential use make a very important contribution to the character of this conservation area giving a more intimate domestic atmosphere. A limited amount of ground floor retail floorspace is to be found within the area, notably in Horseferry Road. There are also other notable retail uses to the north of Tufton Street which comprise outlets devoted to the sale of ecclesiastical goods. Ecclesiastical uses also have a long association with this area.

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

## **NEGATIVE FEATURES**

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

4.75 The character of the buildings in the conservation area is overwhelmingly positive. Those buildings or features considered to have a

negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area include:

- An untidy wall facing onto Great Peter Street. This would benefit from suitable treatment to improve its appearance.
- Tufton Court on Tufton Street has qualities of age, materials, and design that contribute to the conservation area but it is too tall, out of scale with the rest of the conservation area and presents an unattractive rear façade, which can be seen from Smith Square. For these reasons it is considered as negative.
- There is considerable scope for improvements to the streetscape, in particular paving and hard surfaces.
- Many of the historic buildings in the conservation area would benefit from improvements particularly where inappropriate repairs, such as coarse cement pointing, have been used in the past. In addition some historic railings and wrought ironwork would benefit from appropriate repairs and maintenance.
- There is scope for improvements of roofscape and rear elevations where ugly plant, telecommunications equipment such as aerials and inappropriate extensions have been added and are visible in views from street level.
- At the south-western edge of the conservation area the coach park presents a negative element.

The City Council will take appropriate steps to ensure the preservation and enhancement of its conservation area. Schemes for the improvement and enhancement of conservation areas will be encouraged and initiated where possible. Any proposal will be judged against policies DES1 and DES9.

## **MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS**

4.76 It is expected that the effective management of the Smith Square Conservation Area can, for the most part, be met through an effective policy framework and the positive use of existing development control and enforcement powers. The analysis of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area within this audit therefore identifies those elements the Council will seek to protect, as well as negative features which may present opportunities for change or enhancement.

4.77 Each section of the audit is linked to relevant policy guidance, which provides the framework for the future management of the area. Other statutory designations and existing controls in place to manage the Conservation Area are listed in the Directory, which follows this section. This includes a list of documents, supplementary planning guidance and planning briefs relevant to the management of Smith Square Conservation Area. In addition, the following table provides a list of proposals related specifically to those features identified as 'negative' in Section 5.

### Table of proposals

<b>Identified Negative Feature</b>	<b>Action</b>
Untidy Wall facing onto Great Peter Street	Encourage improvements as part of any proposals for development/ refurbishment on the site.
Roof clutter, Satellite Dishes, Aerials, Telecommunications equipment and Inappropriate extensions	Refer any recent unauthorised satellite dishes to enforcement team for investigation; Update and republish guidance on siting of Satellite Dishes.  Encourage removal of any redundant equipment as part of refurbishment schemes and impose conditions to require this where appropriate.  When carrying out improvements, including roof repairs and further extensions, consider possibility of changing unsympathetic modern alterations at the same time
Buildings and Sites: Tufton Court, Tufton Street	Any future proposals for infill development should reflect the predominant scale of the area, making reference to the findings of the conservation area audit.
Repairs and Maintenance	Encourage awareness of best conservation practice and importance of timely maintenance. Continue to monitor condition of properties and if any deterioration liaise with property owners and give consideration to use of listed building repairs and Section 214 notices.  Encourage enhancements to be undertaken as part of refurbishment / redevelopment schemes.
Streetscape	Council to ensure design issues are fully considered when renewal is in hand, as part of highways maintenance programmes. Traffic management proposals as a result of the World Squares for All masterplan should consider impact on the conservation area.

### Monitoring

Photographic survey of conservation area has been undertaken and will be reviewed and updated every five years, with the audit.

## DIRECTORY



## **DESIGNATION AND EXTENSION**

**Relevant extracts and copies have been taken from the following reports:**

Town Planning Committee 8 May 1969: Conservation Areas: Government Precinct

Town Planning Committee 6 November 1969: Designation of Conservation Area Government Precinct

Town Planning Committee 30 June 1987: Extension to Government Precinct Conservation Area - Report on Consultation.

Planning and Development Committee 17 November 1987: Redesignation of the Government Precinct Conservation Area

**CITY OF WESTMINSTER**

**TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE - 8TH MAY, 1969**

**CIVIC AMENITIES ACT 1967**

**CONSERVATION AREAS: GOVERNMENT PRECINCT**

**REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING**

In accordance with a report accepted by the Committee on 29 June 1967, concerning the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and conservation areas, studies have now been made of the area stretching from Trafalgar Square to Smith Square and between St James's Park and the River.

Near the great mediaeval Abbey of Westminster which was founded possibly in the seventh century, certainly by the tenth, on a site that had been used in Roman times, the seat of King and government also was established remote from the important and flourishing mercantile capital, the City of London, sometime in the eleventh century. The principal buildings of the Abbey now standing are of the thirteenth century while of the mediaeval Royal Palace of Westminster the most conspicuous survival is Westminster Hall.

The Palace of Westminster remained a Royal residence until Henry VIII moved to the Palace of Whitehall, leaving the former as an administrative Centre, and he made substantial addition and alterations to his new palace: parts of these works are now embedded in the Treasury Buildings and his wine cellar is preserved underneath the Board of Trade building.

Throughout the mediaeval period and for long after, the Strand, the road linking the City of London to the Abbey and Palace at Westminster, was a poor mud track beset by thieves; on its south side were established the palaces of bishops and lords. At its western end, Charing Cross, is split north and westwards as well as turning southwards, and it passed through and indeed under the complex of buildings forming the Palace of Whitehall as extended by Henry VIII. He also acquired St James's Park and other lands as hunting land, thus assuring the close relationship which still survives of open space to the royal and government buildings.

The eastern portion of the Palace of Whitehall was a rambling hotch potch, the result of gradual enlargement, and it was as the first instalment of a grandiose rebuilding scheme that Inigo Jones' Banqueting House was begun in 1619. It remained isolated and by the end of the Century Kensington Palace was much preferred as a residence, so that when a great fire in 1698 destroyed almost the whole of the palace east of Whitehall there was no desire to rebuild it as a royal residence.

Thereafter the growth of government services engendered new buildings in and near Whitehall many of which now survive; important among those of the eighteenth century are the Admiralty (by Ripley, 1722-1726) with its screen (by Robert Adam, 1759-1761), the Horse Guards (built 1750-1760 to designs of Kent), next to it Dover House (by Paine 1755-1758) with domed forebuilding (by Holland 1787), Kent's Treasury (1733-1736) overlooking Horse Guards Parade and adjoining Dorset House (c.1700-1710, a part of the Treasury Buildings). Together with the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century buildings of Downing Street they form a remarkable

complex of official and domestic architecture around Horse Guards Parade. In the nineteenth century building was undertaken on a much larger scale and with increasing grandeur; the south end of the west side of Whitehall shows this very clearly; the Treasury Buildings towards Whitehall were partly rebuilt by Soane (c.1810-1820) and altered and refaced by Barry in 1845 in a classical idiom; the Home and Foreign Offices were built to design of Scott in 1860-1873, and a further block of Government Offices at the southern end by Brydon and Tanner (1898-c.1912). These represent neatly the three stages of official Victorian architecture, Early, High and Late.

