

# Chapter 28 Proposals Map

## 28.1 Proposals Map

**28.1.1** The map in this section details areas of change from the 2002 Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map (UDP). Where an area or designation is not included, there has been no change to the existing map.

**28.1.2** An updated version will be made available as part of the full adoption of the Core Strategy. This will include all items including those covered by the existing 2002 Proposals Map, namely:

- Conservation Areas;
- Metropolitan Open Land;
- Areas of Metropolitan Importance;
- Sites of Archaeological Importance;
- Sites of Nature Conservation;
- Areas Unsuitable for Diplomatic Uses;
- The bridge over Chelsea Creek;
- Employment Zones;
- Strategic Roads;
- Red Routes;
- London Distributor Roads;
- Local Distributor Roads;
- Existing Thames Path;
- Proposed Thames Path;
- Rail Safeguarding Line;
- Strategic Views of St Paul's Cathedral from King Henry Mound, Richmond Park;
- Thames Policy Area;
- Archaeological Priority Area.

**28.1.3** The main areas for change are as follows:

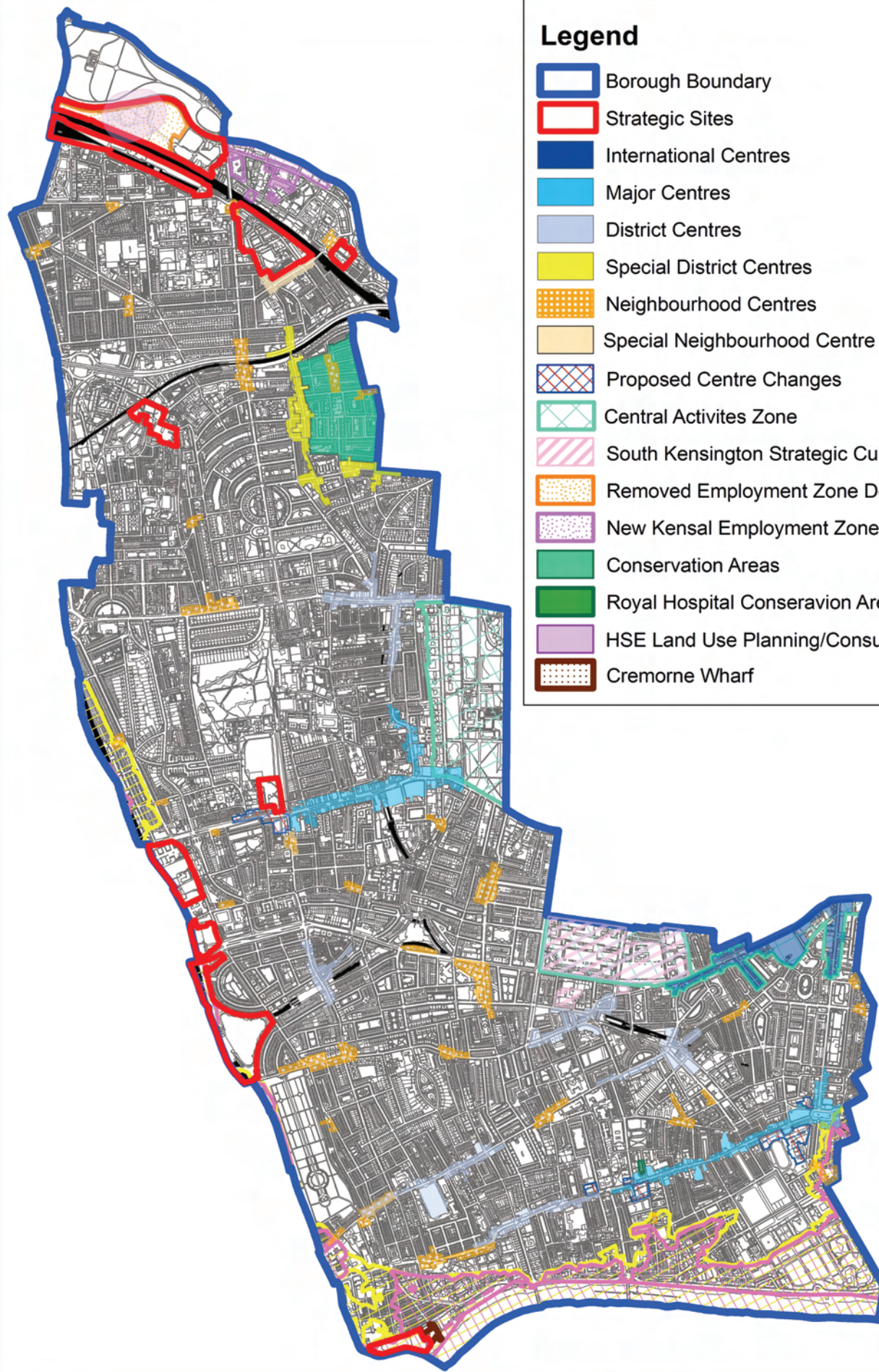
- Identification of the Borough's Sites of Strategic Importance;
- The amended Employment Zone Boundary in Kensal;
- Updated Town Centre boundaries in Kensington High Street, King's Road (East) and King's Road (West);
- Inclusion of the South Kensington Strategic Cultural Area.

**28.1.4** In addition, we are therefore taking the opportunity to update the proposals map with a wider range of information which not contained on the existing proposals map, to make it a more useful tool. This information is:

- Inclusion of the Colville Conservation Area;
- Change to the Royal Hospital Conservation Area to include Chelsea Sorting Office;
- Inclusion of Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3;
- Town Centres as designated under London Plan's hierarchy;
- Central Activities Zone (CAZ) boundary (this defines the exact boundary - the boundary in the London Plan was conceptual);
- The safeguarded waste site at Cremorne Wharf (whilst this features in UDP Policy PU12, it does not feature on the map);
- [HSE Land Use Planning/Consultation Inner Zone.](#)

**28.1.5** A detailed set of plans have been included in Section 3 of this document. This highlights the areas identified above at a much closer and more practical scale. A further fold-out map with all the designations and allocations still current from the UDP, with those added as set out in this document, will be published when the plan is adopted.

[NB: The areas of solid black as illustrated both on the borough-wide and smaller scale maps in Chapter 42 indicate the railway lines within the borough.](#)



## Legend

-  Borough Boundary
-  Strategic Sites
-  International Centres
-  Major Centres
-  District Centres
-  Special District Centres
-  Neighbourhood Centres
-  Special Neighbourhood Centre
-  Proposed Centre Changes
-  Central Activities Zone
-  South Kensington Strategic Cultural Area
-  Removed Employment Zone Designation
-  New Kensal Employment Zone Boundary
-  Conservation Areas
-  Royal Hospital Conservation Area Extension
-  HSE Land Use Planning/Consultation (Inner) Zone
-  Cremorne Wharf



## Proposals Map for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

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0 400 800 1,600 Metres



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA



# Chapter 29 Policies and Actions

## 29.1 Introduction

**29.1.1** This section of the plan sets out the policies and actions to deliver the seven Strategic Objectives. This covers both planning policies to guide development, and other actions the Council and its partners are undertaking. We have taken great care to ensure that these Strategic Objectives are not bland topic statements, but express what the issue is for the topic here in the Royal Borough. The title of each of these expresses strategic intent. So for example, the Council's Strategic Objective is to diversify our housing, to provide adaptable and high quality housing to cater for a variety of housing needs. It is not simply to maximise the supply of housing.

**29.1.2** The seven Strategic Objectives are:

- **Keeping Life Local:** *Social and Community Uses, Local Shopping Facilities and 'Walkable Neighbourhoods';*
- **Fostering Vitality:** *Town centres, Retail, Arts and Culture and Business;*
- **Better Travel Choices:** *Public transport, Walking and Cycling, Parking;*
- **An Engaging Public Realm:** *A Sense of Place, Attractive streets, Parks and Outdoor Spaces;*
- **Renewing the Legacy:** *Conservation, Enhancement and Design Quality;*
- **Diversity of Housing:** *Affordable and Market Housing, Housing Mix, Estate Renewal;*
- **Respecting Environmental Limits:** *Climate Change, Flooding, Waste, Biodiversity, Air Quality, Noise and Vibration.*

**29.1.3** Each of the sections follows a similar format.

- An introduction summarising the Strategic Objective;
- A section 'what this means for the Borough', identifying issues that are locally distinctive;
- Planning policies are set out with a summary of the relevant evidence being provided as reasoned justification for the policy that follows. The policies are set in boxes. Each of the planning policies has an overarching or

more strategic policy, under which are set out details of how this policy will be achieved;

- Corporate and Partner actions follow. This section summarises other strategies and plans prepared by the Council and partners that will also play a part in delivering the strategic objective. Actions to be taken by the Council or by partners are also listed. Planning may have a direct role in the implementation of these actions, but this will not necessary be the case in all situations.

**29.1.4** There is a requirement that the policies within a Core Strategy must be monitored by the local planning authority to determine their effectiveness. The monitoring framework is included within section 2d of the document.

## 29.2 Infrastructure and Planning Obligations (s106)

**29.2.1** PPS12, paragraph 4.8 states: "The core strategy should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area, taking account of its type and distribution. This evidence should cover who will provide the infrastructure and when it will be provided. The core strategy should draw on and in parallel influence any strategies and investment plans of the local authority and other organisations".

**29.2.2** Delivery of infrastructure is critical to the delivery of all the strategic objectives of the Core Strategy. Planning, through the use of Planning Obligations (s106), is a prime way that the Council can gain the necessary resources to assist in the delivery of this vital infrastructure. The infrastructure schedule is set out in Chapter 37, setting out key schemes required to facilitate development and secure delivery of the Core Strategy, though infrastructure requirements from development will not be limited to these. The Council will prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) with partners and infrastructure providers, which will be regularly monitored and reviewed, forming the basis of site specific requests for infrastructure as part of development proposals.

**29.2.3** Infrastructure Planning is the process for ensuring the physical needs of an area can be delivered to keep pace with its population's requirements. It will include utility services, transport, education, health and leisure provision. Sound infrastructure plans are needed to support the Local Development Framework and to provide

a robust base for developing planning obligations, and are a pre-requisite to introducing the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

**29.2.4** Planning Obligations are intended to make acceptable development which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms. They might be used to prescribe the nature of a development; to secure a contribution from a developer to compensate for loss or damage created by a development; or to mitigate a development's impact. They must comply with the provisions of Circular 05/2005 "Planning Obligations", and such measures may include:

1. **environmental improvements** - to buildings, the street (including townscape enhancements), utility provision, nature conservation measures and mitigating the effects of a development proposal;
2. **economic initiatives** – securing jobs for local residents, community based initiatives, employment training schemes, the provision of small business units and affordable shops, workspace nurseries, flexibly sized accommodation and partnership with regeneration initiatives;
3. **provision of affordable housing** - including an appropriate mix of residential units;
4. **provision of community, social and health facilities** - including welfare, childcare, information and advisory centres, social service uses and facilities, education facilities including nurseries, health facilities including primary health care facilities and specialist functions linked to the health service and dentists, libraries and associated facilities, police and fire services infrastructure, affordable premises for voluntary and community organisations and churches and other religious facilities;
5. **provision of transportation facilities** - including facilities for walking and cycling, public transport and highway improvements to cater for the impact of the development, and towards Crossrail where development within the CAZ<sup>(268)</sup> or in other circumstances, would require this as a result of London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), and *permit-free* development;
6. **conservation of buildings of architectural or historic interest and other conservation projects such as archaeological investigation;**
7. **sports, leisure, recreational and visitor facilities;**
8. **green infrastructure improvements** - to the network of multi-functional open spaces in the borough including the creation of new public open space, improvements to existing open space, and securing public access to private open space;
9. **cultural facilities** - securing the provision of arts, cultural and entertainment facilities, new works of art or performing arts space in association with development proposals;
10. **play facilities** - providing play provision through publicly accessible play space and facilities in new residential developments;
11. **energy efficiency and renewable energy;**
12. **utility infrastructure requirements – including water, foul drainage and sewage treatment, and energy utilities;**
13. **waste management and recycling** to mitigate the impact of the development;
14. **land charges, legal, project management, monitoring and implementation costs, and management and maintenance costs on completion.**

## Policy C 1

### Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations

#### *Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery*

New development will be coordinated with the provision of appropriate infrastructure to support the development. The Council will require that there is adequate infrastructure to serve developments, including through the use of planning obligations, working with infrastructure providers and stakeholders to identify requirements.

In determining applications for planning permission, the Council will take into consideration the nature, scale and location of the proposed development, and where the need arises from the development either because of its individual or cumulative impact, will seek prescriptive, compensatory or mitigatory measures to secure the necessary social, physical, green or environmental infrastructure, or improvements to the

268 The boundaries of the CAZ are shown on the Proposals Map



proposals submitted to enable the development to proceed, in accordance with advice in national guidance.

### ***Planning Obligations***

Planning obligations will be negotiated whenever appropriate in accordance with Circular 05/2005 “*Planning Obligations*”, and taking account of the proposed development, and in determining which measure receives priority, account will be taken of the individual characteristics of the site, the infrastructure needs of the site and the surrounding area, and the London Plan. Proposals that form part of potentially wider sites will be assessed in terms of the capacity of the site as a whole.

The viability of the development will also be taken into account. In the case of an enabling development, or where the development is unable to deliver all the policy requirements for reasons of viability, a viability study will be required to accompany the planning application. s106 contributions will be reviewed in the context of this viability study. The viability study should use the GLA toolkit or an agreed alternative. The applicant will fund the independent assessment of the viability study, or other technical studies requiring independent assessment, prior to the application being determined.

# Chapter 30 Keeping Life Local

*Social and Community Uses, Local Shopping Facilities and 'Walkable Neighbourhoods'*

## 30.1 Introduction

**30.1.1** In spite of the 2008-2009 recession, residential land values will continue to out compete those 'local' borough functions which are essential for a successful residential neighbourhood, the local shops and community facilities. ~~One of our strategic priorities~~ Therefore strategically, is we need to protect and promote functions that otherwise might be lost to residential use and ensure that necessary infrastructure is provided to support the scale, location and timing of development planned for an area.

**30.1.2** But the functions that enrich the quality of life of residents are not only 'local' functions, they can be borough-wide and indeed international facilities. This is an aspect central to upholding the residential quality of life of the Borough.

**30.1.3** *Keeping Life Local* is an integral part of the Core Strategy's central vision of *Building on Success*. It lies at the heart of ~~the~~ the Royal Borough's *residential quality of life*.

### CO 1

#### Strategic Objective for Keeping Life Local

Our strategic objective to **keep life local** is for strong effective local neighbourhood centres and for social and community facilities to be widely available and for neighbourhood functions, including local shopping facilities, to be easily accessible so that residential communities can flourish.

## 30.2 What this means for the Borough

**30.2.1** A key role of the planning system is to protect the uses that have lower land values, but high value to the community. There are a number of parts to this.

**30.2.2** First, protecting existing and facilitating new social and community uses, such as meeting halls, GP and dentist surgeries, pharmacies and primary schools, which have a local catchment. Other facilities, such as libraries, sports centres, secondary schools and hospitals serve ~~a~~ wider, ~~often have larger,~~ even Borough-wide, catchments. Finding new sites in the right place for these uses is a major challenge.

**30.2.3** Secondly, recognising that some facilities within the Borough have a national or international catchment, such as some of our hospitals, and that they also offer significant benefits to Borough residents and are thus highly valued by the community. These are also therefore regarded as social and community facilities.

**30.2.4** Thirdly, strengthening local centres as the focus of a local community, and establishing new ones in areas of deficiency, as part of the concept of walkable neighbourhoods, will meet the main day-to-day needs of local communities, promote healthier more active lifestyles and help to foster community cohesion and a greater sense of belonging.

**30.2.5** Not all shops, doctor's surgeries and schools are within centres. The concept of walkable neighbourhoods therefore extends to all those local facilities wherever located. Currently, the vast majority of the Borough is within a 5-minute walk of local shops, and a 10-minute walk of primary schools and doctors surgeries.

## 30.3 Planning Policies

### Social and Community Uses

**30.3.1** Social and community facilities are identified within the London Plan as enabling the community to function. Their role in stimulating a sense of community and providing valuable social infrastructure is recognised through the protection and enhancement of these facilities is essential to the Borough's status as one of London's most desirable places to live.

**30.3.2** However, with high residential property values, social and community uses and other local services are being threatened in Kensington and Chelsea as they have a lower land value than other uses, in particular housing. High land values can effectively prevent new social and community facilities from being established. Maintaining the present 'land bank' of sites in these uses for future generations is thus essential. Where policy



safeguards have been ineffective, social and community facilities have been lost to higher land value uses. For example, the closure of the care home at Vicarage Gate House in 2003, which was subsequently converted in residential units following an upheld appeal in 2008.

**30.3.3** In spite of this, the Council acknowledges that the needs of communities change. Therefore, the protection of all existing social and community facilities would not allow for necessary changes. Policies have therefore been devised to allow for changes whilst maintaining the Borough's overall stock of social and community uses. The Council also recognises, taking a pragmatic approach, that it may be necessary to support enabling development on a given site where the proposal will result in an overall improvement to the social and community facilities uses in the Borough.

**30.3.4** For the purposes of the Core Strategy, Social and Community uses are defined as including: care homes/care facilities and elderly people's homes<sup>(269)</sup>; community/meeting halls and rooms; doctors, dentists, hospitals and other health facilities; hostels; laundrettes; libraries; Metropolitan Police and other emergency service facilities; petrol

filling stations; places of worship; bespoke premises for the voluntary sector; schools and other educational establishments; sport facilities; and youth facilities.

The Council also acknowledges that there are also uses which are valuable community assets, such as post offices and pharmacies, where change to another use in the same use class, such as a shop, does not require planning consent. The Council cannot therefore control these uses through its planning powers. These facilities respond to supply and demand, which has tended to result in them being available within 'walkable neighbourhoods'. However, especially regarding post offices, this is no longer guaranteed. The Council will, therefore, in partnership with others, strive to achieve this through other means<sup>(270)</sup>.

**30.3.5** One of the most important facilities needed in the Borough is a new academy. At present, 50% of school-age children attending state schools are educated outside of the Borough. A new school, the Chelsea Academy, is under construction in the far south west of the Borough, and will help to address the problem, but another new academy is needed in North Kensington.