Quite apart from the characteristic buildings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries so far mentioned is the enormous and astonishing composition of the Houses of Parliament, where another disastrous fire, in 1834 had destroyed almost the whole of the old, rambling, informal, almost undignified, assortment of buildings which had served for parliament and administrative offices. The new buildings were constructed over the period 1840-1860 to designs of Charles Barry with much of the detailing by A.W.N. Pugin.

It was not until the late nineteenth century that Parliament Street was opened up to form the final grand sweep of Whitehall towards the Houses of Parliament and the Abbey and Parliament Square formed by the removal of many fine Georgian houses in an eastward extension of what is now Great George Street; previously the open spaces had been comprised mainly of the churchyard of the Abbey and of St Margaret's (16th Century). Parliament Square is now enclosed on its northern, eastern and southern sides by government offices, Houses of Parliament and the Abbey and St Margaret's already mentioned, and on the western side by two smaller institutional buildings, the more important of these being the Middlesex Guildhall (by Gibson and Partners) 1906-1913 with in the background Central hall (by Lanchester and Richards, 1905-1911). Apart from the last mentioned all the enclosing buildings bear a very informal relationship to the open space and to one another and form an extremely interesting townscape composition.

Whitehall itself although much widened at its southern end (Parliament Street) still retains the feeling of medieval irregularity of width and curve.

South of the Abbey Church itself stands the remains of the Abbey complex, partly incorporated in and much added to, to form Westminster School, and further south again stretching as far as Smith Square interesting groups of buildings of the early eighteenth century in Barton Street and Cowley Street as one group and in Lord North Street and the north side off Smith Square with the splendid Baroque Church of St John (by Archer 1713-1728) as a second adjacent group. Associated with these two groups are several domestic brick buildings of the beginning of this century of a high quality, some of them by Lutyens.

At its northern end Whitehall narrows as it curves and then opens out in a funnel into Trafalgar Square. Like much of the West End town planning alterations the formation of Trafalgar Square was an idea of Nash's and was carried out in the 1820's where formerly there was only a slight widening of roads meeting. Although there has been an attempt at a formal arrangement, this Square is marred by the indeterminate gaps in its enclosure and the unsatisfactory scale of massing of the buildings. The National Gallery (Wilkins 1832-1838) was designed to provide a crowning visual effect but is not very successful in this; very few of the other original buildings put up for the new square have survived and those on the south side have been replaced by dull Victorian and Edwardian stone buildings. The building on the west side incorporates the principal external features of the Royal College of Physicians

(Smirke, 1824-1827); on the east side is South Africa House (Sir Herbert Baker, 1935).

St Martin's-in-the-Field was built in 1722-1726 to designs of James Gibbs on the site of a mediaeval church; its present relationship to its neighbours is due entirely to the nineteenth century alterations in the layout of Trafalgar Square and its enclosure to the north and east also part of Nash's concept.

Facing Victoria Embankment are two further buildings of considerable importance in the townscape; one is Whitehall Court (Archer & Green 1884) whose roofs especially add to the romantic skyline seen from St James's Park; the other is New Scotland Yard (Norman Shaw 1888-1890 and 1912).

The principal character of the area is as a government precinct interspersed with various national institutions; as soon as the main squares and thoroughfares are left the character can change rapidly to much smaller scale, often domestic in use or appearance, as in the area south of the Abbey and in Craven Street. At present all the thoroughfares are full of traffic which often makes it difficult to appreciate the architectural and townscape qualities of the area; studies are being made to improve this aspect of the environment particularly in Trafalgar Square, Whitehall, and Parliament Square.

The areas described contain a large number of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

In the light of the forgoing remarks it is suggested that the area shown on Map No. CD.R0016 should be considered for designation as a conservation area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) That the area shown outlined on Map No. CD.R.0016 be approved as suitable for designation as a conservation area subject to consultation.
- (2) That the Greater London Council be consulted.
- (3) That the Civic Trust, the Georgian Group, The Victorian Society, the Westminster Society and the Westminster Architectural Society be consulted.
- (4) That the Ministry of Public Buildings be consulted.
- (5) That the Dean and Chapter of Westminster and Westminster School be consulted.

F. G. WEST

DIRECTOR OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

## DECISION

### 9. Government Precinct Area

- (i) Report received and recommendations adopted subject to the eastern boundary of the conservation area being drawn down the centre of the river.
- (ii) See report to Council.

(Note for Director of Architecture and Planning - Recommendation 5 of your report should be amended to refer to the "Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey" and "Westminster School").

## TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE - 6TH NOVEMBER, 1969

### DESIGNATION OF CONSERVATION AREA

#### GOVERNMENT PRECINCT

#### REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

1. On 8th May 1969 the Committee considered proposals for the Government Precinct Conservation Area and authorised consultations with the Greater London Council the Civic Trust, the Georgian Group, the Victorian Society, the Westminster Society, the Westminster Architectural Society, the Ministry of Public Building and Works, the Dean and Chapter of Westminster and Westminster School.
2. Plan No. CD.R.0016A attached to this report shows the boundaries of the area approved by Committee and amended in the light of observations received; a plan at a larger scale (CD.R.0016A) showing this area will be displayed.

3. CONSULTATIONS

Replies have been received from the Civic Trust, Westminster Society and Westminster School expressing satisfaction with the proposals, and from the undermentioned with comments as follows:-

- (a) The Greater London Council (commenting orally) would like to see the following additions:

- "(1) The large building symmetrical to Horseferry Road known as Thames House, the boundary would then run along Thorney Street and would pick up that small portion of Victoria Embankment on the other side of Lambeth Bridge and keep the whole of that section of the Embankment together.
- (2) The area between Tufton Street and Marsham Street contains little of any interest but would act as a buffer between Smith Square and new development on the other side of Marsham Street. This land is likely to be redeveloped soon and some direct control from the historic buildings aspect may be desirable, especially to the closing of the vista down Dean Trench Street.
- (3) If any proposal that the Birdcage Walk area might be extended along Lewisham Street to Princes Street were accepted, I would suggest that the boundary off the Precinct area should run to Lewisham Street behind No. 4 Matthew Parker Street, including that building and then along the boundary of the other Conservation Area to St James's Park.
- (4) I would suggest also that the boundary of the north-west corner should include Nos. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 13 Charing Cross Road and Nos. 11, 12, 13, 9 and 10 Irving Street and run across the road from No. 13 to the Garrick Theatre."

- (b) The Victorian Society are very pleased in principle and add, "we wonder if, after designating the Conservation Area, your Council will oppose the demolition of the many fine buildings which are, or may be, affected by the proposals" (in Sir Leslie Martin's Study.)
- (c) The Dean and Chapter of Westminster in addition to supporting the proposals also advocate the addition of area (2) in the Greater London Council's observations.

4. COMMENT (Related to the G.L.C suggestions)

- (1) It is accepted that the Embankment Garden and the planning of the axis of Lambeth Bridge should be covered by the Conservation Area.
- (2) It is considered that planning control over areas immediately adjoining a Conservation Area is sufficiently strong and that the inclusion of this area, which cannot be justified on its own merits, is unnecessary.
- (3) In the report on the Birdcage Walk Conservation Area, it is suggested that the whole of Old Queen Street should be included and therefore it seems logical and convenient to take in most of the small group of intervening buildings between Matthew Parker Street and Lewisham Street which is suggested by the G.L.C.
- (4) As in (2), control over adjoining buildings makes it unnecessary to include those on the west side of the open space between the National Portrait Gallery and the Garrick Theatre.

RECOMMENDATION

That the officers be authorised to carry out the Statutory Consultations with the Greater London Council and request its comments within two months and, subject to any observations being received within that period to proceed with the Designation of the Government Precinct conservation Area as shown on Plan CD.CO.0016.

F. G. WEST

DIRECTOR OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

## TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE

6TH NOVEMBER 1969

### DECISION

#### CONSERVATION AREAS

6. Government Precinct Area

(i) Report received and recommendation adopted.

(ii) See report to Council.

(Text Missing)

Embankment on the other side of Lambeth Bridge and keep the whole of that section of the Embankment together.

(2) The area between Tufton Street and Marsham Street contains little of any interest but would act as a buffer between Smith Square and new development on the other side of Marsham Street. This land is likely to be redeveloped soon and some direct control from the historic buildings aspect may be desirable, especially to the closing of the vista down Dean Trench Street.

(3) If any proposal that the Birdcage Walk area might be extended along Lewisham Street to Princes Street were accepted, I would suggest that the boundary of the Precinct area should run to Lewisham Street behind No. 4 Matthew Parker Street, including that building and then along the boundary of the other Conservation Area to St James's Park.

(4) I would suggest also that the boundary of the north-west corner should include Nos. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 13 Charing Cross Road and Nos. 11, 12, 13, 9 and 10 Irving Street and run across the road from No. 13 to the Garrick Theatre."

(b) The Victorian Society are very pleased in principle and add, "we wonder if, after designating the conservation area, your Council will oppose the demolition of the many fine buildings which are, or may be, affected by the proposals" (in Sir Leslie Martin's Study.)

(c) The Dean and Chapter of Westminster in addition to supporting the proposals also advocate the addition of area (2) in the Greater London Council's observations.

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

STATUS : FOR GENERAL RELEASE  
COMMITTEE : PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
DATE : 30 JUNE 1987  
REPORT OF : ACTING DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND  
TRANSPORTATION  
SUBJECT : EXTENSION TO GOVERNMENT PRECINCT  
CONSERVATION AREA - REPORT ON  
CONSULTATION  
WARD : VICTORIA  
BACKGROUND PAPERS : LIST ATTACHED

1. SUMMARY

At its meeting on 24 March 1987 the Planning and Development Committee agreed in principle to the designation of an extension to the Government Precinct Conservation Area, subject to appropriate consultations. These have revealed public interest in a wider extension being designated. Authorisation is now sought to proceed formally with such a designation. The Committee is also asked to note progress made regarding a sub-division of the overall conservation area into more coherent, smaller areas. This will be the subject of a future report.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That authority is given to proceed with the designation of the area shown on map number CD/C0/0016 (on display and attached as Figure 2) as part of the Government Precinct Conservation Area under the provisions of Section 277, Town and Country Planning Act 1971.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Consultation letters on the proposed extension of the conservation area (shown at Figure 1) were sent to the following organisations, giving them 28 days in which to comment:

Victorian Society  
Georgian Group  
English Heritage (Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission)  
The Westminster Society  
Great Smith Street Neighbourhood Group

- 3.2 Written responses have been received from the following organisations:

Victorian Society - strongly supports the extension. It sees the unique mixture of types and architectural styles of buildings around Great Smith Street as

having, '...an identity which should be protected from the characterless monstrosities of Victoria and Millbank'. Rather than seeing the area swept away by redevelopment in the future, the Society hopes that conservation area status would lead to more effort being made to enhance and re-use the existing buildings. It also supports a wider designation being made than that proposed to the Committee on 24 March 1987. (This wider area is shown on Figure 3 attached.)

English Heritage - suggests that the extension should include all the properties in the block bounded by St. Ann's Street, Great Peter Street, Great Smith Street and Abbey Orchard Street.

Westminster Society - welcomes the proposal in principle.

Great Smith Street Neighbourhood Conservation Group - the Secretary of the Group has written to advise that the proposal is welcomed, and that Orchard House and Sanctuary Buildings should be included in the extension. On the east side of Great Smith Street the Group proposed the inclusion of all the buildings between Little Smith Street and Bennet's Yard, being particularly concerned that the Christian Science Garden should be within the conservation area.

Additionally, a resident at Westminster Mansions has written in support, agreeing with the extension proposed by the Great Smith Street Neighbourhood Group, as well as proposing the inclusion of local shops in Marsham Street and Horseferry Road.

- 3.3 In the light of the above representations further investigations have been carried out in the Great Smith Street area. Consequently, a broader designation - as shown on Figure 2 attached and map number CD/C0/0016 on display - is now proposed. This will incorporate the listed 'Orchard House', Sanctuary Buildings (1920, Trehearne and Norman) together with Westminster Mansions and the old Library for the Blind building on the east side of Great Smith Street. All are thought to be of sufficient architectural quality to merit inclusion in the conservation area, and with the buildings on the southern part of the street block can be seen to form a coherent visual grouping.
- 3.4 It is not proposed that the Abbey Orchard Street Estate should be included in the designation. The design of this (and the Old Pye Street Estate) is considered to be of a distinct architectural character, quite different from that of the Government Precinct area and therefore not appropriate for inclusion in it. The more modified buildings to the south of Great Peter Street (on the east side of Marsham Street) are not proposed for inclusion. The main building of interest here - the Christian Science Church - is already listed and the minor building which neighbour it are not considered to merit conservation area status.
- 3.5 In considering the proposed extension at its meeting on 24 March 1987, - Committee also agreed to examine the possible sub-division of the existing conservation area, which at present contains several distinct architectural groupings within its boundaries. These range from the grand formality of the major offices of State in Whitehall to the intimate domestic scale seen in the area of Smith Square. A future sub-division of the designation would enable the City Council to present more coherent design arguments, particularly at

planning appeals, directly related to the architectural character of each sub-area. Detailed work on such a sub-division is being carried out. An initial appraisal by officers has resulted in the proposed division illustrated in Figure 4 attached. Once detailed building analysis has been carried out a further report will be presented to Committee.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

#### Background Papers

1. Letter from Victorian Society, dated 4.3.87.
2. Letter from Victorian Society, dated 14.4.87.
3. Letter from English Heritage, dated 15.4.87.
4. Letter from Westminster Society, dated 7.5.87.