Gloucester Road (north) Neighbourhood Centre








269 As defined by Class C2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.

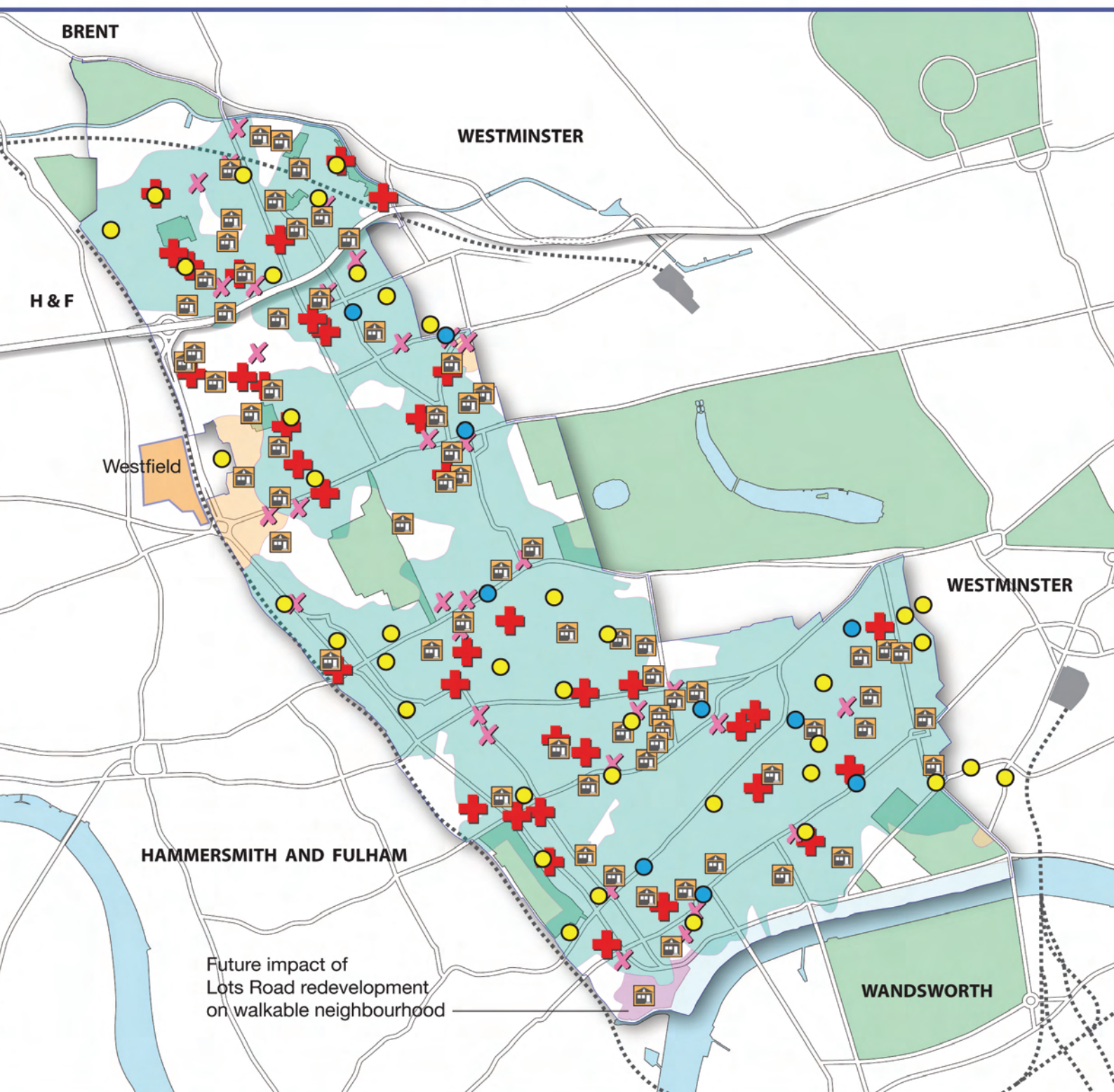
270 See Corporate and Partner Action No 2 at the end of this chapter



# KEEPING LIFE LOCAL

## Social and Community Uses, Local Shopping Facilities and Walkable Neighbourhoods

-  General Practices/Surgeries
-  Dental Surgeries
-  Schools
-  Within 400m or 5mins walk of a Neighbourhood or Higher Order Town Centre
-  Neighbourhood Shopping Centres
-  Higher Order Centres
-  Areas within 400m or 5mins walk of neighbourhood centres outside of the Royal Borough





Metropolitan Police, ambulance and fire services have very specific operational circumstances, unlike those of any other social and community uses. As a result, their needs will be assessed on a case by case basis.

**30.3.6** Public Houses are also considered a social and community use in the Borough, and recent concern over their loss to residential use has been noted. However, the Borough has only lost 6 public houses to residential units in the last decade. This is not to say that their loss is anything but regrettable. However, the Royal Borough is fortunate to have 173 bars (113 of which are traditional public houses) and the entire Borough (~~bar-excluding~~ open spaces) is served by one or more of these facilities being within a 10 minute walk. Therefore, the Council considers that there is too little evidence to resist their loss at the present time. This will be kept under review.

~~The Council also acknowledges that there are also uses which are valuable community assets, such as post-offices and pharmacies, where change to another use in the same use class, such as a shop, does not require planning consent.~~

## Policy CK 1

### Social and Community Uses

The Council will ensure that social and community uses are protected or enhanced throughout the Borough and will support the provision of new facilities.

To deliver this, the Council will:

- a. provide a new academy for the communities of North Kensington;
- b. permit new, and the expansion of existing, social and community uses which predominantly serve, or which provide significant benefits to, Borough residents, except where the proposal results in a shared or communal residential / social and community entrance;
- c. apply the following sequential approach:
  - i. protect land and/or buildings where the current use is or ~~the last the~~ use

- ii. permit the change of use of land and/or buildings where the current or last use was a social or community use from one social and community use to another social and community use which predominantly serves, or which provides significant benefits to Borough residents and where it is successfully demonstrated that there is a greater benefit to the Borough resulting from this change of use;
- iii. permit enabling development on land and of buildings where the current use is or the last use was a social and community use in order to:
  - significantly improve that use;
  - provide another social and community use on site;
  - significantly improve social and community uses elsewhere within the Borough and where it can be demonstrated that there is a greater benefit to the Borough resulting from this enabling development.

### Local Shopping Facilities

**30.3.7** The evidence on local shopping deficiency shows that a policy is required to retain and enable better access to shopping facilities on foot or by bicycle in order to significantly improve the quality of urban life.

**30.3.8** The Council will use walkable neighbourhood indicators to assess accessibility to local shopping facilities. National indicators<sup>(271)</sup> recommend an 800 metre (875 yard) walk. However, the use of national indicators is not appropriate due to the relatively large number of shopping centres within the Borough. As such, a 400 metre (440 yard) area is considered to be more appropriate in terms of assessing local shopping deficiency.

271 Manual For Streets, Department for Transport (2007).

**30.3.9** Currently 74.8% of the Borough is located within a 5 minute (400m or 440 yard) walk of a neighbourhood or higher order shopping centre, of this, 1.5% are served by local centres in neighbouring boroughs. Excluding public spaces, the main areas with an established deficiency are Latimer, Kensal (east of Ladbroke Grove) and parts of Earl's Court. In these areas, many residents will have to walk for more than 10 minutes (or 800m) to local shopping facilities. Lots Road is currently seen as being deficient. However, once implemented, the planning permission for the Lots Road Power Station site will address the deficiency. Whilst it is noted that there is little residential accommodation currently in the area shown as deficient in Kensal, the Kensal Gasworks Strategic Site is allocated for significant housing growth in this Core Strategy, meaning that local shopping facilities will be required. The deficiency in Earl's Court is expected to be resolved through the redevelopment of the Earl's Court Exhibition Centre Strategic Site.

**30.3.10** By developing these sites and by creating new neighbourhood centres in Latimer and Kensal, it is calculated that 76% of the Borough would be within a 5 minute walk of local shopping facilities.

**30.3.11** Individual shops and parades are also important as they offer convenience retail to those living in areas which are not located near defined shopping centres.

**30.3.12** As well as social and community facilities, the Borough must also cater for local employment needs, this both improves the sense of belonging and can contribute to a more sustainable community. The issue of local employment is covered in more detail in *Fostering Vitality*.

## Policy CK 2

### Local Shopping Facilities

The Council will ensure opportunities exist for convenience shopping throughout the Borough.

To deliver this the Council will protect individual shops outside of designated town centres.

*NOTE: Further policy mechanisms for delivering this are included in Policies CF1, CF2 and CF3 in Fostering Vitality, Chapter 31.*

## Walkable Neighbourhoods and Neighbourhood Facilities

**30.3.13** For the purposes of this plan, neighbourhood facilities are defined as being those which provide a day-to-day function, namely primary schools and GP surgeries.

**30.3.14** The evidence on walkable neighbourhoods in the Borough show that existing facilities need protecting, in some cases expanding and new ones establishing. Therefore a policy is required to establish a local walking time for the Borough within which residents can reach neighbourhood facilities.

**30.3.15** The concept of Walkable Neighbourhoods ~~will also be~~ has been used to establish a local walking time appropriate for the Borough. Walkable Neighbourhoods are an excellent method of not only ensuring local facilities and day-to-day needs are available to residents but also encouraging walking and cycling as opposed to driving. In the case of Kensington and Chelsea's neighbourhood facilities, this level has been set at 800 metres (875 yards).

**30.3.16** Having local neighbourhood facilities within a short walking distance is an essential characteristic of local life in Kensington and Chelsea. Currently 84.7% of the Borough is within an 800m walk of a GP surgery and 93.1% of a primary school. Walkable neighbourhoods also include local shopping facilities, but these are covered by the policy above (Policy CK2), because they have a different spatial distribution across the borough.

**30.3.17** A 10 minute walk (800m) to local facilities is widely regarded as being an appropriate distance to travel. This is calculated by using the principle that the average person walks at a speed of 5km per hour<sup>(272)</sup>. It is also used by NHS Kensington and Chelsea as an appropriate distance for residents to travel to General Practitioners<sup>(273)</sup>.

272 Manual For Streets, Department for Transport (2007).

273 Kensington and Chelsea PCT 10 Year Primary Care Strategy (2008)



### Policy CK 3

#### Walkable Neighbourhoods and Neighbourhood Facilities

The Council will maintain the current percentage of access to neighbourhood facilities and work towards increasing the number of facilities where appropriate opportunities arise.

*NOTE: Policy mechanisms for delivering this are included in Policy CK1 above and in Policy C1.*

## 30.4 Corporate and Partner Actions

### Corporate and Partnership Strategies

#### RBKC Strategy for Change parts 1 and 2 (Building Schools for the Future)

**30.4.1** The Strategy for Change is the first key document that local authorities have to produce following their entry into the 'Building Schools for the Future' programme. It is designed to capture both the local authority's strategy for secondary education and the requirements that this strategy places upon the physical school estate and Information and Communication Technologies provision. This was produced by the Royal Borough's Directorate for Family and Children's Services. Part 1 was approved in May 2009 with Part 2 approved in September 2009.

#### Primary Care Trust (PCT) Estates Strategy 2006-2011

**30.4.2** Published in 2007, and maintained by NHS Kensington and Chelsea, the strategy was written to provide an overview of its current situation, the principles by which developments must be driven, the pressures and opportunities influencing future plans, and, as far as possible, an outline of the future plans under development.

#### PCT 10 Year Primary Care Strategy 2008-2018

**30.4.3** Published in 2007, and maintained by NHS Kensington and Chelsea, this paper sets out their vision for primary care over the next 10 years

and how it will be implemented. The strategy relates to GP services, community pharmacies, NHS dentistry and primary care optical services.

#### Metropolitan Police Authority Planning for Future Police Estate Development

**30.4.4** This report published in May 2005, sets out a London-wide planning policy to provide guidance to local authorities on the need to make provision through the planning system for police estate development.

#### Metropolitan Police Authority Asset Management Plan

**30.4.5** Published in November 2007, this document highlights the Metropolitan Police Authority's strategy between 2007 and 2010. A revised draft is currently being prepared but this will not be available until late 2009/early 2010. The working draft is a private document but the Metropolitan Police Authority have explained that to the best of their knowledge, their consultation responses have been made in line with the working draft.

#### Corporate or Partnership Actions for Keeping Life Local

1. The Town Centre Initiatives Manager will work in partnership with retailers to support and strengthen the viability of local shopping centres.
2. The Council's Service Improvement department Economic Development Team will lobby to maintain and improve access to Post Offices in the Borough and work with the Directorate of Planning and Borough Development to seek alternative means of maintaining the current stock.
3. Planning and Borough Development will provide for the requirements of the Metropolitan Police Service in the delivery of its estate strategy through the determination of planning applications.
4. The Directorate of Planning and Borough Development will prepare a masterplan for Latimer which incorporates a new local centre and academy.
5. The Directorate of Planning and Borough Development in partnership with the GLA will prepare a masterplan for Kensal Gasworks which delivers a mix of uses

- including social and community and local facilities.
6. The Directorate of Planning and Borough Development will work with NHS Kensington and Chelsea to ensure that the needs of the Primary Care Strategy are implemented where appropriate, and ensuring that residents have good access to GP, dentist, pharmacy and hospital services.
  7. The Directorate of Planning and Borough Development will work with the private medical sector to ensure that the needs of the future and current population are catered for through the determination of planning applications.
  8. The Directorate of Planning and Borough Development will work in partnership with Family and Children Services and other education providers (including the private sector) to deliver an exemplary standard of learning across the Borough.
  9. Family and Childrens' Services will work with the Department for Education and others, in securing funding for a new academy in the north of the borough, for implementation by 2014.
  10. The Council's Transportation section within Transport, Environment and Leisure Services will work in partnership with Transport for London to encourage streetscape and traffic management improvements which remove barriers and improve access to social and community uses and local shopping centres, and improve cycling and walking environments in the Borough.
  11. The Directorate of Planning and Borough Development will help to secure affordable retail units as well as new and/or improved social and community facilities in new developments through the use of the Council's SPD on Planning Obligations throughout the life of this document.
  12. The Family and Childrens' Services Directorate will work with the Department for Education and others, in securing funding for the upgrading of all schools through the Primary Capital Programme and 'Building Schools for the Future' programme.
  13. Property Services will consider the potential to expand the number of units managed under the neighbourhood shopping policy.
  14. Planning and Borough Development will work with NHS Kensington and Chelsea, the Metropolitan Police Authority and other essential infrastructure providers to ensure that facilities are located where possible to fill the gaps identified using walkable neighbourhood indicators which will form part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
  15. The Directorate of Planning and Borough Development will work with Transport, Environment and Leisure and the Sports Development Team to ensure opportunities for new sports facilities, particularly in areas of deficiency, will be fully examined.



Thackeray Street Neighbourhood Centre



## Chapter 31 Fostering Vitality

*Town centres, retail, arts and culture and business*

### 31.1 Introduction

**31.1.1** The Borough has a finely-grained mix of uses such as shops, businesses, arts and cultural facilities, some of which are world class. These uses have benefited from the Borough's high residential density and from visitors to the Borough but have of late, been under pressure from residential development. There is a risk that they could decline to such an extent that the collective quality of life of the Borough could be diminished.

**31.1.2** *Fostering vitality* is an integral part of the Core Strategy's central vision of *Building on Success*. It lies at the heart of the the Royal Borough's *reputation* as a national and international destination.

#### CO 2

##### Strategic Objective for Fostering Vitality

Our strategic objective to **foster vitality** is that the quality of life of our predominantly residential Borough is enhanced by a wide variety of cultural, creative and commercial uses which can significantly contribute to the well being of residents and to the capital's role as a world city.

### 31.2 What this means for the Borough

**31.2.1** Most of these cultural, creative and commercial uses will continue to be concentrated within the Borough's higher order town centres, namely: Portobello Road, Notting Hill Gate, Knightsbridge, Kensington High Street, Fulham Road, Brompton Cross, South Kensington and the King's Road. This 'town centre first' approach ensures that as many people as possible can enjoy the benefits that this Borough has to offer, as it is our town centres which are the parts of the Borough best served by public transport.

**31.2.2** The Council will direct new shopping, large-scale offices, and other town centre uses into existing higher order town centres wherever possible. The Council does however, recognise that it is likely that Knightsbridge, King's Road, Fulham Road, Brompton Cross and South Kensington will need to be expanded to accommodate an increased need for shopping floorspace in the south of the Borough over the next five to ten years.

**31.2.3** New hotels will be encouraged in those higher order centres with excellent links to the rest of the Capital, particularly Knightsbridge, King's Road (East), Brompton Cross, South Kensington, Kensington High Street and Notting Hill Gate. They will also be supported in the wider Earl's Court Opportunity Area, to service the destination cultural use proposed.

**31.2.4** The strength of South Kensington as an area which offers an exceptional cultural experience will be supported further by its designation as a Strategic Cultural Area, and the inclusion of the museums complex within the Mayor's Central Activity Zone (CAZ).

**31.2.5** The Council recognises that the Borough is a dynamic place and that some areas will see improvements in their public transport accessibility in the lifetime of the Plan. These areas, which are likely to include Kensal, may prove suitable locations for new concentrations of commercial development. Improvements in accessibility will not, however, be allowed to cause the homogenisation of uses within the Borough. The important role that the Employment Zones in the Latimer, Lots Road and Kensal areas play in providing a mix of light industrial and small and medium-sized offices will continue to be supported. Similarly, the important role that very small and small offices have throughout the Borough will continue to be recognised. It is these premises that are both disproportionately staffed by the Borough's residents and are of particular value to the Borough's thriving creative and cultural business sector.

## 31.3 Planning Policies

### Location of Town Centre Uses

The Council's Retail Needs Assessment (274) predicts retail need up till 2028, the end of the plan period. Whilst need until 2015 can be estimated to an acceptable degree of accuracy, longer term forecasts are more susceptible to change. The Core Strategy, therefore, seeks to plan for, and accommodate, retail need to 2015 only. This approach is consistent with PPS4 which states that Local Planning Authorities need only to allocate sufficient sites to meet identified need for the first five years of the plan. The Council will review retail need on a regular basis, and where necessary amend the Core Strategy accordingly.

**31.3.1** The Council's Retail Needs Assessment states that to 2015 a total of 25,500m<sup>2</sup> (gross) (approximately 275,000 sq ft) of additional comparison retail floorspace is needed in the south of the Borough if the Borough is to take advantage of the expected increase in retail expenditure in the area. Some of this need is already in the development pipeline, with much of the remainder likely to be accommodated within the existing higher order centres (Knightsbridge, King's Road, Fulham Road, Brompton Cross and South Kensington) as well as within the network of neighbourhood centres, by making better use of existing premises, the filling of vacant units, or by making better use of under-used sites. The Council has, however, identified a number of edge-of-centre sites within the Knightsbridge, King's Road, South Kensington and Brompton Cross Places (Chapters 12-15), as being potentially suitable for retail expansion. With a total site area of more than 21,000m<sup>2</sup> (approximately 225,000 sq ft), these sites should be capable of accommodating any additional retail need which cannot be provided within the existing centres. The suitability of any additional windfall sites for shopping floorspace will be assessed against Policy CF1.

**31.3.2** Over the same period 650m<sup>2</sup> (gross) (approximately 7,000 ft<sup>2</sup>)<sup>(275)</sup> of additional comparison retail floorspace will be needed to meet expected demand in the main centres in the north and centre of the Borough (Portobello Road, Notting Hill Gate and Kensington High Street). The Retail Needs Assessment suggests that all of this additional floorspace could be accommodated

within existing centres through making better use of existing premises, the filling of vacant units or by making better use of under-used sites.

**31.3.3** The Council endorses the 'town centre first' approach and 'sequential test' for new town centre uses as set out within PPS46 and the London Plan. The PPS46 definition of an edge-of-centre site (within 300m of a town centre boundary) is not however, considered to be relevant in the Borough because almost the entirety of the Borough would qualify as edge-of-centre within this definition. The Council considers edge-of-centre development to be that adjacent to an existing centre.

**31.3.4** PPS64 notes that in assessing proposals for new town centre uses, local planning authorities must take into account the impact that proposals will have upon the physical regeneration, employment, economic growth and social inclusion in an area. This may be of particular relevance in the north of the Borough, an area which is named within the Core Strategy Vision as requiring regeneration.

**31.3.5** The *Keeping Life Local* Strategic Objective (Chapter 30) introduces the concept of walkable neighbourhoods, and includes a map which shows those parts of the Borough that are not within a five minute walk of a centre. The main areas of deficiency are in the Latimer and Kensal areas. New centres in these areas will meet this deficiency, with the scale of development within these new centres reflecting the nature of the proposed development in the wider area.

In addition a significant amount of development is expected within the plan period in the Earl's Court and West Kensington Opportunity Area. This site, designated within the draft London Plan as an Opportunity Area, straddles the boundary with Hammersmith and Fulham. Both the quantum of development, and its detailed nature (including whether the constituent parts lie in this Borough or within Hammersmith and Fulham) will be established within a future planning brief. However, it is likely that the wider area will include a significant amount of housing, as well as business uses, hotel floorspace, and a destination cultural facility. This development is likely to generate some retail 'need'.