## RELEVANT EXTRACT AND COPY FROM REPORT DATED 17.11.87

ITEM NO. 12

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

STATUS : FOR GENERAL RELEASE  
COMMITTEE : PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
DATE : 17 NOVEMBER 1987  
REPORT OF : ACTING DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND  
TRANSPORTATION  
SUBJECT : REDESIGNATION OF THE GOVERNMENT  
PRECINCT CONSERVATION AREA INTO FOUR  
SMALLER CONSERVATION AREAS  
WARD : ST. JAMES'S, VICTORIA AND MILLBANK  
BACKGROUND PAPERS : LIST ATTACHED

### 1. SUMMARY

At its meeting on 30 June 1987 the Committee agreed to proceed with the designation of an extension to the Government Precinct Conservation Area and noted that officers were investigating the possibility of sub-dividing the existing designation into smaller, more architecturally coherent areas.

The proposed redesignation will divide the existing diverse townscape areas into smaller, more cogent architectural entities, enabling the City Council to create a clearer design and conservation context.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

That the following four conservation areas be designated:-

- i. Trafalgar Square;
- ii. Whitehall;
- iii. Westminster Abbey and Parliament Square; and
- iv. **Smith Square**

under the provisions of Section 277 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 and that officers be instructed to proceed with the necessary advertising of these designations.

These are shown on the map number on display and attached as Figure 1.

### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The existing Government Precinct Conservation Area was designated in 1969 and comprises a number of areas, urban spaces and building groups which have distinctly different architectural and functional character. This element of variety sets the existing Government Precinct Conservation Area apart

from those designations elsewhere in the City which have a very much more uniform architectural or functional character.

#### 4. REDESIGNATION

4.1 This diversity of character leads to difficulties when attempting to apply conservation and urban design policies in a logical and consistent manner. In order to overcome this and to give developers, their agents and the public a better guide to the individual design characteristics of the different parts of the present designation the Committee is asked to agree to the following redesignation:-

##### i. Trafalgar Square

4.2 The character of the area centred upon Trafalgar Square is largely determined by the architectural character of the Square itself and the important buildings surrounding it. Its surrounding buildings were not constructed to a formal layout or plan but rather were developed in a piecemeal manner. All are characterised by the consistent use of stone as their primary facing material and have an essentially classical theme in their elevational design.

4.3 Dating mostly from the 188's the major of the buildings which line Northumberland Avenue have an architectural character which gives the street a distinctly Parisian 'boulevard', 'Second Empire' architectural character.

4.4 A third element of the Trafalgar Square area is the formal entrance to St. James's Park and the Mall marked by the triple archways of Admiralty Arch, and the northern ending of Whitehall where the buildings are generally of a lesser scale than those in Trafalgar Square and Northumberland Avenue. Nevertheless they relate very strongly in design terms to the Square, and in functional terms mirror the rich fusion of civic and commercial uses seen throughout this area.

##### ii. Whitehall

4.5 In contrast Whitehall and Parliament Street have an architectural character dominated by Government and State uses. This character derives from the presence of a range of buildings and features of major historic and national importance and the ceremonial and public open spaces - all of national renown and each having a particular character of its own.

##### iii. Westminster Abbey and Parliament Square

4.6 The grassed exposure of Parliament Square acts as a piazza setting for several of the most famous and important buildings of both Church and State institutions. The Square has a series of major public buildings which have established its present framework. The architecture is dominated by the gothic of the Abbey and the Houses of Parliament and the quality of the townscape emphasised by the viewing opportunities affected by the open spaces of Broad Sanctuary, Parliament Square itself and the Victoria Tower Gardens.

##### iv. **Smith Square**

**4.7 The character of this proposed designation is substantially shaped by the distinctive and singularly attractive group, comprising Georgian or Georgian Revival domestic buildings which run between Abbey Gardens and Smith Square. These streets share a character - quite at variance with the remainder of the present Government Precinct designation, and their function remains overwhelmingly residential.**

**4.8 Complementing this is a group of very much larger, early twentieth century, mainly commercial buildings fronting onto Millbank.**

## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Redesignation of a conservation area need not involve public consultation of the type normally undertaken with new areas or extensions. It will be sufficient to give notice to the Secretary of State and to give notice of the proposal in the London Gazette and a local newspaper (as required by sections 277(6) and 277(7) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971).

5.2 A redesignation of this kind should not result in any addition to the workload of the Department. It should have no effect on applicants except to make clear the context in which their developments should be set.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

### Background Papers

1. Report to Planning and Development Committee of 30 June 1987 entitled, 'Extension to Government Precinct Area - Report on Consultation'.

## **LISTED BUILDINGS & OTHER DESIGNATIONS**

## LISTED BUILDINGS IN SMITH SQUARE

The list of buildings of special architectural and historic interest set out below was prepared in January 2005. As new buildings are constantly being listed this list should not be treated as definitive.

At the time of preparation there were 98 Listed buildings in Smith Square. Of this number one was Grade I, fifty were Grade II\* and forty-seven were Grade II. Of those listed Grade II, seven were items of street furniture.

Street	Post Code	Grade
1 Barton Street	SW1	2*
3 Barton Street	SW1	2*
4 Barton Street	SW1	2*
5 Barton Street	SW1	2*
6 Barton Street	SW1	2*
London House, 8 Barton Street	SW1	2*
9 Barton Street	SW1	2*
10 Barton Street	SW1	2*
11 Barton Street	SW1	2*
12 Barton Street	SW1	2*
13 Barton Street	SW1	2*
14 Barton Street	SW1	2*
1 Cowley Street	SW1	2*
2 Cowley Street	SW1	2*
3 Cowley Street	SW1	2*
4 Cowley Street	SW1	2*
13 Cowley Street	SW1	2*
14 Cowley Street	SW1	2*
15 Cowley Street	SW1	2*
16 Cowley Street	SW1	2*
17 Cowley Street	SW1	2*
18 Cowley Street	SW1	2*
19 Cowley Street	SW1	2*
Lamp Standard, Dean Bradley Street	SW1	2
Lamp Standard, Dean Bradley Street	SW1	2
1 Dean Trench Street	SW1	2
2 Dean Trench Street	SW1	2
3 Dean Trench Street	SW1	2
4 Dean Trench Street	SW1	2
7 Gayfere Street	SW1	2