274 RBKC, Retail and Leisure Needs Study, Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, July 2008

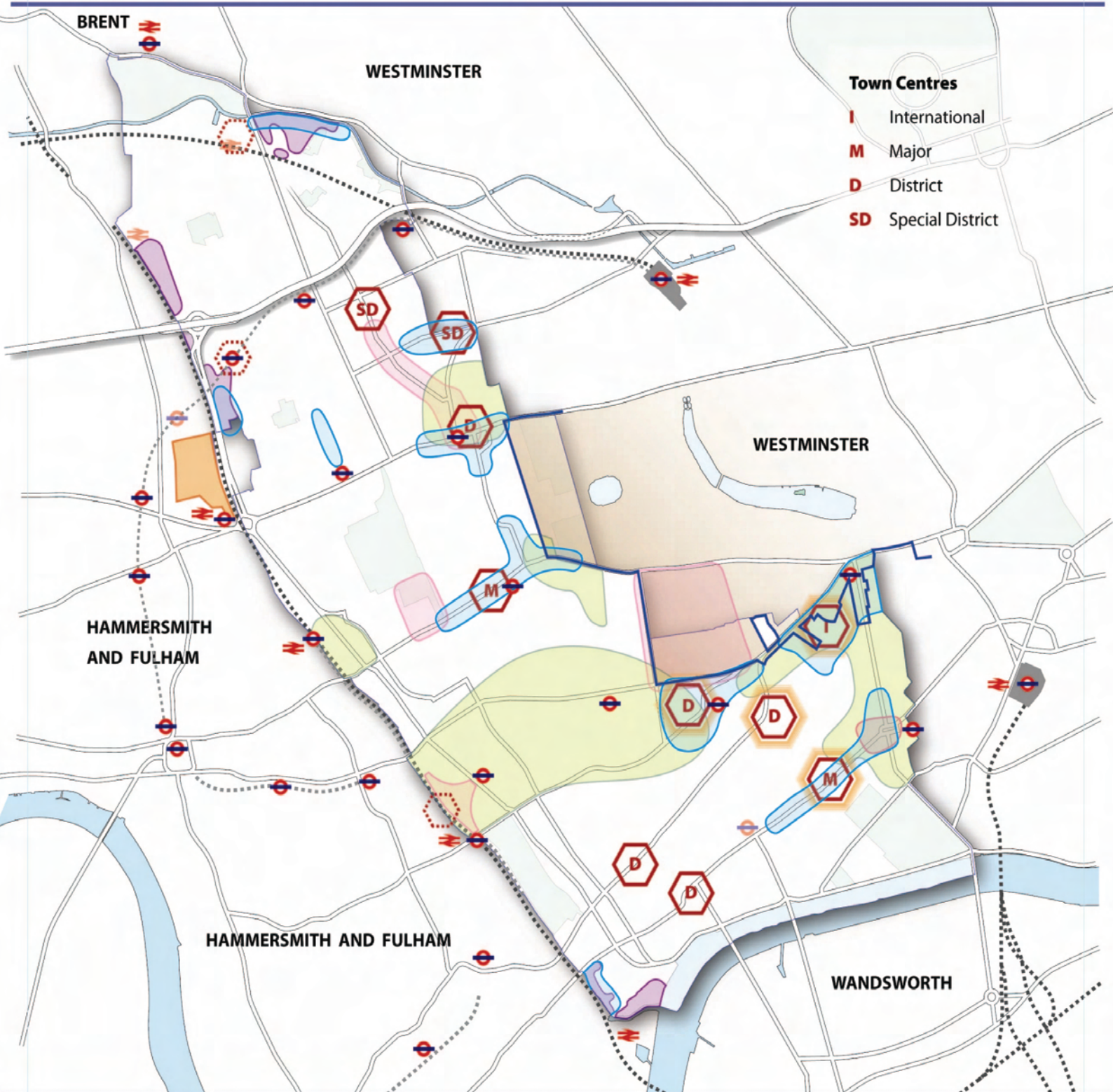
275 ibid



# FOSTERING VITALITY

## Town Centres, Retail, Arts and Culture and Business,

- Employment Zones
- Westfield London Shopping Centre
- Concentration of Cultural Uses
- Concentration of Offices
- Concentration of Hotels
- Town Centres
- Centres identified for possible expansion
- Central Activities Zone (CAZ)
- Possible new centre





A neighbourhood centre in the area will, therefore, be appropriate, as long it is of a scale which does not harm the vitality of nearby centres. A new centre is 'supported' rather than 'required' as it is possible that its eventual location may be in Hammersmith and Fulham.

**31.3.6** The Council recognises that smaller scale parades of shops or isolated shops also have a role in serving the needs of residents across the Borough. Out of centre units with a gross floor area of less than 400m<sup>2</sup> (4,300 sq ft) are likely to have a convenience function as are of a scale which often equate to a 'local' format small supermarket. These are of a size which are usually to be considered a 'small shop' with regard to the restrictions for Sunday Trading (280m<sup>2</sup> (net) (3,000 sq ft)).

## Policy CF 1

### Location of New Shop Uses

The Council will ensure vital and viable town centres through a town centre first approach to new retail floorspace.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. support the creation of new shop floorspace within town centres;
- b. require new retail development with a floor area of 400m<sup>2</sup> (4,300 ft<sup>2</sup>) (gross external) or more to be located within existing higher order town centres or within sites adjoining Knightsbridge, King's Road (East and West), Fulham Road, Brompton Cross and South Kensington where no suitable sites can be identified within these centres;
- c. permit new shops (A1) of less than 400 m<sup>2</sup> (4,300 ft<sup>2</sup>)(gross external) in areas of retail deficiency as shown on the plan within Chapter 30 (*Keeping Life Local*) ;
- d. require the establishment of new centres in the Latimer and Kensal areas to address identified retail deficiency;

- e. support the establishment of a new neighbourhood centre in the Earl's Court Opportunity Area, to serve the day-to-day needs of the development.
- f. require, where proposals for new retail development do not comply with parts (a) to ~~(d)~~~~(e)~~, that it is demonstrated either:
  - i. ~~the need for the proposal;~~ and that the development would meet the requirements of the sequential assessment test; and that the development will not have an unacceptable impact on existing centres; or
  - ii. that the new floorspace would underpin the Council's regeneration objectives and the vitality of any existing centre will not be harmed.

## Character of Town Centres

**31.3.7** The Borough contains some of London's finest shopping areas; including Knightsbridge, the King's Road, Kensington High Street and the Portobello Road. Each of these offers something special, be this access to world-class brands, to eclectic markets or to the quirky and the unexpected. Indeed, the significant contribution that Knightsbridge plays to the Capital's retail draw is reflected by its inclusion within the London Plan's CAZ. The boundary of the CAZ is shown on the Proposals map

**31.3.8** The Borough contains four levels of town centres. Three of these, the Borough's *higher order centres*, form part of the *London town centre network* as designated within the London Plan. These are:

- **International Centre:** Knightsbridge
- **Major Centres:** King's Road (East) and Kensington High Street
- **District Centres:** South Kensington, King's Road (West), Notting Hill Gate, Fulham Road (Fulham Road ~~(east)~~~~(West)~~ in the London Plan) and Brompton Cross (called Fulham Road ~~(East)~~~~(West)~~ in the London Plan).

**31.3.9** Portobello Road and Westbourne Grove have been designated by the Council as separate **Special District Centres** to reflect their unique

function in having both a substantial local and international draw. Earl's Court Road has been classed as a Neighbourhood rather than a District Centre to recognise the ongoing review of the London Town Centre Network being carried out by the GLA in preparation of the forthcoming London Plan<sup>(276)</sup>.

**31.3.10** These *higher order town centres* are the main shopping areas in the Borough, offering both comparison and day-to-day convenience shopping for residents and for those visiting the Borough or working within it.

**31.3.11** The Council has drawn up visions for each of the Borough's higher order centres. These are included within the *Places* section of the Core Strategy (Chapters 5 to 18). Detailed changes to specific town centre boundaries are set out in the *Places* section where applicable.

**31.3.12** The fourth type of centre, the Borough's *Neighbourhood Centres*, have a different role, to meet the day-to-day needs of those living and working in the Borough. Neighbourhood centres are therefore integral to building up the walkable neighbourhood as outlined in Chapter 30 (*Keeping Life Local*).

**31.3.13** The ***Neighbourhood Centres*** are: Barlby Road, Ladbroke Grove (North), Golborne Road (North), North Pole Road, St Helen's Gardens, Ladbroke Grove Station, All Saints Road, Westbourne Park Road, Clarendon Cross, Holland Park Avenue, Holland Road, Napier Road, Kensington High Street (West), Thackeray Street, Pembroke Road, Earl's Court Road, Stratford Road, Gloucester Road, Cromwell Road Air Terminal, Gloucester Road (South), Old Brompton Road (West), Old Brompton Road (East), Ifield Road, The Billings, Fulham Road (Old Church Street), Walton Street, Lowndes Street, Pont Street, Sloane Avenue, Elystan Street, Chelsea Manor Street, Lower Sloane Street, World's End, and Fulham Road/ Brompton Cemetery.

**31.3.14** Golborne Road has been designated a ***Special Neighbourhood Centre*** to reflect its wider function and the close links between the Golborne and Portobello Markets.

The Boundaries of these centres are shown in Chapter 42, Proposals Map.

**31.3.15** The Retail Needs Assessment concludes that the Council is in a fortunate position and that our centres are healthy and vibrant in character. However, the Council recognises that the Borough is not immune from the changes in the local retail market, be these increasing competition from shopping centres outside the Borough, or the pressure on diversity from an increasing homogeneous retail sector. The Council is currently concerned about what impact the new shopping centre in Hammersmith and Fulham, 'Westfield London' will have upon the health of the Borough's centres. The higher order centres north of the Cromwell Road, and in particular Kensington High Street are likely to be the most affected as visitors choose to visit Westfield rather than the established centres in this Borough. Whilst anecdotal evidence does suggest that, to date, the impact of Westfield on Kensington High Street has not been as great as originally feared, the Council will continue to monitor the health of the Borough's centres very carefully.

**31.3.16** The Council endorses the view of the Retail Commission<sup>(277)</sup> in recognising that the health of a centre does not depend merely on the number of shops within it. A successful centre is one which contains a diverse mix of uses and one which retains a distinct character. There are threats to this diversity, and whilst the Council recognises that multiple retailers are likely to form the spine of many of the Borough's centres, some of the Borough's iconic town centres are in danger of becoming 'cloned high streets'. 89% of the shopping floorspace within Knightsbridge, 81% of Kensington High Street and 68% of King's Road (East) is occupied by *multiple retailers*<sup>(278)</sup>, although many of these are top name international brands which have a limited representation in Britain.

**31.3.17** Despite the threats, many of our centres currently retain a high proportion of retailers which are either independent or are not part of national chains. This is true for the Portobello Road, with only 18%<sup>(279)</sup> of the total retail floorspace of the centre being occupied by multiple retailers. The Council cannot however, be complacent, and recognises that it is the low proportion of national

276 London Town Centre Network, Review for the London Plan, Provisional findings. GLA April 2009.

277 A Balance of Trade: Everyone can help, Report of the Commission on Retail Conservation to RBKC, May 2007

278 GLA, London-wide Town Centres Health Check, 2006 Analysis, January 2007, [http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/planning/docs/towncentrehealthchecks2006\\_annexes.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/planning/docs/towncentrehealthchecks2006_annexes.pdf)

279 ibid

multiples that helps maintain the special character of some of our centres. The Council recognises that the Planning System does not allow a Local Planning Authority to consider the nature of a particular shopkeeper when determining a planning application. Councils are, however, encouraged to promote diversity within town centres, using the tools available to them.

**31.3.18** The 'town centre first' approach to new shopping development is central to maintaining the character of successful and diverse centres. Similarly, the Council recognises that for new retail development to help support the function of a centre, it must be of an appropriate scale and provide a mix of shop unit sizes. The Council endorses the view of the Retail Commission<sup>(280)</sup> that, in order to ensure the continued supply of small units that are more likely to be occupied by start-up, independent or specialist traders it may be appropriate to use s106 agreements (or conditions) to provide both a mix of unit sizes and affordable shops. In both cases, the use of such methods will only normally be suitable within major shopping developments (with a net increase in retail floor area of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or more), where the viability of the wider scheme is not jeopardised. The Council's favoured method for the provision of 'affordable shops' is for developers to provide premises to be managed under the Council's *Neighbourhood Shopping Policy*. The Council recognises that there may be circumstances where it would be appropriate for the affordable shop to be provided off site, but within the same centre. These could include, for example, where the proposed retail development has a narrow street frontage, and where the provision of an additional shop on the site could jeopardise the successful operation of the principal shop. The onus is on the applicant to successfully demonstrate where off site provision will be appropriate.

**31.3.19** The Council does recognise that the planning system does not normally allow a Local Planning Authority to control the amalgamation of shop units as amalgamation is not normally considered to be development which requires planning permission. Conditions do, however, allow the Council to protect newly created small units where they are considered to play a significant role in maintaining the character of a centre.

## Policy CF 2

### Retail Development within Town Centres

The Council will promote vital and viable town centres and ensure that the character and diversity of the Borough's town centres is maintained.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. require the scale and nature of development within a town centre to reflect the position of the centre within the retail hierarchy and to assist in the implementation of the vision for that centre as set out within Section 1b *Places* (Chapters 4-18);
- b. require a range of shop unit sizes in new major retail development, and resist the amalgamation of shop units, where the retention of the existing units contributes to achieving the vision for the centre;
- c. require new large scale retail development or mixed use development with a significant retail element, to provide affordable shops to be managed under the Council's *Neighbourhood Shopping Policy*. Affordable shops can be provided off site within the same centre where appropriate.

### Diversity within Town Centres

**31.3.20** PPS6 (Planning for Town Centres) PPS4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth) list the main town centre uses. These are retail, banks, building societies and other professional services, leisure and entertainment (including restaurants, pubs, take-aways and cinemas), offices, arts, culture and tourism (theatres, museums, galleries, concert halls, hotels and conference facilities). The PPS also notes that housing can be a possible town centre use when on upper floors. Social and community uses, are also considered to be appropriate town centre uses. Some, including police contact points, are particularly suited to central town centre locations. Social and

280 A Balance of Trade: Everyone can help, Report of the Commission on Retail Conservation to RBKC, May 2007 and Response to Report from Retail Commission: A Balance of Trade, September 2007



community uses and local convenience shopping are considered in both this chapter and in Keeping Life Local (Chapter 30).

**31.3.21** It is important to keep concentrations of shops together at the heart of a town centre to make it easy to compare goods between retailers. This 'critical mass' of shops is necessary to encourage shoppers into a centre and to encourage its vitality. Town centres are, however, about more than just shopping. They are preferred locations for other *town centre uses*, uses which support the Borough's function as a place to live and which to work, and uses such as restaurants and bars, which draw people into the centres and encourage them to linger.

**31.3.22** The Council recognises that these differing roles are served by different parts of the Borough's larger centres. It is the *primary retail frontages* which provide the critical mass of shops, and the *secondary retail frontages*, whilst still being mostly shops, contain a greater diversity of town centre uses serving non-shopping needs of visitors. Taken together, the primary and secondary retail frontages provide the range of town centre uses necessary to make the Borough's centres the diverse and successful places that they are.

**31.3.23** The Council is concerned with the mix uses within differing parts of the centre, as well as in the centre as a whole. In any one street frontage (between successive intersecting vehicular highways) the Council will take account of the concentration of units in any non-shop use and the length of break in the retail frontage. The primary and secondary retail frontages equate to the core and non-core frontages, respectively, of the Borough's Principal Shopping Centres as set out within the Council's UDP (2002). These will be reviewed.

**31.3.24** The Council recognises that restaurants and drinking establishments do have a role in supporting the diversity of the Borough's town centres and in providing a useful day-to-day service to our residents. Such uses can, however, be unneighbourly and cause particular problems to the quiet enjoyment of our residential areas.

**31.3.25** It is not appropriate to draw such a distinction between the primary and secondary retail frontages within the Borough's neighbourhood centres. The maintenance of strong neighbourhood centres is integral to the creation of walkable neighbourhoods, and all shops in such locations will be essential to the centres' character. The only

exception to this is where a new social community use is to be provided, as the function of the neighbourhood centres is to serve both the shopping and other day-to-day need of the residents of the area. The main retail function cannot, however, be allowed to be lost.

## Policy CF 3

### Diversity of uses within Town Centres

The Council will secure the success and vitality of our town centres by protecting, enhancing and promoting a diverse range of shops and by ensuring that these uses will be supported, but not dominated by, a range of complimentary town centre uses.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. Protect **all** shops and shop floorspace at ground floor level in primary retail frontages of:
  - i. Knightsbridge, King's Road (East and West), Fulham Road, Brompton Cross, South Kensington, Kensington High Street **and Westbourne Grove** town centres unless the change is to another town centre use and where 80% of the ground-floor units in the relevant street frontage will remain in an A1(shop) use and the non shop use is not adjacent to another non-A1 use;
  - ii. Notting Hill Gate unless the change is to another town centre **use**, but not an estate agents, bureaux de change (Class A2) or hot food takeaway (Class **A45**) use and where 80% of the ground-floor units in the relevant street frontage will remain in an A1(shop) use and the non-shop use is not adjacent to another non-A1 use;
  - iii. Portobello Road Special District Centre;
- b. Protect **all shops and shopping retail** floorspace at ground floor level within the secondary retail frontages of:

- i. Knightsbridge, King's Road (East and West), Fulham Road, Brompton Cross, South Kensington and Kensington High Street and Portobello Road town centres, unless the change is to a town centre use and where 66% of the ground-floor units in the relevant street frontage will remain in an A1(shop) use and there are no more than 3 non-A1 uses in a row;
- ii. Notting Hill Gate District Centre unless the change is to another town centre **use**, but not an estate agents, bureaux de change (Class A2) or hot food takeaway (Class **A4A5**) and the change is to a town centre use and where 66% of the ground-floor units in the relevant street frontage will remain in an A1(shop) use and there are no more than 3 non-A1 uses in a row;
- c. protect retail uses above or below ground floor level within town centres unless it is successfully demonstrated that their loss will not adversely affect the essential shopping character and function of the centre;
- d. protect all shops within neighbourhood centres, unless the proposal is to change to a social and community use, and where 66% of the relevant street frontage remains in an A1 use (shop).

market pitches if they are to serve any useful function. The expansion of the Portobello Road Street market, north up to the Golborne Road, has been supported within both the Golborne and Portobello/Notting Hill Places, in Chapters 6 and 7 respectively, as it is considered to be an initiative that will greatly assist in generating increased footfall in this part of the Borough.

## Policy CF 4

### Street Markets

The Council will ensure that street markets remain a vibrant part of the Borough's retail offer.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. protect all of the Borough's street markets including those at Portobello Road, Golborne Road and Bute Street;
- b. support new, or the expansion of existing, street markets where this fits in with our broader retail strategy and our strategic objectives for the town centres in which they would be located within or adjacent to;
- c. require the protection of existing storage lockups for street traders, or their equivalent re-provision.

## Street Markets

**31.3.26** Street markets are a form of shopping greatly valued by many of the Borough's residents. Their role is diverse, supporting the day-to-day shopping needs of local people, as well as, in the case of the Portobello and Golborne Road markets, attracting large number of visitors from outside the Borough. The existing markets are considered to be an integral part the Borough's retail offer and to play a vital role in maintaining the special character and the diversity of the Borough's centres. Storage for market traders is essential for the market to operate successfully. This storage will be for both the goods sold and for the stalls themselves, and, as such, must be in reasonable proximity to the

## Location of Business uses

**31.3.27** Business uses are considered to be those which fall under Class B of the Use Classes Order, and include office, light industrial and storage uses. The retail, catering and hotel sectors are therefore excluded.

**31.3.28** Whilst the Borough has not been designated by the Mayor of London as a strategic office location, it does contain locally-important concentrations of offices, particularly in the wards around Kensington High Street and South Kensington. There are also concentrations within the other higher order centres, within the remaining predominantly commercial mews and within the Borough's Employment Zones.

**31.3.29** Business uses employ some 34,500 people within the Borough, or 31% of all jobs within Kensington and Chelsea. This is less than the national average of 41%, a figure which reflects the small proportion of industrial jobs, at just 5% compared to the national average of 21%<sup>(281)</sup>. The office sector is significant, providing 29,000, or a quarter of all jobs in the Borough. This proportion is greater than the national average, and with 587,000m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace makes the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea the 12 largest office provider in the Capital<sup>(282)</sup>.

**31.3.30** The average business unit in the Borough measures 230m<sup>2</sup> (2,475 ft<sup>2</sup>) – less than half the London average of 425m<sup>2</sup> (4,550 ft<sup>2</sup>)<sup>(283)</sup>. The data however, shows that a high proportion of business premises within the Borough are considerably smaller, at less than 100m<sup>2</sup> (1,075 ft<sup>2</sup>). Offices of this size (and indeed, smaller) are often home to local businesses including those providing a community or voluntary sector function.

**31.3.31** There is a forecast demand for 15% growth of office jobs over the plan period. This equates to a net addition of 69,200m<sup>2</sup> (750,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) of office floorspace. For industry and warehousing, the forecast is for a small reduction of required stock of just 4,500m<sup>2</sup> (50,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) or just 180 jobs. The type of units sought does vary. For light industrial uses, most take up is in units to about 230 m<sup>2</sup> (2,500 ft<sup>2</sup>), whereas for offices, most take up is for units between 45m<sup>2</sup> and 75m<sup>2</sup> (500 ft<sup>2</sup> and 800 ft<sup>2</sup>)<sup>(284)</sup>. This is not to say that there is no demand for larger units within the Borough. The recent building out of some large scale office developments indicates that there is.

**31.3.32** On the supply side, office floorspace under construction and outstanding permissions provide a net addition of 46,000m<sup>2</sup> (500,000 ft<sup>2</sup>)<sup>(285)</sup>. This level of building will meet office demand until 2017. The Council therefore recognises that a further 23,000m<sup>2</sup> of office floorspace needs to be developed within the Borough, within the plan period for the predicted need to be met. The Council has allocated 20,000m<sup>2</sup> (215,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) of business floor space within the Strategic Site Allocations for the Earl's Court and the Kensal Gasworks sites. Any remaining need would be

likely to be met by other smaller windfall sites, particularly by very small and small office developments across the Borough.

**31.3.33** The continued concentration of *large* (greater than 1000m<sup>2</sup> (GEA)) and *medium* scale (300m<sup>2</sup> to 1000m<sup>2</sup> (GEA)) *office business* developments on the upper floors of sites within town centres and in other accessible areas is important as it supports both the continued vitality of the Borough's town centres (increasing the number of people visiting the centre but not at the expense of existing shopping floorspace) and ensures that as many people as possible can reach these areas without having to rely on the private car. This is a central tenet of a sustainable pattern of development. The protection of offices within town centres should not however be at the expense of existing town centre occupiers who are in need of expansion. Meeting the needs of employers is integral to fostering the vitality of the Borough. For the sake of clarity, the expansion of residential uses at the expense of offices within town centres is not supported.

**31.3.34** The Council considers an area which has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) score of 4 or greater to be accessible.

**31.3.35** The availability of *small* (floor area of 300m<sup>2</sup> (GEA) or less) and *very small* (floor area of 100m<sup>2</sup> (GEA) or less) business premises across the Borough is also valued as these are the premises which are in the greatest demand by the Borough's residents. These smaller units are often provided within purpose built business centres. These offer flexibility and the scope for a successful business to expand in situ. The use of S106 agreements to control amalgamation will, however, be appropriate for newly built business centres and other proposals which provide small workspaces. This will allow the Council to support the expansion of growing businesses but resist the incremental creation of large scale single occupier buildings outside of Higher Order Town Centres and other accessible areas.

**31.3.36** The Kensal, Freston Road/Latimer Road and Lots Road Employment Zones are the principal concentrations for the Borough's remaining light industrial uses, although other parts of the north of

281 Annual Business Inquiry 2005, RBKC, Employment Land Study, Roger Tym & Partners, January 2007

282 *ibid*

283 RBKC, Employment Land Study, Roger Tym & Partners, January 2007

284 *ibid*

285 RBKC, Employment Land Review Update, Roger Tyms and Partners, Draft September 2009



the Borough, as well as Campden ward, do make a significant contribution to this sector<sup>(286)</sup>. These uses are valuable as it is the smaller business units that usually provide disproportionately more jobs for local people than larger units<sup>(287)</sup>. In particular it is these smaller units which are of particular demand for the Borough's creative and cultural industries. As a borough with some of the highest land values in the country, there is a danger that lower value land uses, such as light industrial or small offices, will be replaced by higher value uses such as housing (including student accommodation) or large-scale offices. In addition the Council notes that none of the Borough's Employment Zones are located in areas which are well served by public transport and therefore that, as major trip generators, large scale offices in these areas are likely to increase car use and congestion.

**31.3.37** In order to maintain a broad mix of employment opportunities, to protect the small business units favoured by local employees, and to ensure diversity of uses within the Borough, the Council will support the Employment Zones as the remaining concentrations of light industrial uses, workshops, creative and cultural industries and small business uses outside the town centres. The Council recognises that business centres make an important contribution to the function of the Employment Zones, as they assist in providing the flexible workspace which is in particular demand from the Borough's creative and cultural industry.

## Policy CF 5

### Location of Business Uses

The Council will ensure that there are a range of business premises within the Borough to allow businesses to grow and thrive; to promote the consolidation of ~~consolidate~~ large and medium offices within town centres; support their location in and areas of high transport accessibility; and protect and promote employment zones for a range of small and medium business activities which directly support the function and character of the zone.

To deliver this the Council will, with regard to:

### Offices

- a. protect very small and small offices (when either stand alone or as part of a larger business premises) throughout the Borough; medium sized offices within the Employment Zones, Higher Order Town Centres, other accessible areas and primarily commercial mews; large offices in Higher Order Town Centres and other accessible areas, except where:
  - i. the office is within an employment zone and is being replaced by a light industrial use, workshop or other use which directly supports the character and function of the zone;
  - ii. the office is within a town centre and is being replaced by a shop or shop floorspace, or another (not residential) town centre use where this allows the expansion of an adjoining premises;
- b. permit very small offices anywhere in the Borough save for ground floor level of town centres;
- c. permit small offices anywhere in the Borough; require medium offices to be located in town centres, in other accessible areas, in Employment Zones and in commercial mews; require large offices to be located in higher order town centres and other accessible areas, except where the proposal:
  - i. results in shared communal residential/ business entrance;
  - ii. results in the net loss of any residential units or floorspace; or
  - iii. in the case of a town centre, harms the retail function of that centre;
- d. permit business centres at upper floor levels of higher order town centres, within accessible areas and within Employment Zones;
- e. require all new business floorspace over 100m<sup>2</sup> to be flexible, capable of accommodating a range of unit sizes;

286 RBKC, Employment Land Study, Roger Tym & Partners, January 2007

287 ibid

**Light Industrial**

- f. protect all light industrial uses throughout the Borough;
- g. require new light industrial uses to be located within Employment Zones, predominantly commercial mews and other areas where amenity is not harmed;
- h. require the provision of a mix of unit sizes suitable for the creative and cultural businesses, as appropriate;

**Employment Zones**

- i. protect light industrial uses, workshops, **very small**, small and medium offices, and business centres;
- j. require there be no net loss of business floorspace unless to uses which directly support the function and character of the zone;
- k. resist large scale offices;
- l. resist residential uses including for student housing or any form of living accommodation;
- m. promote employment zones as locations for small businesses and for workshops (whether stand alone or part of large business centres).
- n. **to restrict, through the use of S106 planning obligations, the amalgamation of small and very small business units.**

industries are well represented across the Borough, but particularly within the Employment Zones and the town centres<sup>(289)</sup>.

**31.3.39** The Borough has long been a centre for innovation, initially attracting artists and artisans, and now as a centre for the new media, for the film, music and fashion businesses, for advertising and publishing, for architects and for the antiques trade. These remain vibrant industries that contribute to the Borough's economy and to its reputation as a desirable place in which to work.

**31.3.40** As a local planning authority it is difficult for the Council to use the planning system to promote one form of business over another. However, it does recognise that the provision of a mix of unit sizes, flexible work-spaces and lower cost units can all help the creative and cultural sector set up, expand and thrive within the Borough.

**31.3.41** The Council also recognises that the creative industry thrives on the linkages associated with being parts of wider 'clusters'. Therefore, whilst the policies within this chapter support the creation of premises suitable for the creative and cultural business sectors across the Borough, concentrations of creative industries are specifically supported in the Kensal, Earl's Court and Lots Road Places (Chapters 5, 10 and 18).

**Policy CF 6****Creative and Cultural Businesses**

The Council will promote and protect the work-spaces needed to support the creative and cultural industries across the Borough.

**Creative and Cultural Businesses**

**31.3.38** As a share of total employment in the Borough, the *cultural and creative sector* is unusually large, accounting for around 30% of all business units in the Borough, or about three times the national average. Some 16,600 people were employed in the Borough in the 'creative jobs' in 2006, in 4,000 separate businesses<sup>(288)</sup>. These

**Arts and Culture uses**

**31.3.42** The Borough contains a number of major arts and cultural attractions, including the Natural History, Science and Victoria and Albert Museums, the Earl's Court Exhibition Centre, the Royal Court Theatre and the Saatchi Gallery, as well as hosting the Notting Hill Carnival and the Chelsea Flower Show. It also contains a wealth of more local attractions, including the Museum of Brands, nine

288 RBKC, Understanding the creative and cultural sector in Kensington & Chelsea, BOP Consulting, 2008.

289 RBKC, Employment Land Review Update, Roger Tyms and Partners, Draft September 2009

cinemas and eight smaller theatres, as well as being home to more than six hundred arts organisations and artists<sup>(290)</sup>.

**31.3.43** The South Kensington Museums' role in defining London as a world city is reflected by their inclusion within the London Plan's Central Activities Zone. Their popularity and their importance is indisputable, with over eight and a half million visits being made to the Natural History, the Victoria and Albert and Science Museums in 2007<sup>(291)</sup>.

**31.3.44** The Borough's arts and cultural uses include museums, art galleries, exhibition spaces, theatres, cinemas and studios. Several of these facilities are enjoyed by more than just a local audience, but have a national, and, in some cases, an international draw.

**31.3.45** The requirements of arts and cultural operators change over time. Sometimes new requirements can be met on the existing site. Sometimes they cannot. Therefore, the Council recognises that it may be necessary to be pragmatic and to support enabling development on a given site where the proposal will result in an overall improvement to the arts and cultural use provided in the Borough.

## Policy CF 7

### Arts and Culture Uses

The Council supports the Borough's role in world-class culture and will welcome new cultural institutions across the Borough and protect, nurture and encourage those which already exist. In particular the Council will support proposals which enhance the cultural draw of South Kensington, King's Road/Sloane Square, the Notting Hill Gate and Portobello Road area and Kensington High Street.

To deliver this, the Council will:

- a. protect all land and/or buildings where the current or last use is/was an arts and cultural use unless that use is re-provided

to an equivalent or better standard in the immediate vicinity of the site;

- b. permit new arts and cultural uses, or the expansion of these uses, which are likely to generate large numbers of visitors in higher order town centres and other areas of the Borough which have a PTAL score of 4 or above, or will achieve this level through improvements to public transport during the lifetime of the plan. Smaller scale arts and cultural uses which are likely to attract fewer visitors will be welcomed throughout the Borough;
- c. permit enabling development on land and/ or buildings where the current or last use is/ was an arts and cultural use, in order to provide alternative arts and cultural uses on site or improve arts and cultural uses elsewhere within the Borough, where it is successfully demonstrated that there is greater benefit to the Borough resulting from this proposal.

## Hotels

**31.3.46** Tourism is one of the Borough's key economic drivers. In 2008, it was estimated that some £3.1 billion was spent by tourists in the Borough<sup>(292)</sup>. About half of this is spent in the Borough's shops. A quarter relates to stays in hotels. With 191 hotels (28,500 bed spaces)<sup>(293)</sup> the Borough is one of London's main providers of visitor accommodation. 39% of the Borough's jobs<sup>(294)</sup> are in the hotels and restaurant sector, a figure significantly greater than any other sector of the local economy. This compares with a figure of 21% for the wider central London Area.

**31.3.47** The Borough has not been identified within the London Plan as an area that is "strategically important" for new hotels. The Council does, however, recognise that it can play a role in assisting the London Plan in achieving its ambition of creating an additional 40,000 bedrooms across the Capital by 2026. The Council also recognises that its hotel stock is essential in helping ensure

290 RBKC, Arts Strategy 2004 – 2008, <http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/ArtsAndMuseums/artservices/artsstrategy.pdf>

291 <http://visitlondon.prelive.cimex.com/images/uploads/attractions.pdf>

292 RBKC, Study of the Visitor Economy, 2009.

293 RBKC Hotel Survey

294 Annual Business Inquiry 2005, RBKC, Employment Land Study, Roger Tym & Partners, January 2007



that the expected influx of visitors into the Capital for the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics will have somewhere to stay.

**31.3.48** Whilst hotels contribute greatly to both the Borough's economy and to its reputation, they are not always good neighbours. Poorly run hotels can cause problems, and a concentration of hotels in a residential area can change the area's character. This has been the case in the Earl's Court ward. The Council does however, recognise that the benefits of hotels can be maximised, and their negative impact minimised, when hotels are located in the Borough's international or major centres; when they lie close to major tourist attractions; or when they lie in areas which enjoy excellent links to Central London.

## Policy CF 8

### Hotels

The Council will ensure that the visitor economy is supported through appropriate hotel provision.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. protect hotels across the Borough except in Earl's Court ward;
- b. require new hotels to be located within, or immediately adjoining, the Borough's higher order town centres, and in particular Knightsbridge, South Kensington, Kensington High Street, King's Road (East), Brompton Cross and Notting Hill Gate and within the Earl's Court Strategic Site;
- c. encourage the upgrading of existing hotels where:
  - i. this will assist in maintaining the vitality of the centre;
  - ii. this will not result in the loss of any residential accommodation;
  - iii. there will be no material harm to amenity.

## South Kensington Strategic Cultural Area

**31.3.49** In recognition of its outstanding universal value as a visitor destination, the Council has designated the museums complex as a Strategic Cultural Area. We will work with the City of Westminster to widen the area designated to include the Royal Albert Hall and Albert Memorial. We will also work with the City of Westminster to investigate the merits of designating the wider area as a World Heritage Site. A vision for the area forms part of the South Kensington Place (Chapter 12) section of the Core Strategy.

**31.3.50** The Council recognises that any development within the Strategic Cultural Area must be of the highest quality and reflect the historic and architectural interest of the area. This is considered in detail within An Engaging Public Realm (Chapter 33) and Renewing the Legacy (Chapter 34). The Council also recognises the changing commercial reality of the institutions that give the area its raison d'être. These two demands do not have to conflict.

**31.3.51** The boundary of the Strategic Cultural Area is shown on the Proposals Map.

## Policy CF 9

### The South Kensington Strategic Cultural Area

The Council will protect and enhance arts and cultural uses in the South Kensington Strategic Cultural Area.

## 31.4 Corporate and Partner Actions

**31.4.1** Delivering the strategic objective of Fostering Vitality will take more than the planning policies above. A range of activities undertaken across the Council and by our partner organisations will also deliver this objective. This section sets out the main strategies and action plans that have been prepared that will play a part in delivering this objective. It then sets out specific actions that will be undertaken to further the objective.

## Corporate or Partnership Strategies that will contribute to the delivery of the Strategic Objective

### Response to Report from Retail Commission, A Balance of Trade (September 2007)

**31.4.2** The Council set up a Retail Commission in 2006 to explore whether the Council could take a more proactive role in maintaining the special character and the diversity of the Borough's centres. The Commission published its findings in May 2007, with the Cabinet reporting on these in September 2007. In this report the Cabinet endorsed 54 of the recommendations made. Given the multidisciplinary nature of the 'solution' a number of different business groups were responsible for the implementation of these recommendations. These are principally the Directorates of Planning and Borough Development; Transport, Environment and Leisure Services; and of Property Services. The principal coordinator of the implementation of the recommendations is the Council's Town Centre Initiatives Manager, who currently sits within the Department of Planning and Borough Development. There is no deadline to have implemented the recommendations, with the Council recognising that this will be an ongoing process.

### The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Arts and Culture Policy 2009-20

**31.4.3** Published in June 2009 by the Council's Arts Service, this document considers the role of the arts and cultural sector within the Royal Borough and makes 15 recommendations as to how the Council can support the sector within the borough. Whilst the implementation of these recommendations will require the cooperation of a number of Council departments, it is the Arts Service which are responsible for their implementation. No date has been set for the document's review.

### The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Restart Scheme

**31.4.4** Restart is a Council initiative, begun in 2008, which is aimed at Borough residents who are over 50 years of age and seeking to return to paid employment. It provides a period of employment (6-12 months) within the Council,

supported with work-related training and qualifications, where appropriate. The aim is for individuals to gain permanent employment at the end of the scheme. The Council's personnel department is responsible for the implementation of the scheme.

## Corporate and Partner Actions for Fostering Vitality

1. The Town Centre Initiatives Manager will work in partnership with shop keepers, land owners, residents and other interested stakeholders to develop Town Centre Action Plans for a number of the Borough's centres. These Action Plans will not be Local Development Documents. Priority is for the completion of action plans for Kensington High Street and Portobello/Notting Hill followed by Knightsbridge and the King's Road. These action plans ~~will have been drafted by October 2009~~ and ~~will be~~ although continually updated to suit the changing needs of the centres.
2. The Council will continue to lobby Government to give us the necessary powers to allow us to take a proactive approach in the support of independent shopkeepers. This will be an ongoing process.
3. Planning officers will work with land owners and other stakeholders to deliver two new town centres in the north of the Borough, in the Kensal and Latimer areas.
4. The Council's Planning and Borough Development team will work with South Kensington Estates to improve the island site between Thurloe Street and Thurloe Place. This will be an ongoing process.
5. The Council's Economic Development and Regeneration team will work with the Portobello Business Centre to provide personalised training and support to residents who wish to start their own business. This will be an ongoing process.
6. The Council's Economic Development and Regeneration team will work with NOVA New Opportunities to <sup>(295)</sup> help

- people into work in Kensington and Chelsea. This will be an ongoing process.
7. The Council's personnel department will implement the Council's Restart Programme, which tries to get older people back into work, by offers job opportunities within the Council to unemployed people aged over 50.
  8. The Council's Directorate of Economic Development and Regeneration work with JobCentre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council and NHS Kensington and Chelsea to address the needs of unemployed and under-employed residents and promote effective links with employers within Kensington and Chelsea and in neighbouring boroughs.

9. The Council's Economic Development and Regeneration work will create links between Connexions, the Education Business Partnership, and other agencies dealing with school pupils and leavers and local and sub-regional employers. This will be an ongoing process.
10. The Council's Market Development Manager will develop the Borough's markets. This in an ongoing process.
11. The Directorate of Planning and Borough Development will explore opportunities for using Article 4 Directions to control permitted changes of use within each of the land use classes



High Street Kensington



# Chapter 32 Better Travel Choices

*Public transport, walking and cycling, parking*

## 32.1 Introduction

**32.1.1** The Borough has one of the lowest rates of car ownership nationally, but many of the streets are still dominated by parking and vehicular traffic. By making it easier to live without a car, the Borough can meet its vision of improving residents' quality of life, improving the local built environment, and taking action on our environmental challenges.

**32.1.2** *Better Travel Choices* is an integral part of the vision *Building on Success*. It is central to upholding the *residential quality of life* of the borough.

### CO 3

#### Strategic Objective for Better Travel Choices

Our strategic objective for **better travel choices** is for walking, cycling and public transport to be safe, easy and attractive and preferred by our residents to private car ownership and use.

## 32.2 What this means for the Borough

**32.2.1** The provision of new public transport services, and improvements to existing services, will make it easier for all Borough residents to choose to use public transport over the private car. In some areas, such as Kensal, new rail infrastructure would transform access to the public transport network and facilitate significant regeneration.

**32.2.2** In a Borough with such a high concentration of shops, businesses, and arts and cultural facilities, walking and cycling can often be the quickest and easiest way of getting to places, as well as providing significant health benefits. Through constantly improving the street environment, removing and bridging existing barriers, supporting the London Cycle Hire Scheme and by ensuring new development provides the

appropriate facilities, the Council will ensure that the number of journeys made on foot and by bicycle increases. Where residents need to use a car, a dense network of on-street car club bays will mean they do not need to own their own vehicle. The communities surrounding the Earl's Court One-Way System are currently blighted by traffic. This would be improved by returning the roads to two-way operation and by securing improvements to the pedestrian environment.

**32.2.3** The Council will ensure that new developments include all the facilities that will enable residents, workers and visitors to make better travel choices. Travel Plans will be standard for all types of development and will ensure that walking and cycling is easy, that strong incentives are in place to encourage the use of public transport, and that organisations are committed to reducing the use of private cars.

**32.2.4** An integral part of reducing the negative impacts of car use in the Borough is to ensure that car parking levels are minimised in new development. Over the lifetime of the plan maximum parking standards will be reduced and new residential development will increasingly include no car parking at all except for *essential need*. The current adopted car and cycle parking standards will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document.