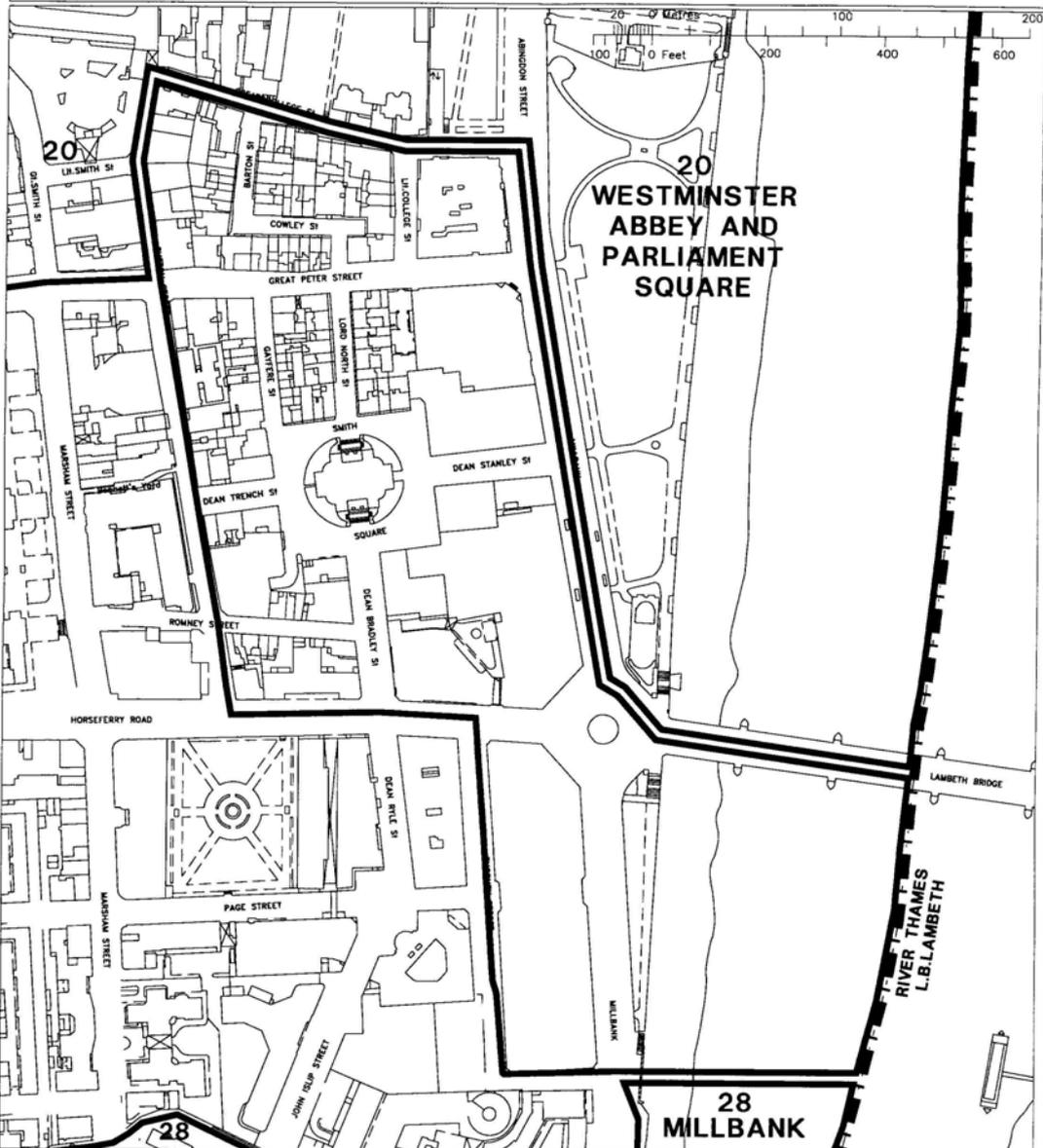
10 Gayfere Street	SW1	2
11 Gayfere Street	SW1	2
Gayfere Lodge, 12 Gayfere Street	SW1	2
17 Gayfere Street	SW1	2
18 Gayfere Street	SW1	2
19 Gayfere Street	SW1	2
20 Gayfere Street	SW1	2
21 Gayfere Street	SW1	2
22 Gayfere Street	SW1	2
23 Gayfere Street	SW1	2
16 Great College Street	SW1	2*
17 Great College Street	SW1	2*
18 Great College Street	SW1	2*
19 Great College Street	SW1	2*
St. Edward's House, 22-23 Great College Street	SW1	2*
Corner House, 2 Great Peter Street	SW1	2
Clergy House, 20 Great Peter Street	SW1	2
North House, Great Peter Street	SW1	2
Gayfere House, Great Peter Street	SW1	2
62-64 Horseferry Road	SW1	2
9 Little College Street	SW1	2
10 Little College Street	SW1	2
11 Little College Street	SW1	2
12 Little College Street	SW1	2*
Lamp Standard, Little College Street	SW1	2
2 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
4 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
5 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
7 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
9 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
10 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
11 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
13 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
14 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
15 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
16 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
17 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
19 Lord North Street	SW1	2*
Bollards - 2 - Junction with Smith Square, Lord North Street	SW1	2*

Norwest House / ICI House, 9 Millbank	SW1	2
Thames House South, Millbank	SW1	2
Thames House North, Millbank	SW1	2
1 & 2 Millbank	SW1	2*
1 Smith Square	SW1	2*
2 Smith Square	SW1	2*
3 Smith Square	SW1	2*
4 Smith Square	SW1	2*
5 Smith Square	SW1	2*
6 Smith Square	SW1	2*
7 Smith Square	SW1	2*
Thorney House, 34 Smith Square	SW1	2
36 Smith Square	SW1	2
37 Smith Square	SW1	2
Bollards - Stone - 13 around Church, Smith Square	SW1	2
Lamp Standards (7), Smith Square	SW1	2
St. John's Church, Smith Square	SW1	1
8-9 Smith Square	SW1	2*
St. John's Institute, 7 Tufton Street	SW1	2
57 Tufton Street	SW1	2
57A Tufton Street	SW1	2
59 Tufton Street	SW1	2

# ADJACENT CONSERVATION AREAS

City of Westminster  
 Planning and Environment Department  
 Westminster City Hall Victoria Street SW1E 6QP

## SMITH SQUARE CONSERVATION AREA ADJACENT CONSERVATION AREAS



BASE MAP REPRODUCED/DERIVED FROM THE ORDNANCE SURVEY WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CONTROLLER OF HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE (C) CROWN COPYRIGHT (YEAR AS MAP DATE), WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL LA 086 592

CONSERVATION AREA NUMBER 21

Scale - None



name: LOWCAB21.dwg TA  
 15 11 85

**Adjacent Conservation Areas -**  
 the following conservation areas adjoin this conservation area:  
 WESTMINSTER ABBEY & PARLIAMENT SQUARE (20), MILLBANK (28).

## AREAS OF SPECIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRIORITY

Smith Square is immediately adjacent to the Ludenwic and Thorney Island area of special archaeological priority.

The list of sites and finds set out below was prepared in October 1995, from the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record. As new finds are constantly being discovered this list should not be treated as definitive.

At the time of preparation there were 20 archaeological sites and finds in Smith Square.