## 32.3 Planning Policies

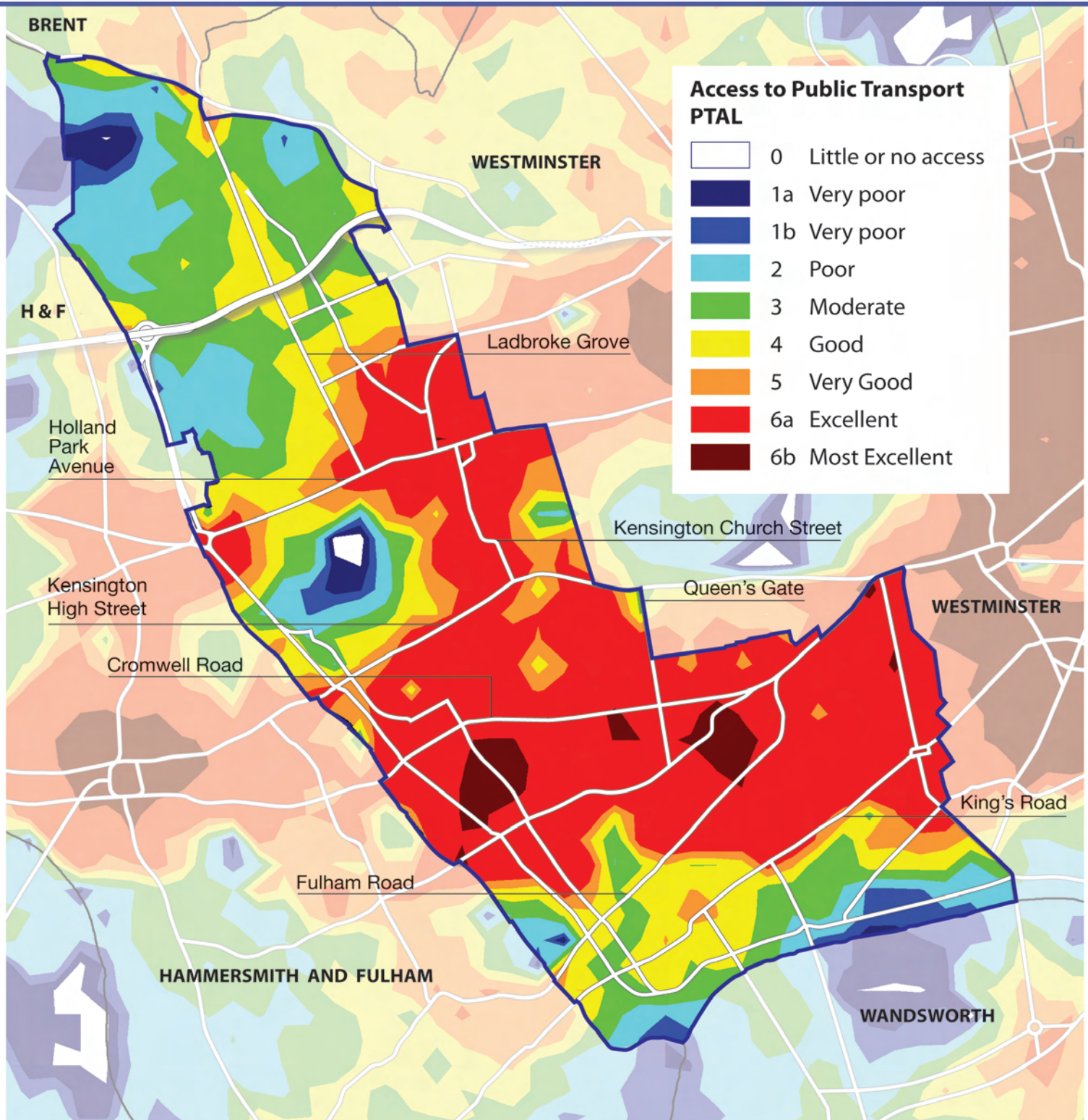
### Improving alternatives to car use

**32.3.1** If the Council's strategic objective is to be achieved, new development must be appropriately located and must include from day one all the facilities needed to encourage walking, cycling and public transport use, whilst not encouraging the use of private cars. In other words development must 'build in' the travel patterns that the strategic objective seeks. This will involve the use of *Travel Plans* that include innovative facilities and measures to make walking, cycling and the use of public transport an attractive first choice.

**32.3.2** Development that generates a high number of new trips must be located in areas that have good public transport accessibility and where public transport has the capacity to accommodate the new demand. The level of car parking provided must also be minimised and new public car parks resisted. Failure to achieve these aims will increase traffic congestion, resulting in unacceptable impacts

# BETTER TRAVEL CHOICES

## PTAL (Public Transport Accessibility Level)



on residential amenity, increased air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and a more hostile street environment, which reduces the attractiveness of walking and cycling. *Public Transport Accessibility Level* (PTAL) four is recognised as a 'good' level of accessibility by Transport for London (TfL) and is the threshold at which higher densities of development are considered appropriate in the *London Plan*. Areas with a PTAL of four or higher are appropriate locations for high trip generating development.

**32.3.3** Occupancy levels of on-street residents' car parking is high in all areas of the Borough despite only around half of households having access to a car, so demand for on-street parking from development must be managed. There is little scope, except in major redevelopment schemes, for new on-street parking to be created and where this is proposed off-street parking must be minimised to ensure there is no significant increase in parking demand or traffic congestion.

**32.3.4** The whole Borough is subject to one Controlled Parking Zone and therefore demand for parking from new development will not necessarily be focused in the area surrounding it. *Permit-free* agreements will be required for all new additional residential development.

**32.3.5** Car parking standards for development are set out in other documents, and are expressed as maxima. These will be revised downwards during the lifetime of this strategy. Low or zero levels of car parking are encouraged in order to minimise the negative impacts of increased car use and traffic congestion. In some locations and for some scales of development car parking will need to be significantly below the maximum adopted standards in order to ensure the impacts of any additional car trips are acceptable.

**32.3.6** The Borough's road network is heavily constrained with limited possibility of capacity increases. Any significant increases in road traffic would have serious impacts on residential amenity. Some of the major road links into Central London from the west pass through the Borough, and these vital links will need to be maintained.

**32.3.7** Transport has a huge impact on air quality in the Borough, with many areas experiencing levels of pollution above Government objective levels. Consequently the entire borough is designated an Air Quality Management Area.

**32.3.8** Public transport accessibility is generally good in much of the Borough but there are areas in the north west, along parts of the western boundary, and in the south west of the Borough, that are less accessible, particularly in terms of access to the Underground network.

**32.3.9** North-south links across the Borough are weak, and improvements to these would improve access for residents and encourage more use of public transport. Most of the Underground and rail stations in the Borough do not have step-free access and remain inaccessible to passengers with reduced mobility, and to people with children especially those with prams and pushchairs.

**32.3.10** There are significant barriers to increasing walking and cycling in some parts of the Borough and significant improvements to the Borough's streetscape are still needed. In particular the roads on the Transport for London Road Network present a hostile environment to pedestrians and cyclists, despite containing important and well used routes. That said the streetscape of much of the Borough is first class, which can make walking and cycling a pleasant experience. There are many footpaths and rights of way in the Borough that contribute towards creating an attractive and pleasant pedestrian environment. New development must not compromise these routes or rights of way, either for pedestrians or other street users, and opportunities to improve them should be taken wherever possible. There are a number of strategic sites along the western boundary of the Borough with significant development potential. Opportunities to provide cycle and pedestrian links should be taken at these sites and linked with existing routes to improve north-south accessibility.

**32.3.11** The Borough is bounded to the south by the Thames, which is joined by Chelsea Creek. To the north the Grand Union Canal crosses the borough through Kensal. Greater use could be made of the Borough's waterways, both on the water and adjacent to it.

**32.3.12** Meeting Government road safety targets is an ongoing challenge. Although progress has been made, there are still around 800 casualties recorded on roads in the Borough every year.

**32.3.13** The Earl's Court One Way System has seriously negative impacts on the ease and attractiveness of pedestrian and cyclist movement,



residential amenity, access to public transport services and the townscape of the areas through which it runs.

## Policy CT 1

### Improving alternatives to car use

The Council will ensure that there are better alternatives to car use by making it easier and more attractive to walk, cycle and use public transport and by managing traffic congestion and the supply of car parking.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. require high trip generating development to be located in areas of the Borough where public transport accessibility has a PTAL score of 4 or above and where there is sufficient public transport capacity, or that will achieve PTAL 4 and provide sufficient capacity as a result of committed improvements to public transport;
- b. require it to be demonstrated that development will not result in any material increase in traffic congestion or on-street parking pressure;
- c. require that all new additional residential development be permit-free;
- d. require car parking provided in new residential development to be at or below the adopted car parking standards;
- e. require that parking in non-residential development is for essential need only;
- f. require improvements to the walking and cycling environment and require cycle parking, showering and changing facilities in new development;
- g. require new development to incorporate measures to improve road safety, and in particular the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists, and resist development that compromises road safety;
- h. require [Transport Assessments and Travel Plans](#) for larger scale development;
- i. work to ensure that public transport services, and access to them, are improved, giving priority to north-south bus links and areas that currently have lower levels of accessibility;
- j. work with partners to ensure that step-free access is delivered at all underground and rail stations by 2028, and require that step-free access is delivered at underground and rail stations in the Borough where there is a re-development opportunity;
- k. resist new public car parks;
- l. require that where a development creates new on-street parking it is managed so that parking demand is controlled and the need for off-street parking is minimised;
- m. require that new development adjacent to the River Thames or Grand Union Canal takes full advantage of, and improves the opportunities for, public transport and freight on the water and walking and cycling alongside it;
- n. work with TfL to improve the streets within the Earl's Court One-Way System by:
  - i. [investigating the return of the streets to seeking](#) two-way operation, [and by implementing the findings of this investigation](#)
  - ii. [by securing improvements to the pedestrian environment; and by](#)
  - iii. requiring developments to contribute to objectives i and ii.
- o. protect existing footways and footpaths used by the public, or land over which the public have a right of way.

## New and enhanced rail infrastructure

**32.3.14** New rail infrastructure would greatly improve access to public transport in the northwest and extreme south of the Borough where public transport access is not currently as good as elsewhere.

**32.3.15** A new station on the West London Line at North Pole Road would significantly improve access for local residents to public transport, both on the West London Line and, via Willesden Junction, the wider London Overground and Underground network. The Chelsea-Hackney Line will provide access for the south of the Borough to the Underground network, where access is currently poor. with significant improvements to public transport accessibility. A Chelsea-Hackney Line station at Imperial Wharf would allow interchange onto the West London Line and would provide an important new link into central London for existing residents and for the substantial new developments that are taking place in the area.

**32.3.16** A new Crossrail station at Kensal would unlock significant regeneration opportunities. There is also scope to increase line capacity, quality and accessibility of the existing stations on the West London Line.

### Policy CT 2

#### New and enhanced rail infrastructure

The Council will require improved access to existing and planned new rail infrastructure in the Borough.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. require developments at the allocated Kensal Gasworks site to establish a Crossrail Station, subject to approval by Crossrail Limited;
- b. promote the creation of a new station on the West London Line at North Pole Road;
- c. protect the safeguarded route and associated land for Crossrail and the Chelsea-Hackney Line, including for the latter a station at Sloane Square and near Chelsea Old Town Hall on the King's Road;

- d. promote a station further west, potentially at Imperial Wharf, as part of the Chelsea-Hackney Line;
- e. require improvements to the accessibility of West Brompton Station, measures to increase the capacity of the West London Line and improvements to its interchange with the underground network, particularly at Earl's Court and, if feasible, as part of any the redevelopment of the Earl's Court Exhibition Centre.

## 32.4 Corporate and Partner Actions

### Introduction

**32.4.1** Delivering the strategic objective of *Better Travel Choices* will take more than the planning policies above. A range of activities undertaken across the Council and by our partner organisations will also deliver this objective. This section sets out the main strategies and action plans that have been prepared that will play a part in delivering this objective. It then sets out specific actions that will be undertaken to further this objective.

### Corporate or Partnership Strategies that will contribute to the delivery of the Strategic Objective

#### RBKC Transport and Streetscape Policies 2008

**32.4.2** The document 'Transport and Streetscape Policies' covers a range of principles that the Council is using to improve road safety, to reduce the environmental impact of cars and to improve the design of the Borough's roads and pavements.

#### RBKC Sustainable Modes of Travel Survey 2009

**32.4.3** The Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy is a strategy to aid parents and schools in making better travel choices. The strategy sets out actions to increase the number of pupils travelling safely and sustainably. It is produced annually and provides a summary of current patterns of travel to school and existing travel infrastructure in the Borough.

**RBKC Local Implementation Plan 2007-2011**

**32.4.4** The Greater London Authority Act 1999 requires London boroughs to prepare Local Implementation Plans (LIPs) containing their policies and proposals for the implementation of the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy (MTS).

**Mayor's Transport Strategy 2001**

**32.4.5** The Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) was published in 2001 and sets out the Mayor's proposals for managing and improving transport in London. It contains a package of measures and policies to improve transport, enhance the environment and foster London's economic development. It deals with improving public transport, including bus, Underground and the overground railways.

**32.4.6** The Mayor has announced that he is replacing the existing MTS. Public consultation is taking place in 2009 and the new document will be adopted in 2010.

**Corporate or Partnership Actions for Better Travel Choices**

1. The Transportation and Highways Department will work with Transport for London to identify the need for and deliver new public transport facilities including improvements to the Borough's bus and Underground services and improving accessibility within the Borough's rail and Underground stations;
2. The Transportation and Highways and Planning and Borough Development Departments will work with Transport for London, Crossrail (for delivery of Crossrail and the Chelsea-Hackney Line), the Department for Transport and Network Rail to improve the Borough's rail infrastructure and services;
3. The Transportation and Highways and Planning and Borough Development Departments will work with developers, TfL and others to reduce the impact of major barriers to pedestrian and cycle movement such as major roads, rail lines and the Borough's waterways;
4. The Transportation and Highways Department will work closely with TfL, who are the relevant Highway Authority for the Earl's Court One Way System, to

- investigate and implement improvements to the street environment in the area;
5. The Transportation and Highways and Planning and Borough Development Departments will ensure that existing pedestrian rights of way are protected and will secure new rights of way when opportunities arise;
6. The Transportation and Highways Department will continue to work with the car club operators to provide an extensive network of on-street car club bays, and with the Directorate of Planning and Borough Development will secure publicly available car club bays in new development when opportunities arise;
7. The Transportation and Highways Department will secure funding from TfL through the Local Implementation Plan process for improvements to bus services, streetscape, walking and cycling facilities, smarter travel initiatives and other complementary transport measures that serve to improve the attractiveness of non-car modes;
8. The Transportation and Highways, and the Directorate of Planning and Borough Development will work with landowners and developers to help deliver public transport improvements;
9. The Transportation and Highways and the Directorate of Planning and Borough Development will work with adjacent boroughs to secure improvements to public transport, walking and cycling facilities, particularly where large developments present regeneration benefits to the Borough;
10. The Council supports the London Cycle Hire Scheme and if the initial launch in 2010 is successful, the Transportation and Highways and Planning and Borough Development Departments will work with TfL on any expansion of the scheme;
11. The Transportation and Highways and Planning and Borough Development Departments will ensure charging facilities are provided for electric vehicles in new development.



# Chapter 33 An Engaging Public Realm

*A sense of place, attractive streets, parks and outdoor spaces*

## 33.1 Introduction

**33.1.1** Kensington and Chelsea is distinguished by a high quality network of streets, squares and public spaces. The public realm is widely recognised and valued for providing the setting for our rich architectural heritage. This is a strategic matter for the Royal Borough, being central to our success as an attractive place to live, work and visit. Establishing a new street network, based on our historic patterns, will be at the heart of the successful regeneration of the north, and enhancing the public realm will be a key part of maintaining the success of the Borough as a whole.

**33.1.2** The public realm is not just the two-dimensional streetscape, although that is an important component. The public realm is the full three-dimensional space of streets and parks, and how they connect together and contribute to making our neighbourhoods and centres distinctive and memorable. It is the public realm therefore which gives the Borough its strong sense of place. The way buildings relate to streets, and the way streets relate to one another, are thus as important as the management and maintenance of the streetscape and our parks and gardens.

**33.1.3** *An Engaging Public Realm* is an integral part of the Core Strategy's central vision of *Building on Success*. It is regarded as critical by residents to their quality of life, and also underpins the national and international reputation of Kensington and Chelsea.

### CO 4

#### Strategic Objective for An Engaging Public Realm

Our strategic objective for an **engaging public realm** is to endow a strong local sense of place by maintaining and extending our excellent public realm to all parts of the Borough.

## 33.2 What this means for the Borough

**33.2.1** The streets, spaces and places provide a range of opportunities for external living, whilst making it easier and more attractive to walk, cycle and take public transport. They are also the location of the world renowned Notting Hill Carnival.

**33.2.2** Open spaces support physical as well as passive activities, from playing sport to sitting and relaxing. They are places where people meet and come together. Paying particular attention to making the public realm safer and more enjoyable improves external living, whilst also enhancing the appearance of the Borough.

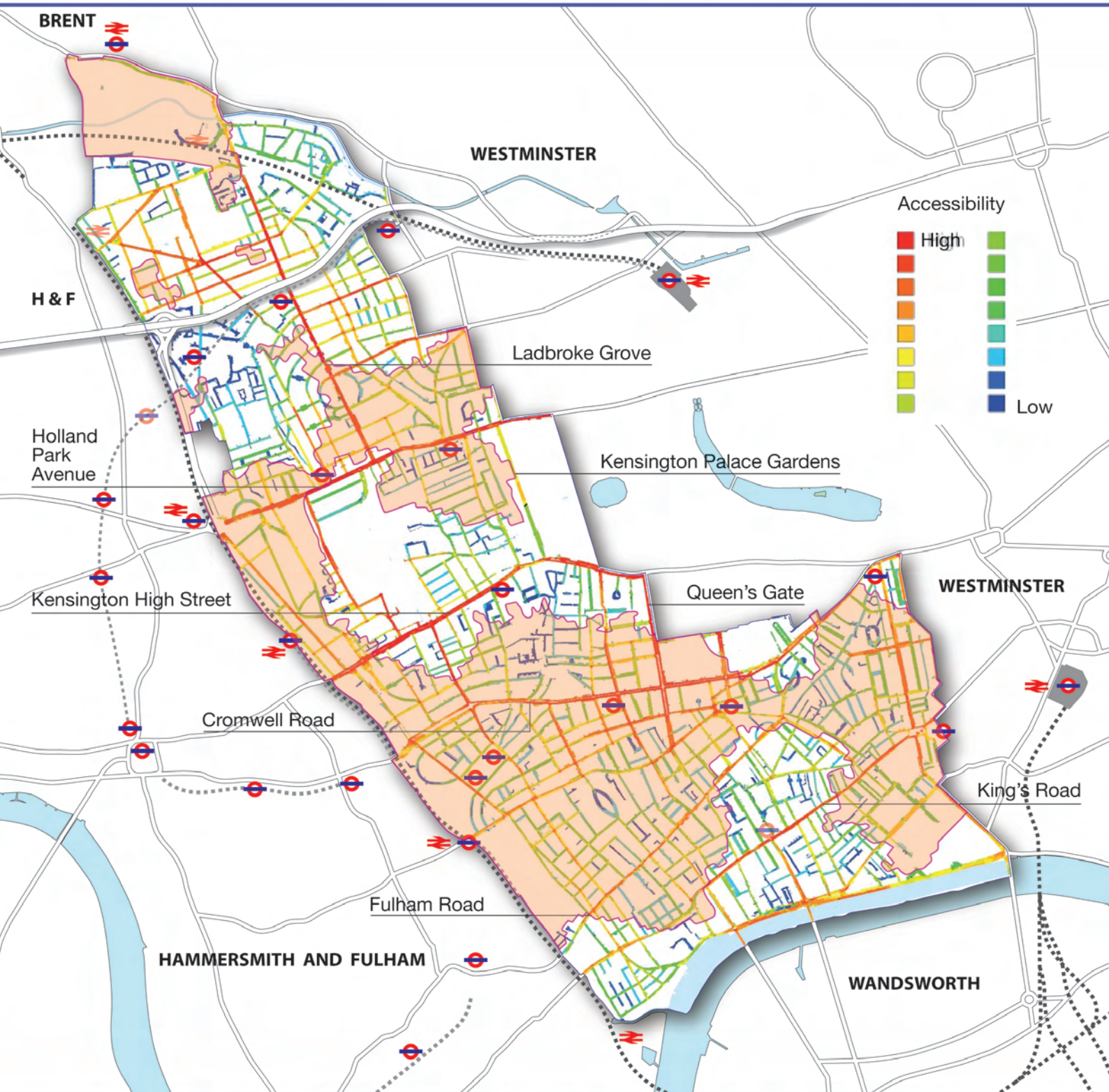
**33.2.3** The Exhibition Road redevelopment is a prime example of the Council's innovative approach to single surface and de-cluttering of the streets. The design principles of single surface rests on making drivers more aware of other road users and their surroundings, thereby lowering traffic speeds in the presence of pedestrians and improving safety. This approach has been modelled on Kensington High Street, which has received international praise for its ground-breaking approach to clutter reduction and streetscape improvements.