<b>Ref. Number</b>	<b>Name/Address</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Type</b>
081158	Great College Street	Roman	Structure
081237	Great College Street	Roman C2	Statue
0812440	Site of Corner Tower, Great College Street	Medieval C13	Tower
081364	Line of Longditch, Great College Street	Medieval	Ditch
082734	Great Peter Street	Iron Age	Peat
082735	Great Peter Street	Iron Age	Ditch
082736	Great Peter Street	Medieval	Dump
082737	Great Peter Street	Post Medieval	Pit
082738	Great Peter Street	Post Medieval	Cess Pit
082739	Great Peter Street	Post Medieval	Structure
082740	Great Peter Street	Post Medieval	Foundations
081367	Great Smith Street	Medieval	Bridge
081126	Horseferry Road	Medieval	Axe
081309	Horseferry Road	Bronze Age	Axe
081101	Millbank	Lower Palaeolithic	Flint Artefact
081138	Millbank	Saxon	Armlet
081139	Millbank	Neolithic	Flake
081164	Millbank	Roman C3	Coin
0811204	Millbank	Roman C2	Vessel
0811252	Millbank	Bronze Age	Sword

#### **ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS**

There are no Article 4 Directions in the Smith Square Conservation Area.

#### **REGULATION 7 DIRECTION**

There is no Regulation 7 directions covering the Conservation Area.

#### **STRATEGIC VIEWS**

There are no strategic views which cross the conservation area. It forms the backdrop to the strategic view from Parliament Hill to the Palace of Westminster.



## **PUBLICATIONS & SOURCES OF FUTURE INFORMATION**

## **WESTMINSTER PUBLICATIONS, POLICIES AND DESIGN GUIDES**

### **Unitary Development Plan**

Planning policies are explained in the adopted City of Westminster Unitary Development Plan 1997 and the Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2nd deposit version, pre-inquiry version and modifications agreed May, September and December 2004). This can also be viewed on the Internet at: <http://www.westminster.gov.uk/planningandlicensing/udp/index.cfm>

### **Design Guides and Publications**

Other Westminster City Council publications, produced by the Department of Planning and City Development are listed below. These are available from One Stop Services (see addresses under 'contact details') or can be viewed on the Westminster City Council Website.

1. Smith Square Conservation Area No. 21 - General Information Leaflet.
2. Conservation areas: A Guide to property Owners
3. Development and Demolition in Conservation Areas
4. A Guide to Providing Access for All
5. Design Matters in Westminster – Supplementary Planning Guidance on creating Good City Architecture
6. Railings on Domestic Buildings in Westminster
7. Roofs - A Guide to Alterations and Extensions on Domestic Buildings
8. Conservatories : A Guide to Design and Planning Procedures.
9. A Guide to the siting of Satellite Dishes and other Telecommunications Equipment
10. A Guide to the siting of Security Cameras and Other Security Equipment
11. Public CCTV Systems – Guidance for Design and Privacy
12. Shopfronts, Blinds and Signs.
13. Designing out Crime in Westminster
14. Façade Cleaning - The removal of soiling and paint from brick and stone facades
15. Stucco : A Guide to its Care and Maintenance.
16. Lighting Up the City - A good practice guide for the illumination of buildings and monuments
17. Plant and Air Conditioning Equipment - Guidance notes on applications for planning permission
18. Public Art in Westminster
19. Trees and Other Planting on Development Sites
20. A Brief Guide to Planning Enforcement
21. The Listing of Historic Buildings : A Guide for Owners and Occupiers.
22. The Protection of Historic Buildings in Westminster - A Guide to Structural Alterations for Owners, Architects and Developers.
25. Advertisement Design Guidelines.
27. Strategic Views in Westminster.

## **Further Reading**

1. Bradley, S and Pevsner (2003), *The Buildings of England. London 6: Westminster*. Yale University Press
2. Watson, Isobel (1993) *Westminster and Pimlico Past* Historical Publications Ltd
3. Weinreb and Hibbert (1983) *The London Encyclopedia* Papermac
4. Westminster City Council (1989) *A Prospect of Westminster* Chapters 3, 4
5. Summerson J, *Georgian London* Yale University Press June 2003

## **Local History**

For information on all aspects of local history contact:

**City of Westminster Archive Centre**  
**10 St. Ann's Street**  
**London SW1P 2XR**

**General Enquiries: Tel: (020) 7641 5180**

## WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL CONTACTS LIST

### General Planning Information

To find out if a property is listed or in a conservation area or is affected by a Regulation 7 or Article 4 Direction and to obtain copies of design guidance or planning application forms contact or to report a breach of planning control: Planning Records (Customer Service Centre) Tel: **(020) 7641 2513** or Fax: **(020) 7641 2515**

Email: [PlanningInformation@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:PlanningInformation@westminster.gov.uk)

### Planning Advice

For advice about planning permission, conservation area, listed building or advertisement consent, design and restoration advice, restrictions in Article 4 Direction Areas, lawful development certificates contact:

**South Area Team** (Addresses in SW1, SW7, WC2 and EC4)

Tel: **(020) 7641 2681** or Fax: **(020) 7641 2339**

Email: [SouthPlanningTeam@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:SouthPlanningTeam@westminster.gov.uk)

Or write to:

### Development Planning Services

**Department of Planning and City Development**

**Westminster City Council**

**City Hall, 64 Victoria Street,**

**London SW1E 6QP**

### One Stop Services

Where you can view or purchase the Council's Unitary Development Plan and other documents giving advice on access and design matters. The address is:

**62 Victoria Street, SW1** (Open 8.30am - 7pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday; 9am - 1pm Saturday)

### Trees

For advice on trees, planting, works to trees and tree care and Tree Preservation Orders, tree planting programmes and greening policies:

### Tree Section

**Environment and Leisure Department**

**Westminster City Council**

**City Hall, 64 Victoria Street**

**London SW1E 6QP**

Tel: **(020) 7641 2618** or Fax: **(020) 7641 2959**

### Further Information

For contacts regarding other frequently used services refer to the City Council's booklet '**A-Z Guide, Your Guide to Council Services**' available from One Stop Services, Libraries and Council Information Points or by contacting: Tel: **(020) 7641 8088** or Fax: **(020) 7641 2958**

Alternatively you can ring the City of Westminster General Inquiries number for assistance. Tel: **(020) 7641 6000**

## AUDIT ADOPTION REPORT & STATEMENT OF DECISION

Item No.
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Decision-maker	Date	Title of Report
CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES		<b>Smith Square Conservation Area – Adoption of Conservation Area Audit as Supplementary Planning Guidance</b>
<b>CLASSIFICATION FOR GENERAL RELEASE</b>		<b>Report of</b>
		<b>Director of Planning and City Development</b>
<b>Wards Involved</b>	Vincent Square	
<b>Policy Context</b>	The Civic Review Initiative has a target to adopt 5 Conservation Area Audits as supplementary planning guidance by the end of 2004/05 in order to implement the programme to prepare audits for the City's 53 conservation areas. The review of conservation area boundaries forms part of this process.	
<b>Financial Summary</b>	There are no financial implications arising from this report at this stage.	