**33.2.4** There is very high public satisfaction with the appearance and maintenance of our streets and public spaces, with success derived from inherent design quality, use of high quality materials and craftsmanship, and regular maintenance. The Royal Borough is ranked third out of all London Boroughs in terms of residents' overall satisfaction with the local area<sup>(296)</sup>.

**33.2.5** However, there are parts of the Borough where the public realm is of a lesser quality and in need of significant attention. Areas such as the Westway, Cromwell Road, the Earl's Court One-Way System, Kensal, World's End and Latimer. Establishing a new and improved street network, drawing from the Borough's historic patterns and public spaces, will be at the heart of the successful regeneration of these areas.

# AN ENGAGING PUBLIC REALM

This map shows all of the Borough's roads and how well they are connected to each other. The extent to which roads are well connected into a network is the single most important factor in determining pedestrians' preferred routes, and 'legibility' of an area - how easily you find your way around. The streets that are most well connected are red. By contrast, those areas that are relatively isolated and harder to navigate are dark blue. It also shows an overlay of public open space accessibility.



 Areas outside a 400m walking distance of publicly accessible open space



## 33.3 Planning Policies

### Street Network

**33.3.1** The Victorian and Edwardian terraced houses provided grid street patterns, with good connectivity. The postwar estates do not follow the historical street patterns, and this has often given rise to functional problems. Improved co-ordination of the Borough's street form enhances the experience for pedestrians, cyclist and vehicles. It provides for safer routes to school, contributes to road safety, reduces the need to travel, improves the accessibility to London's transport system and to local services and thus aids social inclusion.

**33.3.2** Street network is about the role streets play in connecting places and the ease with which people can move from one place to another in the Borough.

**33.3.3** The public realm, particularly the street network, plays a vital role in providing good transport and mobility. These networks and spaces provide excellent levels of 'permeability', reflected in spatial analysis of pedestrian movements for large parts of the Borough, but not all. There are also parts of the Borough that are isolated by the Canal, railway lines, the Westway and other major roads, which create access barriers. Parks and cemeteries can also form access barriers in some cases, not only physical barriers but also safety barriers, particularly at night. Some housing estates, especially those post-war, also create barriers, and street networks that are confusing. Parts of the Borough where the street network is less well connected are shown as blue areas on the preceding map. These areas need to be reconnected by breaking down or otherwise overcoming barriers.

**33.3.4** Road hierarchy is an important component of any street network. This is in terms of managing through movement of vehicles or providing access to sites, buildings and their immediate surroundings and in terms of pedestrian and cycle permeability in particular. It also helps to make sense of how to navigate in the built environment.

**33.3.5** To ensure the public function of the road network is fulfilled, roads are 'adopted' by the local authority. This ensures that they are built to proper standards, and maintained for the expected levels of different types of traffic and pedestrians. It also ensures a level of uniformity and so aids to an extent social cohesion.

**33.3.6** Designing out opportunities for crime and making design more inclusive, particularly when it comes to the public realm and streets is a positive step to creating a safer community. The recent growth in demand for private 'gated communities' is a misguided attempt to address issues of safety ([see also Policy CL2 \(a\) vii](#)).

### Policy CR 1

#### Street Network

The Council will require a well connected, inclusive and legible network of streets to be maintained and enhanced.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. require, in areas of regeneration and large scale redevelopment, the new street network to be inspired by the Borough's historic street patterns to ensure optimal connectivity and accessibility;
- b. require new street networks to be established with a clear function, hierarchy and choice of routes, designed to optimise connectivity, accessibility and legibility, and to reflect the historic and finely grained block structure of the Borough;
- c. require new links and the removal of barriers that disconnect access for pedestrians, cyclists and people with limited mobility;
- d. require new streets to be built to adoptable standards;
- e. resist the gating of existing streets and the development of new gated communities;
- f. require new streets to be designed to be attractive, safe, minimise opportunities for crime, and be inclusive to all.



### Three-dimensional Street Form

**33.3.7** Streets<sup>(297)</sup> provide a multi-functional role; they provide access to buildings, movement through areas and also create a sense of 'place'. Three-dimensional street form is the relationship between streets and buildings and dictates how successful the street is in performing its multi-functional role.

**33.3.8** The relationship between streets, buildings and parking often determines our feelings about a place. A street form that is open and is naturally overlooked by occupied buildings provides a positive environment, whereas a secluded street enclosed by windowless walls can create safety issues. It is important that the Borough's street form creates an environment that is inclusive, safe, functional and attractive.

**33.3.9** The Borough has a wide variety of street forms, ranging from cobbled mews with two rows of terraced cottages facing each other in close proximity, to the uniformity of the Victorian terraced housing on long, linear streets. The variation of relationships between the buildings and streets within the Borough interact differently, but are complementary.

**33.3.10** Creating a clear distinction between private and public space, such as forecourts and front gardens, helps to avoid conflicts between who has ownership, control and use of the space. Boundary treatments are an important aspect of determining whether areas are public, private or communal. Boundary treatments can be 'hard', such as walls or fences, or 'soft' such as hedges or gardens. Hard boundary treatments are often used for private spaces where as softer boundary treatments are more common in public spaces.

#### Policy CR 2

##### Three-dimensional Street Form

The Council will require that where new streets are proposed, or where development would make significant change to the form of existing streets, the resultant street form and character must draw from the traditional qualities and form of the existing high quality streets. To deliver this the Council will:

- a. require appropriate street widths to be established with regard to the legibility of the street function and hierarchy;
- b. require the ratio of building height to street width to give a coherent and comfortable scale to the street;
- c. require building lines and building scales to be consistent and related to context;
- d. require a frequency and rhythm of building entrances and windows that support active street frontages and optimises community safety;
- e. require a clear distinction to be maintained between public, private and communal space through the retention and provision of characteristic boundary treatments.

**NOTE:** Refer to Policy CL1(b) with regard to context.

### Street and Outdoor Life

**33.3.11** The Borough is highly built-up and leads residents and visitors alike to put high value on all open spaces. The Council is therefore keen to maximise the benefit of the public realm by encouraging the shared use of public spaces.

**33.3.12** Not only does the public realm have aesthetic value, but the outdoor spaces that make up our public realm also promote individual health and social well-being. This is achieved by the provision of opportunities for physical activity and of meeting places for social interaction. The public realm also provides a source of local economy with our streets, squares, open spaces, parks and townscapes attracting many visitors, which in turn encourage enterprise helping to keep local people in employment<sup>(298)</sup>.

**33.3.13** Restaurants and cafés which have tables and chairs on the highway are increasingly popular in the Borough. They can add vitality to town centres but can also reduce the amount of space pedestrians have to move freely and safely.

297 'street' means the space between buildings, in some instances this could be a public square or place

298 The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea: Ten-year Parks Strategy 2006/2015. Better City Life

**33.3.14** Compared to other London boroughs there is a comparatively small amount of publicly-accessible parks, gardens and open space. This makes any open space that does exist a precious asset. Some of these spaces have come under increasing pressure from temporary uses for special events, often in large structures, to accommodate commercial activities. The form of these means that some open spaces are not accessible to the public for large parts of the year and can be visually intrusive. These spaces need to be better managed in order to maintain their primary use as publicly-accessible and visibly open space.

**33.3.15** Street traders, pavement cafés and festivals all bring life to the public realm, with Portobello Market, Duke of York's Square and the Notting Hill Carnival being good examples. However, the multifunctional use of space in the public realm needs to be carefully managed to ensure that it is inclusive and all users are catered for in a safe and successful manner. Event Management Plans and Management Strategies for temporary and occasional uses can ensure that matters such as public health, pedestrian and traffic safety and waste management are maintained.

## Policy CR 3

### Street and Outdoor Life

The Council will require opportunities to be taken within the street environment to create 'places' that support outdoor life, inclusive to all, adding to their attractiveness and vitality.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. require proposals for new, and extensions to existing, markets on public highways:
  - i. where a highway is to be closed for the duration of the market, that it is demonstrated there are sufficient alternative vehicular routes and that vehicle access outside market hours is maintained;
  - ii. to maintain amenity;
  - iii. to submit waste management plans as part of a planning application.

- b. require new isolated street trading pitches to contribute to the character and appearance of the street, have no adverse impact on existing shops and residential amenity and to allow for the safe and secure passage of pedestrians;
- c. maintain the free, safe and secure passage of pedestrians;
- d. require proposals for tables and chairs on the highway to maintain the primary function as public footway allowing for the free, safe and secure passage of pedestrians;
- e. require that the occasional use of parks, gardens and open spaces for special events will be well-managed, and that in the duration, frequency and scale of the event has no adverse impact upon:
  - i. local residential amenity;
  - ii. the setting of historic listed buildings;
  - iii. the setting of registered Parks and Gardens;
  - iv. the character and appearance of conservation areas;
  - v. the predominant use as open space, taking the cumulative impact into account;
  - vi. the road network.
- f. require an Events Management Plan and a Management Strategy for repeated use of an open space to be submitted as part of a planning application.

### Streetscape

**33.3.16** Much of the Borough lies within one of thirty-five conservation areas. The Council has a duty to ensure that new development within a conservation area preserves or enhances the character or appearance of that area. Street furniture, such as guardrails and signs, can both detract from this local character and hinder the safe passage for people with sensory and mobility difficulties.

**33.3.17** The excellent quality of our public realm is constantly under threat from poorly designed or uncoordinated development and the paraphernalia used to control traffic and pedestrians, public utility

equipment, street furniture and advertising. This undermines the very quality that everyone values. The Council's 'Renewing the Legacy: 21 Projects for the 21st Century' included the creation of the Royal Borough Streetscape Guide. This sets out principles of good design, such as more white lighting, the use of York stone, less clutter, sensitively designed street furniture and more public art<sup>(299)</sup>.

**33.3.18** Advertising hoardings and freestanding adverts can have a negative impact on visual amenity; ~~especially their cumulative impact but they and~~ can also have serious implications for public and road safety.

**33.3.19** Front gardens offer a valuable contribution to the streetscape. The loss of front gardens to off-street parking has long had harmful effects upon visual amenity and townscape quality. It can also reduce public safety.

**33.3.20** Public art can promote civic pride and help create a sense of place and promote local distinctiveness.

## Policy CR 4

### Streetscape

The Council will require improvements to the visual, functional and inclusive quality of our streets, ensuring they are designed and maintained to a very high standard.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. require all work to, or affecting, the public highway, to be carried out in accordance with the Council's adopted Streetscape Guidance;
- b. require all redundant or non-essential street furniture to be removed;
- c. retain and maintain historic street furniture, where it does not adversely impact on the safe functioning of the street;
- d. require that where there is an exceptional need for new street furniture that it is of high quality design and construction, and

placed with great care, so as to relate well to the character and function of the street;

- e. require that by reason of size, siting, design, materials or method of illumination, advertising on buildings does not harm the appearance of the building or streetscene, and does not adversely affect amenity, or public or road safety;
- f. resist temporary or permanent advertising hoardings, or freestanding adverts on streets, forecourts or roadsides, or advertisements attached to street furniture, where these negatively impact on our high quality townscape or on public or road safety;
- g. resist pavement crossovers and forecourt parking;
- h. require all major development to provide new public art that is of high quality and either incorporated into the external design of the new building or carefully located within the public realm.

### Parks, Gardens, Open Spaces and Waterways

**33.3.21** The benefit of open space is wider than pure aesthetics, it also provides a valuable recreational resource, and contributes to wildlife habitats and biodiversity and has benefits in minimising noise and air pollution. The Borough has a long history and tradition of high quality parks and gardens, such as Kensington Gardens, the Physic Garden, Holland Park, Royal Hospital and Ranelagh Gardens.

**33.3.22** There are 100 garden squares within the Borough. There are also 15 open spaces on England's Registered Parks and Gardens<sup>(300)</sup>, including Kensington Gardens, Holland Park, Brompton and Kensal cemeteries and Kensington Roof Gardens, the latter being the only roof garden on the national register.

**33.3.23** The Borough contains four areas of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL): Kensington Gardens, Holland Park, Brompton and Kensal cemeteries. These areas provide attractive breaks

299 RBKC Streetscape Guide 2006

300 Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England compiled by English Heritage



in the built-up area, provide open air facilities and contain features or landscapes of historic, recreational, or natural importance.

**33.3.24** Holland Park and Kensington Gardens are the main public open spaces in the Borough. Hyde Park, although entirely in the neighbouring borough of the City of Westminster, also makes a particular contribution to open space which is accessible to residents of the Borough. However, much of the Borough, particularly in the south, lies beyond a 5 minute (400m) walk to the nearest public open space<sup>(301)</sup>. In spite of this, there is a strong green amenity to the area, with numerous garden squares and street trees.

**33.3.25** The Parks Strategy, Local Biodiversity Action Plan, the Play Strategy and regular updating of Playable Spaces Audits provide both a qualitative and quantitative audit of play and open spaces in the Borough. There are limited opportunities to create larger areas of public open space because of the location and potential size of development opportunities and the fact that many sites have constrained boundaries. Small areas of open space might be possible, but these are often better managed if they are communal<sup>(302)</sup> to the adjacent development, rather than public – as the garden square tradition of this Borough demonstrates. The provision of new public open space is, therefore, not seen as a strategic issue for this Borough, and will be assessed on a case by case basis, using the up-to-date information from on-going audits of play and open space. Contributions towards the maintenance of the existing public open spaces with appropriate play facilities will be sought from developers while communal external open space which can greatly improve the quality of life of residents, can be designed into quite small schemes. This will therefore, be the focus of our policy.

**33.3.26** Maintaining open spaces ensures the ecological and biological diversity of the Borough and contributes positively not only to wildlife habitats but also to the quality of life for residents and those visiting and working here. Optimising wildlife habitat ensures that the Borough and London provides feeding, breeding and nesting areas for a variety of bird and mammal species, which are often marginalised by increasing development pressures.

**33.3.27** In the north, the Borough is bounded by the Grand Union Canal, which is currently viewed as a physical barrier to movement. However, it is a valuable public realm asset and its potential to provide for improved biodiversity as well as amenity space and pedestrian and cycle links should be exploited.

**33.3.28** The River Thames forms the southern boundary, and like the Grand Union Canal to the north, the potential of the Thames as a leisure, recreation, biodiversity and transport resource remains under utilised.

## Policy CR 5

### Parks, Gardens, Open Spaces and Waterways

The Council will protect, enhance and make the most of existing parks, gardens and open spaces, and require new high quality outdoor spaces to be provided.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. resist the loss of existing:
  - i. Metropolitan Open Land;
  - ii. public open space;
  - iii. private communal open space and private open space where the space gives visual amenity to the public;
- b. resist development that has an adverse effect upon the environmental and open character or visual amenity of Metropolitan Open Land or sites which are listed within the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England, or their setting;
- c. resist development that has an adverse effect on garden squares including proposals for subterranean development, and to promote the enhancement of garden squares;
- d. require all major development outside a 400m radius of the closest entrance to the nearest public open space to make provision for new open space which is

301 PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation 2002

302 such as a private garden square

suitable for a range of outdoor activities for users of all ages, which may be in the form of communal garden space. Where this is not possible for justified townscape reasons, that a s106 contribution is made towards improving existing publicly accessible open space;

- e. require all major developments to provide on site external play space, including for under 5s, based on expected child occupancy;
- f. require all green open space to optimise biodiversity and wildlife habitat;
- g. require all open space that forms part of a proposal to be designed and landscaped to a high standard;
- h. require opportunities to be taken to improve public access to, and along the Thames and the Grand Union Canal, and promote their use for education, tourism, leisure and recreation, health, well-being and transport.

## Trees and Landscape

**33.3.29** Trees and landscaping are considered an important aspect of any development as have the potential to improve quality of life within the Borough and contribute to its high quality character. The Borough has approximately 7,000 street trees and approximately 500 Tree Preservation Orders. Trees on private open space, such as those located within residential gardens can also contribute to the public realm.

**33.3.30** Although trees provide amenity, wildlife habitat and biodiversity values, there may be occasions where a tree may need to be felled, particularly if it is likely to cause serious damage to property or injury to people. Most commonly the tree will not have to be removed in its entirety – just the limbs causing the potential danger. Good planning when selecting a tree will ensure the long-term function of the site and the trees longevity, and can avoid unnecessary felling.

**33.3.31** There is a growing awareness that trees and landscaping provide a positive contribution to biodiversity and habitats for wildlife. They also help to address climate change issues and are important for human mental health. Designing landscaping

so that it is compatible with its intended purpose and function allow for optimised visual and physical benefit.

**33.3.32** Street trees and trees in general are an important element of the urban environment and provide contrast to the built environment. Street trees are not only attractive and add to the character of the townscape but also act as noise and wind barriers and filter out pollution. The Council takes great pride in its strong tradition of managing street trees, being the first Council in London to employ Arboricultural Officers.

**33.3.33** Development, particularly during construction or demolition can have a negative impact on the health of trees. However, protective measures can be implemented to ensure harmony between trees and development.

## Policy CR 6

### Trees and landscape

The Council will require the protection of existing trees and the provision of new trees that compliment existing or create new, high quality green areas which deliver amenity and biodiversity benefits.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. resist the loss of trees unless:
  - i. the tree is dead, dying or dangerous;
  - ii. the tree is causing significant damage to adjacent structures;
  - iii. the tree has little or no amenity value;
  - iv. felling is for reasons of good arboricultural practise.
- b. resist development which results in the damage or loss of trees of townscape or amenity value;
- c. require where practicable an appropriate replacement for any tree that is felled;
- d. require that trees are adequately protected throughout the course of development;

- e. require new trees to be suitable species for the location and to be compatible with the surrounding landscape and townscape;
- f. require landscape design to:
  - i. be fit for purpose and function;
  - ii. be of a high quality and compatible with the surrounding landscape, and townscape character;
  - iii. clearly defined as public or private space;
  - iv. optimise the benefit to wildlife habitat;
- g. require existing street trees to be maintained and to extend street tree coverage across the Borough;
- h. serve Tree Preservation Orders or attach planning conditions to protect trees of townscape or amenity value that are threatened by development.

## Servicing

**33.3.34** Servicing requirements add to the already high demands on our roads and can be particularly harmful to the appearance and safe functioning of the street.

**33.3.35** The servicing of sites, including vehicle parking, refuse storage and off-street loading bays, are essential for a site to function as intended. Although the Borough is primarily residential in nature, there are several strategic traffic routes into and out of London which carry very high levels of traffic. Servicing in the Borough can give rise to traffic congestion, conflict with pedestrians, and has the potential to create disturbance, particularly in or adjacent to residential areas. A Servicing Management Plan will ensure the safe and effective movement of all service vehicles and minimise any potential negative impacts on both the residential amenity, road function and pedestrian safety.

**33.3.36** The provision of servicing is a balancing act. On one hand, the Council needs to ensure the safe and efficient management of servicing vehicles so that the road network is not hindered, whilst on the other, the Council wishes to ensure that the physical servicing area is not detrimental to the

character or appearance of an area, or detrimental to residential amenity. As the nature of the Borough is predominantly high density residential, the impacts of servicing can have a wider reaching impact and is therefore a matter of strategic importance.

## Policy CR 7

### Servicing

The Council will require servicing facilities to be well-designed, built to accommodate the demands of new development and sensitively integrated into the development and the surrounding townscape. In particular servicing activities should not give rise to traffic congestion, conflict with pedestrians or be detrimental to residential amenity.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. require sufficient on-site servicing space to accommodate the number and type of vehicles likely to be generated and to ensure that this can take place without manoeuvring on the highway;
- b. require a Servicing Management Plan for all sites with on-site servicing space that will control the hours of servicing, including detail on how vehicles will be managed, and controls on the types and sizes of vehicles to ensure they are appropriate to the local area and are environmentally acceptable;
- c. require, where developments cannot provide on-site servicing space, that it is demonstrated that the proposal can function satisfactorily without giving rise to adverse effects on traffic congestion, pedestrian safety, residential amenity or impact on bus routes. A Servicing Management Plan will be required in these instances;
- d. require on-site servicing space and entrances to be sensitive to the character and appearance of the building and wider townscape and streetscape.



## 33.4 Corporate and Partner Actions

### Introduction

**33.4.1** Delivering the strategic objective of *An Engaging Public Realm* will take more than the planning policies above. A range of activities undertaken across the Council and by our partner organisations will also deliver this objective. This section sets out the main strategies and action plans that have been prepared that will play a part in delivering this objective. It sets out specific actions that will be undertaken to further the objective.

### Corporate or Partnership Strategies that will contribute to the delivery of the Strategic Objective

#### The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Parks Strategy 2006-2015

**33.4.2** The Council's Transport, Environment and Leisure Services Department (TELS) has a 10-year Parks Strategy to improve and invest in its main parks. This Strategy includes an aspiration to increase the number of public open spaces managed by the Council. It also includes a rolling programme of consultation followed by a major programme of maintenance and park improvements over the lifetime of the Core Strategy. TELS also plans to produce a 'Royal Borough Parkscape Guide', by the end of 2010. This guide will include technical guidance and a design element to the planned park improvements.

#### The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Streetscape Guide 2008

**33.4.3** The Transportation and Highways Department has produced the Streetscape Guide which sets out the concepts of 'streetscape', policies and elements of streetscape design. The guide also includes detailed specifications for streetscape standards.

#### The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Tree Strategy 2005

**33.4.4** The Tree Strategy seeks to give greater emphasis to the relationship between trees in the Royal Borough and the built and historic environment. With careful consideration of planting position, spacing, selection of species and management, the strategy seeks to develop a more

rigorous and coherent contribution by trees to the Borough. The Council's Arboriculture Section are responsible for implementing the Tree Strategy.

#### The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Planning and Conservation Capital Programme 2007/08 - 2009/10

**33.4.5** The Capital Programme proposes investment of £205 million from 2009/10 onwards. In terms of *An Engaging Public Realm*, there are a number of 'Local enhancement schemes' proposed, such as repaving and improved streetscape schemes.

#### The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Renewing the Legacy: 21 Projects for the 21st Century 2006

**33.4.6** This document outlines a series of Council and partner-led projects that will help keep Kensington and Chelsea one of the world's best places to live. The projects range from public art to achieving high standard parks.

#### Sport England Strategy 2008-2011

**33.4.7** The Sport England's Strategy aims to address the fundamental challenges facing sport, and particularly community sport, in England. The Strategy states that Sport England will draw in other partners such as local authorities who drive local provision and are key to delivering a world-leading community sport infrastructure.

#### The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Play Strategy 2006-2009

**33.4.8** In 2006, the Council's Family and Children's Services Department produced a Play Strategy which sets out a vision, policies and an action plan to improve access and opportunity for the Borough's children to enjoy a range of play and recreation activities. This strategy will be replaced in 2010 and will run until 2013. The Council's Family and Children's Services Department are responsible for the implementation of the majority of the action points, although others who will play a role include the Arts and Leisure Service, Library Service and Community Safety.

#### The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Play Pathfinder

**33.4.9** In 2008 the Royal Borough was chosen to be one of England's twenty play pathfinders. The aim of this scheme is to enhance adventure and

open access play for local children in the Royal Borough. A Play Pathfinder Team has been created, with representatives from the Transport Environment and Leisure Services Business Group, Planning, Housing, Family and Children's Services Department Extended Services and the Tenant Management Organisations. The scheme runs until the end of 2010.

### **CABE: This way to better residential streets 2009**

**33.4.10** CABE's guidance document focuses on the design of residential streets in new developments to ensure that well designed streets help create sustainable communities, enable people to get around, promote walking and cycling, civic pride and identity, provide safe play for children and allow the community to interact.

#### **Corporate or Partnership Actions for An Engaging Public Realm**

1. The Council will work in partnership with Transport for London and the Council's Transportation and Highways department to encourage streetscape improvements which remove barriers and improve access for local residents;
2. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work in partnership with the Council's Transportation and Highways Department to implement the Local Implementation Plan;
3. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work closely with the Council's Family and Children's Services to assist in the implementation of the Play Strategy, to improve access to, and widen the nature of, play facilities provided by the Council across the Borough;
4. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work closely with the Council's Family and Children's Service Department and with the Play Pathfinder team to help increase local children's access to adventure and open access play facilities;
5. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work with the Council's Transportation, Environment and Leisure Services Business Group to ensure the Implementation of the Streets and Physical Activity Strategy;
6. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work in partnership with the Council's Arboricultural Department to deliver the Tree Strategy;
7. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work in partnership with the Council's Arboricultural Department to continue the programme of street tree maintenance and replacement planting in accordance with good Arboricultural practice;
8. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work in partnership with Sport England to help deliver their strategy, particularly in relation to providing community sport infrastructure<sup>(303)</sup>;
9. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work in partnership with Natural England to help deliver improved Green Infrastructure;
10. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work in partnership with National Trails to help deliver the Thames Path Management Strategy for 2006 - 2011;
11. The Council will work with CABE to deliver developments that take account of the design guidance on public realm and streetscape;
12. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work in partnership with British Waterways [and the Port of London Authority](#) to help deliver improved 'blue infrastructure';
13. The Transport, Education and Leisure Directorate will deliver the Exhibition Road Project, in partnership with the City of Westminster and the Mayor of London;
14. The Natural History Museum will prepare a Grounds Strategy that sets out a long term vision and management plan to review the use of the museum grounds;
15. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will continue to work in partnership with the City of Westminster to achieve a shared vision for Knightsbridge and investigate the possibility of implementing public realm improvements in Montpelier Street.

## Chapter 34 Renewing the Legacy

*Conservation, quality and design*

### 34.1 Introduction

**34.1.1** The Borough has inherited a remarkable historic townscape and a large number of historic buildings. The exceptional quality of the built environment underpins the Borough's success as a highly desirable place in which to live, work and invest. Over 4,000 buildings are 'listed' and there are over 100 garden squares. Conservation areas cover more than 70% of the Borough. The Royal Borough is known for its legacy of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian architecture, but there are also a number of twentieth century buildings which continue the legacy of high quality design. Our listed buildings and conservation areas contribute immensely to local distinctiveness both within the Borough and to London as a whole.

**34.1.2** *Renewing the Legacy* is an integral part of the Core Strategy's central vision of *Building on Success*. The exceptional quality of the built environment underpins the *reputation* of both Kensington and Chelsea, and our *residents' quality of life*.

#### CO 5

#### Strategic Objective for Renewing the Legacy

Our strategic objective to **renew the legacy** is not simply to ensure no diminution in the excellence we have inherited, but to pass to the next generation a Borough that is better than today, of the highest quality and inclusive for all. **This will be achieved** by taking great care to maintain, conserve and enhance the glorious built heritage we have inherited and to ensure that where new development takes place it enhances the Borough.

### 34.2 What this means for the Borough

**34.2.1** Careful incremental improvement is needed to ensure our conservation areas remain of the highest quality. However, there are a number of small areas in the south and two large areas in the north of the Borough which are not within conservation areas. It is important that these areas are not regarded as 'second class' in terms of the future quality and contribution for which we should be striving. We should aspire for these areas to be our future conservation areas and **exceptional-a high** design quality is needed to create a new design legacy for the Borough.

**34.2.2** There is inevitable pressure for change, as the existing, often historic, building stock is updated, renewed or replaced to meet today's needs and changing lifestyles. Maintaining and improving the character, quality, inclusivity and setting of the Royal Borough's exceptional built environment is vital. The local context is of primary importance in achieving this.

**34.2.3** To ensure continued design excellence in the Royal Borough, the Council and the Royal Institute of British Architects (London) have appointed an Architectural Appraisal Panel. The purpose of the panel is to review key planning proposals and offer support and advice to the Council's officers, planning application committees and its Design Champion, and for planning applicants to deliver high quality architecture within the Royal Borough.

### 34.3 Planning Policies

#### Context and Character

**34.3.1** The Borough's townscape is unique in its high quality, finely grained, historic built environment with a strong context and character. The Council has a reputation of upholding high standards of conservation and design.

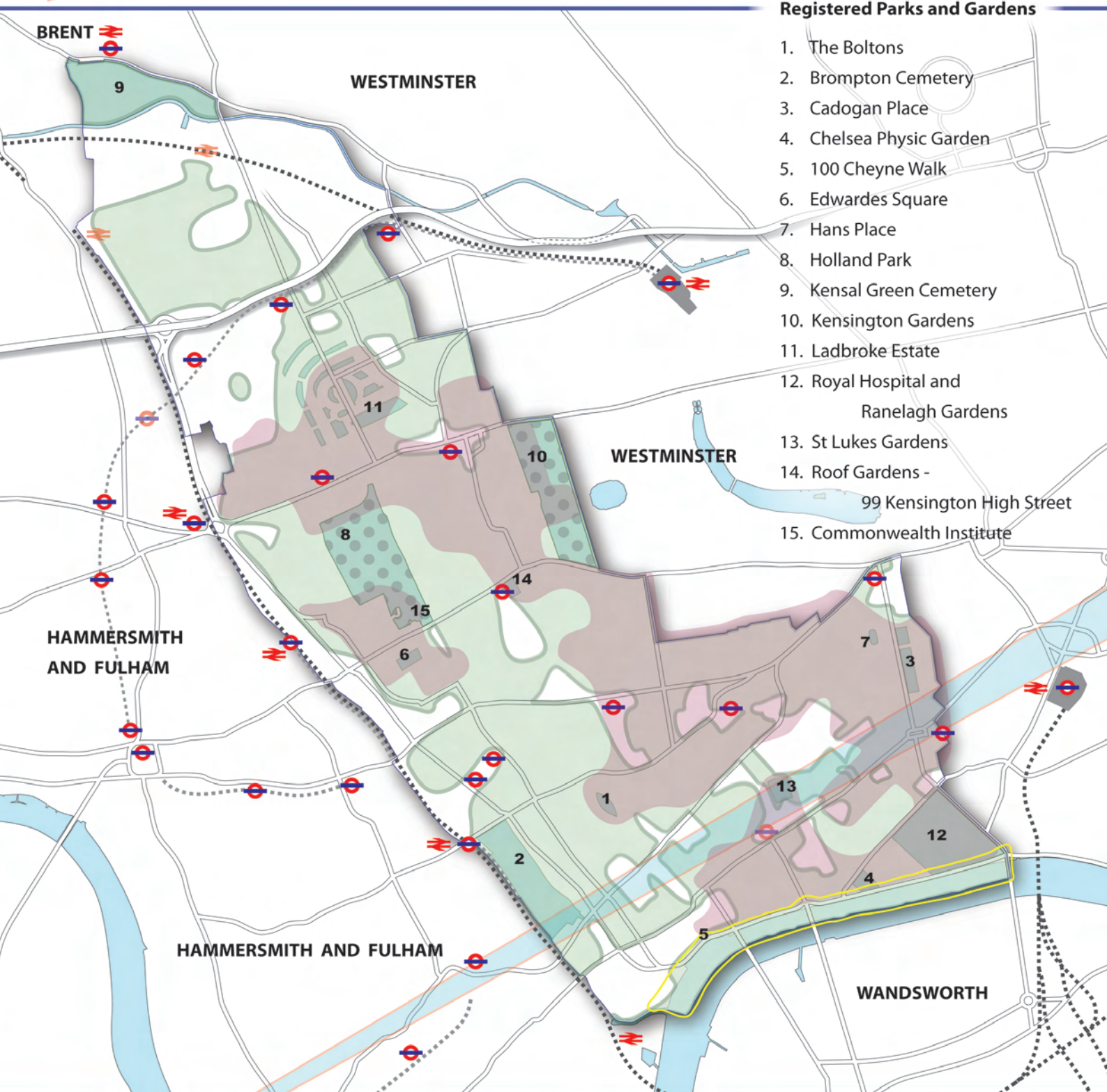
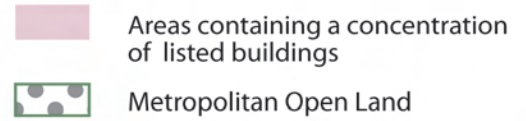
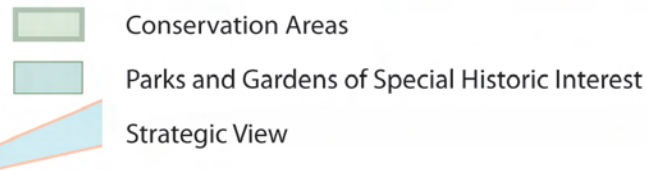
**34.3.2** We consider that the assessment of planning applications should be based on whether they are 'good enough to approve' rather than 'bad enough to refuse' to ensure the continuation of our existing high quality environment.

**34.3.3** We have a hard-won reputation for requiring more for the Borough's historic urban fabric than pure preservation when it comes to assessing planning applications. We have



# RENEWING THE LEGACY

## Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens and Strategic View



embraced the principle of resisting '*design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area and the way it functions*'<sup>(304)</sup>. We are therefore constantly seeking to improve our environment and new development must improve upon the existing situation.

**34.3.4** The Borough is a highly desirable place to live, shown by the highest average home prices in England<sup>(305)</sup>. This is against a backdrop of considerable residential densities but surprisingly modest building scales. For example, Victorian terraced housing in the Borough typically consists of 700 habitable rooms per hectare (hrh) in 4 storeys, Edwardian terraced mansion blocks increasing this to 970hrh in 6 storeys. In North Kensington, the typical density and height of the postwar estates are 500hrh and 5-6 storeys, much lower than in the Victorian period.

**34.3.5** Vistas and views as well as gaps between development are often planned aspects of townscape, particularly within the Victorian period.

**34.3.6** The Borough does not shy away from high density designs, it is an exemplar in demonstrating that high density and high quality are compatible - our context encourages us to deliver high density schemes.

**34.3.7** However, the Council considers that densities should not be used as ~~a~~ the sole determinant of design, as it would undermine our duties to have regard both to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas, and to good design<sup>(306)</sup>. The density matrix in the London Plan<sup>(307)</sup> therefore needs to be read in relation to the context of the development.

**34.3.8** The physical context of the Borough is highly valued, far beyond the Borough itself, and it has become a well-known and cherished part of London. Context is relevant to the size of the development. For example, for a single dwelling house the relevant context may be just the immediate street, whereas a larger development would draw on the wider area for its context.

**34.3.9** The Borough is fortunate to abut the River Thames in the south and the Grand Union Canal in the north. These river and canalside environments are considered important features in maintaining the Borough's distinctiveness. The Thames and areas adjoining have been designated as the Thames Policy Area in conformity with the London Plan. The Council considers that developments within these environments should pay great respect in ensuring their enhancement.

**34.3.10** The quality and character of an area is not only provided by the individual buildings but it is also gained from views into and out of the area. Therefore When considering development that impacts on views, vistas and gaps is an important aspect of respecting context, it is important to respect the local context. The Borough has one designated strategic view which is that of St Paul's as seen from King Henry's mound in Richmond Park.

**34.3.11** Small sites within an existing built context can lead to compromised layout and design quality. Adjacent sites should be assessed for their development potential, and a comprehensive approach taken to the planning and design of the sites as a whole, to ensure the efficient use of land. It is important that a comprehensive approach is taken to site re-development so that layout and design quality are not compromised, there is efficient use of land and opportunities to improve the surrounding townscape are taken. This can include, on occasions, assessing adjacent sites and their development potential as part of the development appraisal process, so that a piecemeal and uncoordinated approach to site re-development is avoided.

## Policy CL 1

### Context and Character

The Council will require all development to respect the existing context, character, and appearance, taking opportunities available to improve the quality and character of buildings and the area and the way it functions, including being inclusive and accessible for all.

304 PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, 2006.

305 Land Registry (2009).

306 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 & Planning and Compulsory.

307 Refer to the GLA density matrix for the appropriate range.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. require development through its architecture and urban form to contribute positively to the context of the townscape, addressing matters such as scale, height, bulk, mass, proportion, plot width, building lines, street form, rhythm, roofscape, materials, vistas, views, gaps and historic fabric;
- b. require the analysis of context to be drawn from an area that is proportionate and relevant to the size of the development [site](#);
- c. require the density of development to be optimised relative to context, whilst taking into account the appropriate density range;
- d. require riverside and canalside development to enhance the waterside character and setting, including opening up views and securing access to the waterway;
- e. resist development which interrupts, disrupts or detracts from strategic and local vistas, views and gaps;
- f. require a comprehensive approach to site layout and design including adjacent sites where these are suitable for redevelopment.

## New Buildings, Extensions and Modifications to Existing Buildings

### Architectural Design

**34.3.12** The Royal Borough has a distinctive townscape of high quality, often characterised by a wide variety of architectural styles within relatively small areas. To renew the legacy, a sensitive approach to the architectural design of new buildings, and to extensions and modifications to existing buildings will be required.

**34.3.13** Definitions of good design are many and varied. Design is often interpreted to be about appearance. But good design must also take account of functionality. This is as true in relation to design in the built environment as it is in relation to other types of design, such as product design. The most commonly used set of objectives for good design in the built environment are those set out in 'By Design'<sup>(308)</sup>. But we believe the three criteria set by Vitruvius: functional, robust and attractive, provide a timeless assessment of good design, and can be applied at any scale, from the design of a chair, to a building, or part of a city<sup>(309)</sup>.

**34.3.14** In the past, crime prevention, accessibility and inclusivity have not been aspects of initial design, such features are often added at a later date in a way which is not always sensitive to the existing building or the surrounding character. Architecture is about more than just aesthetics and these functional issues have to be integrated into the design at the outset to ensure that the final architectural quality of any development is not compromised and the unique character of the Borough is therefore upheld.

**34.3.15** Sustainability is also essential in good design for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and has meanings at many levels. The plan as a whole is concerned with social, environmental and economic sustainability. In terms of architectural design the focus is on resource use. Detailed policies in this regard are set out in Chapter 36 'Respecting Environmental Limits'. But the philosophy of sustainability must be integrated into the architectural approach from the beginning of the design process.

**34.3.16** The distinctive townscapes of the Royal Borough vary from the contrasting grandeur of the terraces, squares and crescents to the relative modesty of the mews. Together with garden squares they give a unique character to the Borough, and as such a blanket design approach to new buildings and extensions would not be appropriate. In some cases replicating the design of adjacent buildings will be more appropriate, in others a more contemporary approach will work, depending on the variety or uniformity and quality of the surrounding context.

308 'By Design': urban design in the planning system towards better practice. CABE, 1 May 2000.

309 Vitruvius proposed that the creations of architecture should display three qualities: *utilitas*, *firmitas* and *venustas*. These were rendered into English in 1624 by Sir Henry Wotton as 'commodity, firmness and delight'. It is difficult to better this description, but we have used more conventional language for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



**34.3.17** Although the majority of the Borough's building stock is of high quality, in the Council's view there are currently only three buildings which are considered to be eyesores, the Holiday Inn in Kensington, Forum Hotel in Gloucester Road and Newcombe House in Notting Hill Gate. Where the redevelopment of such buildings comes forth, a flexible approach will be taken in order to facilitate redevelopment. Eyesores will only be identified through Supplementary or Development Planning Documents.

### ***Extensions and Modifications***

**34.3.18** The combination of the Borough's high land values, high residential densities, modest building heights and the expanse of the conservation areas, have resulted in pressures for residential extensions.

**34.3.19** As the majority of the Borough's built development is of modest height, extensions and modifications at roof level can alter the townscape character. Therefore, extensions and modifications need to be assessed carefully and ensure they do not individually or cumulatively dominate the original building.

**34.3.20** Over the last five years, there has been a 70% increase in applications for subterranean developments, with over 200 planning applications submitted in 2008. Subterranean developments involve more challenging planning, environmental, engineering and construction issues than other conventional extensions. Given the high concentration of historic environments and assets within the Borough, ~~the high demand for subterranean development is therefore considered strategically important controlling the impact of proposals for subterranean development is considered to be of strategic importance.~~ Subterranean development may have minimal structural impact on the existing or adjoining buildings as long as they are designed and constructed with great care. Apart from the structural considerations, there is a particular concern regarding the impact of subterranean development on the special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings. In addition, to ensure subterranean developments do not add to the impermeable surfacing of the borough, sufficient soil depth to absorb water and slow its entry into the drainage system is needed. In addition, this allows the green nature of the Borough to be maintained.