## Summary

1.1 National guidance places responsibility on the City Council to produce detailed appraisals of each of its 53 conservation areas and to consider the designation of further areas. Following a public consultation exercise including a public meeting this report seeks the adoption of the Smith Square Conservation Area Audit as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Customer Services resolves to adopt the Smith Square Conservation Area Audit (attached in Appendix 5) as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

## 3 Background Information

3.1 On 22 October 1998, Sub-Committee agreed a priority list of conservation areas to be audited as part of the City Council's comprehensive

review of its then 51 Conservation Areas (there are now 53). This review is a statutory duty and an updated timetable is being progressed.

3.2 Given the complexity and scale of the City's conservation areas this process has been broken into three stages involving the production of mini-guides (General Information Leaflets), directories and audits. The audits represent the third and final stage of the preparation of appraisals of all of the Borough's 53 Conservation Areas.

## **4 Detail**

4.1 The draft Smith Square Conservation Area Audit was adopted for consultation on 19 May 2004. Since this time, a public consultation exercise has been undertaken, including a public meeting. A summary of all correspondence received and the Council's response can be found in Appendix 3. The amended Audit is included in Appendix 5.

### **Original written consultation**

4.3 Letters of consultation were issued on 2 June 2004 and sent to local amenity groups, national bodies, ward Councillors and other local organisations. A list of consultees is attached in Appendix 1.

4.4 Written responses were received commenting on the content of the audit and these are listed in the background paper section and summarised in Appendix 3.

### **Public meeting**

4.5 The letter of 2 June 2004 also invited local groups, national bodies, ward Councillors and other local organisations to attend a public meeting, which discussed both the Millbank and Smith Square Audits. This was held on 28 June 2004.

4.6 The meeting was chaired by Councillor Danny Chalkley, and attended by eighteen members of the public, representatives of local organisations and other interested parties. The audit was presented to the meeting and issues of concern discussed. The minutes of the meeting are attached at Appendix 4 and a summary of all comments is at Appendix 3.

### **Main Concerns raised and comments received**

4.7 In general the findings of the audit have received support and few amendments have been suggested. English Heritage have welcomed the findings of the audit.

4.8 The main comments related to the possibility of extension of the conservation area and a study and report on the area and its designation is being considered as part of a separate report.

4.9 The main comments at the public meeting related to trees issues. The arboricultural officer has amended the text within the audit and a reference to the appropriate management of trees has been added within the policy box.

4.10 Telecommunications aerials were also raised as an issue of concern as these blight the conservation area. Much of this is permitted development but in response to this a paragraph has been added under 'roof extensions' with regards to the impact of visual clutter such as aerials and telecommunications equipment' and an additional reference to this has also been added under 'negative items.'

## **5 Financial Implications**

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report at this stage. Expenditure costs will be met from existing revenue budgets.

## **6 Legal Implications**

6.1 Under Section 69 (1)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 every local authority "shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' interprets this responsibility by advising local authorities to periodically review existing conservation areas and their boundaries.

## **7 Consultation**

7.1 A programme of public consultation was undertaken as detailed above involving English Heritage, national amenity societies, local resident groups and ward Councillors.

## **8 Human Rights Act 1998**

8.1 The Human Rights Act came into force in England on 2 October 2000. It gives teeth to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which was ratified by the UK in 1951 and has been in force since 1953. The Act confers the direct protection of English law in relation to Convention rights. For the purposes of the role of a local planning authority the relevant provisions are: Article 2 - right to life, Article 6 – right to a fair hearing, Article 8 - right to respect for private and family life, Article 14 – prohibition of discrimination and Article 1 of the First Protocol - protection of property.

## **9 Conclusion**

9.1 The Smith Square Conservation Area Audit has now been through a process of public consultation. As a result of this process the findings have received general support. The document has been amended to reflect comments received and has had illustrations added. It is therefore recommended that the audit now be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to ensure the continued preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT OR WISH TO INSPECT ANY OF THE BACKGROUND PAPERS, PLEASE CONTACT JANE HAMILTON ON 020 7641 8019; EMAIL ADDRESS [jhamilton@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:jhamilton@westminster.gov.uk) ; FAX NUMBER 020 7641 2338

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1 Smith Square Conservation Area mini-guide
- 2 Minutes of public meeting
- 3 Letters from The Westminster Society, June Stubbs (The Thorney Island Society), Drivers Jonas (for The Tate), English Heritage, CityWest Homes, Nicolas Underhill

## APPENDIX 1: LIST OF CONSULTEES (for Millbank and Smith Square)

Millbank Estate Office	Thorney Island Society
English Heritage	CityWest Homes
Georgian Group	Senior Aboricultural Officer
Victorian Society	Councillor Louise Hyams
Twentieth Century Society	Councillor Tim Mitchell
Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons	Councillor Alexander Nicoll
Drivers Jonas	Councillor Duncan Sandys
Society of St John the Evangelist	Councillor Danny Chalkley
Westminster Property Owners Association	Councillor Powell Tuck

## APPENDIX 2: ATTENDEES AT PUBLIC MEETING

Rachel Archer: St Johns Smith Square  
June Stubbs: Thorney Island Society  
Olive Whitcombe: Gainsborough House  
Irene Carter: Turner House  
Nina Chitnavis: Gainsborough House  
Ian Stuart: Millbank Estate Management Office  
Matt Haskins: Ponsonby Place  
Nicholas Underhill: Smith Square  
Peter Lawson: Thorney Island Society  
Peter Bottomley: Smith Square  
S Thorne  
Vincent Khyssamouh: Gainsborough House  
Piers Warner: The Tate  
Leonie Hill: Drivers Jonas  
Alex Beard: The Tate  
Peter Wilson: The Tate  
Councillor Danny Chalkley  
Rosemarie MacQueen  
Jane Hamilton  
Helen Stratton

### APPENDIX 3

Consultation responses		Council response
Consultee	Comments	
<b>ENGLISH HERITAGE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The audit clearly identifies the history and special interest of the two conservation areas and equally clearly set out planning/policies/ guidance for proposals which may have an impact on this special interest.</li> </ul>	Welcome support.
<b>SOCIETY OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reference is made to Figure 8 in the Smith Square Audit but figure 8 doesn't exist.</li> <li>Felt it might be of interest to point out that they are now the only Anglican monastery left anywhere in central London.</li> </ul>	<p>Reference to Figure 8 omitted</p> <p>Reference added at para.4.18</p>
<b>THE THORNEY ISLAND SOCIETY (June Stubbs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggest extension of the Smith Square Conservation Area to include the West side of Tufton Street to link Smith Square conservation area with Millbank conservation area.</li> </ul>	A separate report will consider the extension.
<b>THE WESTMINSTER SOCIETY (Peter Handley)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St Johns Smith Square remains an ecclesiastical building and recommend that the audit be amended to reflect this</li> </ul>	<p>St Johns Smith Square were asked to comment on this and have indicated that their main function is now as a concert hall, but they are still officially a church and have 3 services a year.</p> <p>Text amended at 4.23</p>

Consultation responses		Council response
Consultee	Comments	
<b>Nicholas Underhill</b>	<p>The meeting was interesting but two points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In the summary of the points that being taken away from the meeting, trees were not mentioned. But in fact trees were the subject raised spontaneously by the largest number of speakers (though admittedly not all saying the same things !); and I know from talking to my neighbours how strongly people feel about tree-management issues - in particular about inappropriate lopping and felling such as the recent brutal pollarding in Smith Square and adjacent streets. I hope that this level of concern will be noted as part of the audit process. The variety and vigour of the trees in both consultation areas are an important part of their character.</li> <li>2. Some feed-back about the process. I thought that the balance between presentation and discussion was wrong. Your colleague's presentation took up too much time going over historical material which was already in the draft report: I am very interested in local history and the material was well-researched and interesting, but I did not think it was necessary to have such detail in a meeting which should have been designed to get dialogue going.</li> </ol>	<p>Comments from tree officer as follows:</p> <p>In assessing the merits of any proposal for tree surgery or removal, the effects of the proposal on the health, longevity and amenity value of the trees and locality are taken into account, and balanced with the reasons for wishing to carry out tree surgery. There are often conflicts between these considerations and the differing views of local residents. When trees are proposed to be removed, the City Council consults local residents and takes account of their views. However, in making decisions on tree surgery, the overriding consideration must be that of the risks to safety posed by the trees, as was the case in relation to the reduction of the plane tree at 17 Gayfere Street (the case to which Mr Underhill refers).</p> <p>Feedback welcomed and noted for future meetings.</p>

Consultation responses		Council response
Consultee	Comments	
<b>ARBORICULTURAL OFFICER</b>	<p>Suggested amendment and additions to text as follows:</p> <p>3.59 The gardens surrounding St Johns Church <del>on three sides</del> provide a welcome green space in the conservation area, softening the predominantly hard landscape. Mature London plane trees in and around the church includes species such as magnolia and mulberry, and provide added visual interest. <del>The Square also benefits from several mature London Planes around the church.</del></p> <p>Short avenues of London planes such as those on Dean Trench Street and Dean Bradley Street frame views out of the Square and continue the verdant appearance of the surrounding streets.</p> <p>Plane trees in Victoria Tower Gardens South form part of the important and characteristic riverside planting throughout the city.</p> <p>More recent street tree planting is becoming established within the conservation area, such as recently planted pear trees on Tufton Street. These trees help to soften the strong building line and create a visual link to St John’s Garden in the south.</p> <p>Within the private realm, a protected London plane and golden false acacia at the rear of Cowley Street are clearly visible for a considerable length of Great Peter Street, and serve as a focal point in views up and down the street.</p> <p>Trees outside the conservation area such as those in St Johns Gardens, and Victoria Tower Gardens serve to define the boundaries of the conservation area in views along Great Peter Street and Tufton Street.</p>	Text amended.

# **WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL**

## **STATEMENT OF DECISION**

### **SUBJECT: Smith Square Conservation Area – Adoption of Conservation Area Audit as Supplementary Planning Guidance**

Notice is hereby given that Councillor Robert Davis, the Cabinet Member for Customer Services, has made the following executive decision on the above mentioned subject for the reasons set out below.

#### **Summary of Decision**

Adopted the Smith Square Conservation Area Audit attached in appendix 5 of the report as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

#### **Reason for Decision:**

National guidance places responsibility on the Council to produce detailed appraisals of each of its 53 conservation areas. Smith Square Conservation Area Audit has now been through a process of public consultation. It has received general support and where appropriate has been amended to reflect comments received and had illustrations added.

**C T Wilson**  
**Director of Legal and Administrative Services**  
**Westminster City Hall**  
**64 Victoria Street**  
**LONDON**  
**SW1E 6QP**  
**Publication Date: 14 January 2005**  
**Decision Ref: no. CMfCS/2/2005**

## Translation Service

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### Spanish

Puede que el inglés no sea su lengua materna y si no tiene un amigo o familiar que pueda traducirselo, nosotros podemos enviarle una traducción. Por favor escriba a la dirección que a continuación figura indicando su nombre, dirección y su lengua materna.

### French

Si l'anglais n'est pas votre langue principale et si vous n'avez pas un ami ou un membre de votre famille qui puisse le traduire pour vous, nous pourrions vous en faire parvenir une traduction. Ecrivez à l'adresse ci-dessous en donnant votre nom, adresse, et première langue.

### Portuguese

Talvez Inglês não seja a sua primeira língua, e caso você não tenha um amigo ou parente que possa traduzi-lo para você, nos podemos tomar providências para que uma tradução lhe seja enviada. Favor escrever para o endereço abaixo, dando o seu nome, endereço e a sua primeira língua.

### Chinese

如果英語不是你的母語，而且你沒有親戚或朋友能為你翻譯這份文件，我們可以安排寄給你一份翻譯。請寫信到以下的地址，告訴我們你的姓名，地址和母語。

### Bengali

যদি ইংরেজী আপনার প্রথম ভাষা না হয় এবং আপনার কোনো আত্মীয় বা বন্ধু না থাকে, যিনি আপনার জন্য এই ডকুমেন্ট অনুবাদ করতে পারেন, তাহলে আপনাকে আমরা একটি অনুবাদ পাঠাতে পারি। অনুগ্রহ করে নিচের ঠিকানায় লিখুন, আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও প্রথম ভাষা উল্লেখ করুন।

### Arabic

إذا لم تكن الانكليزية هي لغتك الأصلية، ولا يوجد لديك من أقارب أو أصدقاء ممن يستطيع مساعدتك في ترجمة هذه الوثيقة، فمن الممكن أن نرتب لك مترجماً. يرجى الكتابة إلى العنوان أدناه مع ذكر اسمك وعنوانك ولغتك الأصلية.

### Urdu

اگر انگریزی آپ کی پہلی زبان نہیں ہے، اور آپ کا کوئی ایسا رشتہ دار یا دوست نہیں ہے کہ جو اس دستاویز کا ترجمہ آپ کے لئے کر سکے، تو ہم آپ کے لئے ترجمہ سمجھوانے کا انتظام کر سکتے ہیں، برائے مہربانی، اپنا نام، پتہ، اور پہلی زبان جو آپ بولتے ہیں، نیچے دے گئے پتہ پر لکھیں۔

### Farsi

چنانچه انگلیسی زبان اصلی شما نیست و فامیل و دوستی نیز ندارید تا این سند را برایتان ترجمه کند، میتوان ترجمه آن را برایتان ارسال کنیم. برای این کار لطفاً با ذکر نام، آدرس و زبان مادری با آدرس زیر مکاتبه کنید.

### Serbo Croat

Ako engleski nije vaš maternji jezik i nemate rodaka ili prijatelja koji bi mogli da vam prevedu ovaj tekst, mi vam možemo poslati prevod. Molimo vas da napišete pismo na dole pomenutu adresu i da u njemu navedete vaše ime, adresu i maternji jezik.

Conservation Area Audit  
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**(020) 7641 8088.**