**34.3.21** Conservatories are a popular form of residential extension within the Royal Borough; ~~particularly where it may present the most sensitive means of extending a historic building, allowing the original form of the building to be seen clearly. The original use of a conservatory was a form of greenhouse or garden room, which has informed the Council's philosophy of design. The success of a conservatory often depends on its proximity to the garden and its appearance as a light-weight addition, clearly subservient to the parent building and in an appropriate style. When considering the introduction of a conservatory, location is the fundamental issue. The most natural location would usually be at garden level to the rear of a property (the basement level in some cases). There has been an increasing number of planning applications for conservatories above garden level in recent years. However, these do not reinforce the legibility of the buildings original integrity. They are principally garden features and therefore they should be located with this principle in mind. It is important that they fit in with the historic character of the Borough and therefore their location in relation to the building and garden, their impact on neighbouring properties, their size and detailed design will be considered.~~

### ***Modifications***

~~Some modifications to buildings have the potential to cause harm, especially if they are not sensitive to the original character of the building or their cumulative impact detracts from the external appearance of the building. However, if handled in a careful and sympathetic manner they have the potential to result in an improvement to the quality and character of the building. Such details may include changes to windows or glazing patterns; projecting mouldings; chimneys and other architectural details; front walls; railings; the replacement of panelled entrance doors; the repair or replacement of stucco; the permanent removal of projected mouldings and the rendering or painting of a brick-faced building.~~

### ***High Buildings***

**34.3.22** The relatively modest and consistent height of building within Kensington and Chelsea reflects the primarily residential character of the Borough. High residential densities are delivered within this townscape without recourse to tall buildings and this pattern of development with its medium-rise, high-density residential areas has produced a very attractive townscape, and is

central to the Borough's charm. Given its central location, the Borough has comparatively few tall buildings, the tallest being Trellick Tower at 98m. Tall buildings are therefore very much the exception. Building height is thus a critical issue and a very sensitive feature of the townscape.

**34.3.23** One approach to determining the appropriate location of high buildings would be to identify where they are not appropriate - such as in Conservation Areas. However, such an approach risks inferring that they are therefore appropriate anywhere else. ~~That would not be an appropriate approach because~~ Higher buildings should must only be located where - depending on their impact - they give meaning to the local or Borough townscape.

**34.3.24** Local landmarks define points of townscape interest or public functions that are relevant to those living or working within the immediate areas. They do not necessarily rise above the predominant building height line - such as the Michelin Building at Brompton Cross - but where they do, they will not tend to be more than 1½ times in height above the context, and as such are compatible with their context.

**34.3.25** District landmarks, on the other hand, are visible over wider areas, and tend to highlight major public functions. They can rise to up to 4 times their context in height.

**34.3.26** Very tall buildings, more than 4 times their context, characterise central metropolitan areas and are thus inappropriate to this Borough.

**34.3.27** ~~Height is one of several factors which are important when assessing high buildings. The profile and proportions of the building where it sits above the prevailing building height are very important. Height is not the only factor which is important when assessing high buildings. The profile and proportion of the building, especially the part which sits above the prevailing building height, is also a sensitive feature.~~ Bulky tall buildings are not attractive to look at and disfigure the skyline.

**34.3.28** High buildings in the wrong location can interrupt views that are important in the townscape, both those identified within the London Plan or within the Council's Conservation Area Proposal Statements or other adopted documents. It is not enough, however, to ensure that their location

avoids this. They should make a positive intervention in the existing townscape. Because district landmarks are visible over a wider area, their location must be of significance to the Borough as a whole, and they will therefore be exceptional. Their location and ~~the townscape sensitivity relationship to the local townscape~~ are therefore of the utmost importance.

**34.3.29** Care is also needed to ensure that their visibility is assessed in the round contextually to ensure they do not appear in incongruous with their context. A computer generated zone of visual influence, that includes an accurate model of the relevant context, is an essential tool in assessing the visual impact of district landmarks.

### Shopfronts

**34.3.30** Shopfronts<sup>(310)</sup> within the Borough play a key part in establishing and defining the visual character of our high streets and shopping parades. The Borough has many fine examples of shopfront design ranging from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century through to today. While the careful restoration of some of these early examples is important for maintaining our highly valued built heritage, particular emphasis is placed on ensuring high standards of design for all shopfronts, be they of traditional, modern or contemporary style and to ensure they are accessible to all.

## Policy CL 2

### New Buildings, Extensions and Modifications to Existing Buildings

The Council will require new buildings, extensions and modifications to existing buildings to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, taking opportunities to improve the quality and character of buildings and the area and the way it functions.

To deliver this the Council will, in relation to:

#### Architectural Design

- a. require development to be:
  - i. *Functional* - fit for purpose and legible;

310 shopfronts refer to ground floor entrances of class A uses and other commercial and non-commercial uses typically found within town centres and shopping parades

- ii. *Robust* - well built, remain in good condition and adaptable to changes of use, lifestyle, demography and climate;
  - iii. *Attractive* - pleasing in its composition, materials and craftsmanship;
  - iv. *Locally distinctive* - responding well to its context;
  - v. *Sustainable* - in the use of resources, construction and operation;
  - vi. *Inclusive* - accessible to all;
  - vii. *Secure* - designs out crime.
- b. require an appropriate architectural style on a site-by-site basis, in response to:
- i. the context of the site;
  - ii. the building's proposed design, form and use;
  - iii. whether the townscape is of uniform or varied character.
- c. facilitate the redevelopment of 'eyesores' by offering flexibility in relation to policies which make redevelopment with buildings more suited to their context demonstrably unviable;

#### ***Extensions and modifications***

- d. require extensions, including conservatories, and modifications to meet all the following:
- i. to be visually subordinate to the original building; and
  - ii. to allow the form of the original building to be clearly seen; and
  - iii. to reinforce the integrity of the original building.
- e. require extensions, including conservatories, and modifications to respect those aspects of character and integrity of the original building and group of buildings that contribute to local distinctiveness such as height, width, depth, building line, footprint, position, symmetry, rhythm, materials, detailed design, important gaps and sense of garden openness;

- f. require additional storeys and roof level alterations to be sympathetic to the architectural style and character of the building and to either assist in unifying a group of buildings or where there is a detached building to be no higher than below the prevailing building height;
- g. require it is demonstrated that subterranean extensions meet the following criteria:
- i. the proposal does not involve excavation underneath a listed building;
  - ii. the stability of the existing or neighbouring buildings is safeguarded;
  - iii. there is no loss of trees of townscape or amenity value;
  - iv. adequate soil depth and material is provided to ensure sustainable growth.

#### ***High Buildings***

- h. resist a proposal that exceeds the prevailing building height within the context, except where the proposal is:
- i. of a slender profile and proportion; and
  - ii. not within any identified linear views; and
  - iii. of exceptional design quality;
- i. require a proposed local landmark to:
- i. be compatible with the scale of its context; and
  - ii. articulate positively a point of townscape legibility of local significance;
- j. require a proposed district landmark to:
- i. articulate positively a point of townscape legibility of significance for the wider Borough and neighbouring boroughs, such as



- deliberately framed views and specific vistas; and
- ii. provide a strategic London-wide public use;
- k. require an assessment of the zone of visual influence of a proposed district landmark within or visible from the Borough, to demonstrate that the building has a wholly positive visual impact on the quality and character of the Borough's or neighbouring boroughs' townscape when viewed from the Royal Borough;
- l. resist a proposal that is of a metropolitan scale;
- m. require a full planning application for a proposed district landmark all proposed high buildings;

### Shopfronts

- n. require alterations to existing shopfronts to preserve those elements that contribute to their traditional character, such as corbels, part-glazed doors, fascia, glazing bars, pilaster and stallrisers;
- o. require new, and alterations to existing shopfronts, to:
  - i. respect the building's original framework;
  - ii. have a positive visual impact on the appearance of the building or streetscene;
  - iii. respect the character of the building in relation to siting and design of awnings and blinds;
  - iv. be accessible to all;
  - v. provide independent access to upper floor accommodation.

NOTE: Refer to Policy CE1 in relation to sustainability, refer to Policy CE6 in relation to noise and vibration and refer to Policy CR4 in relation to signage.



Holland Park Mews

## Historic Environment

**34.3.31** The historic environment is central to the character of the Borough and the Council has a duty under the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. The special character and appearance of the historic environment is the the most important factor of our high quality townscape.

**34.3.32** The Royal Borough has a reputation for championing the conservation of its high quality historic environment. Preserving and enhancing our conservation areas continues to be a high priority for the Council. The Council considers that in order fulfil its statutory duty and adequately assess planning applications within conservations areas, there is a need for proposals to provide full detail rather than outline applications.

**34.3.33** The character and appearance of a conservation area is not only provided by the high quality and appearance of individual buildings within the area and the inter relationship between them but it is also gained from views into and out of the area. Therefore development that impacts on setting, including the effect on views, gaps and vistas identified within Conservation Area Proposal Statements, needs to be taken into account assessed to ensure that their character and appearance of the area is conserved.

**34.3.34** The Council takes its statutory responsibility to improve or enhance the built environment with in conservation areas seriously. In situations where quality of the built environment

has been eroded, a pro-active approach is needed to ensure the environment is continuously improved.

**34.3.35** The partial or full demolition of a structure, whether it be a listed building or unlisted structure which has architectural merit, can cause irreversible damage to the character and appearance of our high quality townscape. |

**34.3.36** As the vast majority of the Borough is covered by conservation areas, there are limited opportunities for new development. Allowing a site to fall into disrepair, resulting in subsequent partial or full demolition may be an incentive for developers on sites where a different building design is sought. The Council therefore considers that proposals for the partial or full demolition of structures requires careful consideration, particularly the assessment of the appropriateness of the replacement structure.

~~34.3.37 There is a history of occasional building collapse in the Borough within conservation areas. Conservation areas are designated to protect the existing buildings character and appearance and their surroundings. Therefore the collapse a building within a conservation area should not be an incentive to provide a departure from the current architecture. There have been instances of occasional building collapse in the Borough within conservation areas where Conservation Area Consent is required for substantial demolition. Such areas are designated to ensure that proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. The collapse of a building should not therefore be viewed as an incentive to depart from the original design of the building.~~

## Policy CL 3

### Historic Environment

The Council will require development to preserve and to take opportunities to enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, historic places, spaces and townscapes, and their settings.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. require full planning applications in conservation areas;
- b. ~~require that is is demonstrated that, wheresist~~ substantial demolition of

~~buildings~~ in conservation areas ~~unless it can be demonstrated is proposed~~ that:

- i. the building or part of the building or structure makes no positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area;
- ii. a scheme for redevelopment has been approved;
- c. require, in the event of a collapse or unauthorised demolition of a structure in a conservation area, a replacement replica of the structure where the original made a positive contribution to the character and appearance of that conservation area.

### Historic Assets

**34.3.38** The Borough's historic assets play a significant role in the overall quality of the historic environment, not only in this Borough, but within the whole of London. The Council has a duty to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or scheduled ancient monuments and their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. The Council also considers that local historic features such as memorials (particularly war memorials, including those on private land or within buildings), plaques, coal plates, horse and cattle troughs and ~~historic~~ bollards are historic assets worthy of protection, whether listed or not.

**34.3.39** Listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments can be negatively affected not only by inappropriate additions, ~~and internal and external~~ alterations, ~~includingand~~ demolition, but also by inappropriate use and unsympathetic neighbouring development. ~~Such changes which~~ can diminish ~~their~~ architectural and historic value and detract from their setting. ~~Therefore all aspects of development affecting listed building and scheduled ancient monuments are taken seriously by the Council.~~

**34.3.40** ~~If architectural details of a listed building, either internal and external, are unsympathetically modified or permanently removed, their absence will erode the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and, cumulatively,~~

~~impact on the surrounding townscape. Unsympathetic additions have a similar impact.~~

**34.3.41** The Borough contains two Scheduled Ancient Monuments, the Brick Kiln in Walmer Road and Kensington Palace. Archaeological remains constitute the principal surviving evidence of the Borough's past, but are a finite and fragile resource. The destruction of such remains, by development, should be avoided to ensure the Borough's past is not lost forever.

## Policy CL 4

### Historic Assets

The Council will require development to preserve or enhance the special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments and their settings, and the conservation and protection of sites of archaeological interest.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. resist the demolition of listed buildings in whole or in part, or the removal or modification of features of architectural importance (both internal and external);
- b. require the preservation of the special architectural and historic interest of listed buildings, scheduled monuments or other buildings or places of interest. In particular the integrity, plan form and structure of the building including the ground and first floor principal rooms, original staircases and such other areas of the building as may be identified as being of special interest should be preserved;
- c. require the preservation of the original architectural features, and later features of interest, both internal and external;
- d. require internal or external architectural features of listed buildings or scheduled ancient monuments, commensurate with the scale of the development, to be:

- i. reinstated where the missing features are considered important to their special interest;
- ii. removed where the additions to or modifications are considered inappropriate or detract from their special character;
- e. resist the change of use of a listed building which would materially harm its character;
- f. strongly encourage any works to a listed building to be carried out in a correct, scholarly manner by appropriate specialists;
- g. require development to protect the setting of listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments or sites of archaeological interest;
- h. resist development which would threaten the conservation, protection or setting of archaeological remains;
- i. require desk based assessments and where necessary archaeological field evaluation before development proposals are determined, where development is proposed on sites of archaeological significance or potential.

### Amenity

**34.3.42** The densely developed nature of the Royal Borough is such that the protection of the levels of amenity enjoyed by users of its existing buildings and spaces, and the design of new development to provide for equally high levels of amenity, are critical factors to ensuring a good quality of life for all.

**34.3.43** The Borough's ~~closely-grained~~dense historic pattern of development has resulted in buildings that are ~~situated very close together~~in close proximity to one another. ~~This has helped to give the Borough's special, close-knit urban fabric.~~It also means that amenities such as light and privacy take on added significance. ~~People today often seek~~Current expectations are for greater levelsbetter standards of light and privacy than in the past and the historic pattern of



development has ~~permitted, however, this may not be possible in all cases~~ The Council considers that ~~amenity of both~~ proposals ~~for new~~ residential and non-residential developments should ~~enjoy~~ ~~ensure a reasonable standard of visual~~ privacy and ~~access to provide good conditions for~~ daylight and sunlight ~~and will take taking into~~ account ~~of~~ the amenity conditions of the surrounding area. In assessing ~~the effect of new~~ development ~~on light conditions~~, the Council will, ~~where necessary~~, have regard to the guidelines in 'Site Layout for Daylight and Sunlight: a Guide to Good Practice' published by the Building Research Establishment.

**34.3.44** The level and type of activity generated by the development can impact on amenity, such as increased traffic, parking, noise, odours and vibrations in addition to impacts created by the developments physical structure. Therefore, the anticipated level of activity should be carefully taken into consideration to ensure a high level of amenity is maintained.

## Policy CL 5

### Amenity

The Council will require new buildings, extensions and modifications and small scale alterations and additions, to achieve high standards of amenity.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. require good daylight and sunlight amenity for buildings and amenity spaces, and that the conditions of existing adjoining buildings and amenity spaces are not significantly reduced or, where they are already substandard, that there should be no worsening of the conditions;
- b. require ~~reasonable~~ visual privacy for occupants of nearby buildings;

- c. require that there is no harmful increase in the sense of enclosure to existing buildings and spaces;
- d. require that there is no significant impact on the use of buildings and spaces due to increases in traffic, parking, noise, odours or vibration.

## Small-scale Alterations and Additions

**34.3.45** [previous para 34.3.48] Small-scale alterations and additions are often necessary to modernise, adapt and extend the life of a building. Such works include improving accessibility, ~~changes to windows or glazing patterns; projecting mouldings;~~ balustrades, ~~chimneys and other architectural details;~~ alarms, cameras, grilles, ~~shutters~~ and other security equipment; servicing, plant and telecommunications equipment; front walls, railings and forecourt parking; ~~signs which are not advertisements~~ and balconies and terraces.

**34.3.46** Small-scale alterations and additions are considered to comprise minor external changes to the appearance of a building or its curtilage, servicing equipment, plant and telecommunication apparatus. Although small alterations and additions may ~~individually~~ have a negligible impact, if unsympathetically carried out they may individually spoil the appearance of a building or its curtilage, ~~or collectively and cumulatively being~~ detrimental to the townscape or amenity of an area. It is the cumulative effect of these small-scale alterations and additions which can negatively impact on the Borough's overall high quality townscape and their control is therefore a matter of strategic importance.

**34.3.47** There is great pressure for the adaptation of the building stock. Each year the Borough receives, on average, over 2,100 planning applications and 600 applications for listed building consent, with 85% of applications for sites within our conservation areas<sup>(311)</sup>. The vast majority of planning applications are from householders seeking to alter or extend their properties.

**34.3.48** A high proportion of the Borough's dwellings are flats<sup>(312)</sup>. Whilst dwellinghouses have permitted development rights, buildings such as mansion blocks, which are often in multiple ownership, do not have such rights and therefore

311 2004/5 to 2008/9

312 RBKC Housing Needs Assessment 2009

the Council receives a high number of planning applications affecting these types of properties. An inconsistent approach to alterations and additions across the building must be avoided, especially as the residential units are in close proximity to each other.

### Policy CL 6

#### Small-scale Alterations and Additions

The Council will require that alterations and additions do not harm the existing character and appearance of the building and its context.

To deliver this the Council will:

- a. resist small-scale development which:
  - i. harms the character or appearance of the existing building, its setting or townscape;
  - ii. results in a cumulative effect which would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area;
  - iii. are not of high quality form, detailed design and materials;
  - iv. do not improve the accessibility and security of the building in a sensitive manner in relation to the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area;
- b. require telecommunication, plant, micro-generation and other mechanical equipment to be sited discretely so that visual amenity is not impaired.

NOTE: Refer to Policy CE6 in relation to noise and vibration.

section sets out the main strategies and action plans that have been prepared to play a part in delivering this objective. It then sets out specific actions that will be undertaken to further the objective.

### Corporate or Partnership Strategies that will contribute to the delivery of the Strategic Objective

#### English Heritage: National Buildings at Risk Strategy 1998

**34.4.2** The National Buildings at Risk Strategy arose from the success following the survey of all grades of listed buildings in London, when English Heritage first published the annual Register of Buildings at Risk in London in 1991. There is now a combined Heritage at Risk register that combines Grade I and II\* listed buildings at risk and structural scheduled monuments which are at risk and vulnerable.

#### The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, *Renewing the Legacy: 21 Projects for the 21st Century* 2006

This document outlines a series of Council and partner-led projects that will help keep Kensington and Chelsea to be one of the world's best places to live.

#### Corporate or Partnership Actions for Renewing the Legacy

1. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will continue to run the Architecture Appraisal Panel;
2. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work in partnership and consult with design and conservation bodies including English Heritage and CABE;
3. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will review conservation areas and Article 4 directions as resources allow;
4. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will continue to reduce the number of buildings and monuments at risk on 'English Heritages Risk Register' and the Borough's own 'Buildings at Risk Register';

## 34.4 Corporate and Partner Actions

### Introduction

**34.4.1** Delivering the strategic objective of *Renewing the Legacy* will take more than the planning policies above. A range of activities undertaken across the Council and by our partner organisations will also deliver this objective. This

5. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will continue to use Article 4 Directions and Section 215 powers<sup>(313)</sup>;
6. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will continue to produce additional and update existing design guides and Conservation Area Proposal Statements;
7. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work in partnership with the Council's Property Services and Housing Department to deliver housing renewal;
8. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will work in partnership with Police Architectural Liaison to ensure that 'Secured by Design' is embedded in all design;
9. The Council will ~~encourage~~~~make use of~~ architectural competitions to help select architects for developments on major sites, leading to better quality design;
10. The Planning and Borough Development Directorate will designate the Exhibition Road museums as a Strategic Cultural Area and, in partnership with the City of Westminster, will investigate designation of the area as a World Heritage Site.



Natural History Museum

313 An Article 4 Direction is made by the Council and confirmed by the Government. It serves to restrict Permitted Development rights.