FOREWORD

CLLR ROBERT DAVIS

The recognition that environmental quality and public health and well-being are inextricably linked was at the heart of development of the modern town planning system. Today our understanding of the ways in which the urban realm and how it is experienced affect peoples’ welfare is more sophisticated, and it remains a major theme for the planning system to engage with. The range of problems with which we have had to deal has broadened, with issues like climate change which raise new questions about how we ensure the continued health and well-being of all Westminster’s people over coming decades rising up the agenda.

That these are threads running through a wide range of policy areas is reflected in the fact that this booklet does not deal with every aspect relevant to health, safety and well-being and that these are picked up in a number of other booklets in this series. It does deal with some fundamental issues: availability of daylight, guarding against crime and the provision of play space.

These are important issues, key to ensuring ours is a City fit to live in, and to pass on to those who will follow us. I look forward to seeing the comments expressed on these proposals.

Councillor Robert Davis DL
Deputy Leader
Cabinet Member for Built Environment
Westminster City Council
Introduction

This booklet sets out the Council’s proposed planning policies dealing with health, well-being and personal safety which will be included in the Westminster City Plan. In this booklet, “City Plan” is used to mean the completed local plan integrating Strategic and detailed City Management policies which will be adopted as part of this review.

Specific policies covered in this booklet include:

Strategic Policy S29 – Health, safety and well-being

City Management policies:

CM29.3 – Security measures in high-risk developments
CM29.4 – Security measures in the public realm
CM35.2 – Play space

Other policies relevant to health, well-being and personal security can be found in a range of other booklets, particularly those on Flood Risk; Housing: Need, Delivery and Design, Westminster’s Economy and Food; and Drink, Entertainment, Tourism, Arts and Culture (already published) and in those on Design; Open Space and Green Infrastructure; and Planning and Pollution Control (published with this booklet). Relevant policies will also be found in the forthcoming booklets on Housing: Affordable Housing; Energy; and Public Realm and Advertisements. Further details are given on page 9.

We would welcome your views on proposed new policy wording, which is shown as underlined or identified as entirely new policy. Adopted policy is shown in bold and is not intended to be altered as a result of this consultation.
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TRENDS

KEY HEALTH AND WELL-BEING FACTS

*Westminster Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2013-14*

Despite some of the highest house prices in the country, parts of the borough are still deprived. The Marmot Review *Fair Society, Healthy Lives* (2010) highlighted the link between social disadvantages and health.

- **Least deprived**
  - Men 92 yrs
  - Women 92 yrs

- **Most deprived**
  - Men 75 yrs
  - Women 82 yrs

**Life expectancy** in Westminster is higher than the UK average. However, the difference in life expectancy between affluent and deprived areas within the City is the highest nationally: 16.9 years lower for men and 9.7 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of City of Westminster than in the least deprived areas.

**Least deprived**

- Men 92 yrs
- Women 92 yrs

**Most deprived**

- Men 75 yrs
- Women 82 yrs

**Nitrogen oxide and particulate emissions** in Westminster are among the highest in London and the proportion of deaths attributable to air pollution is estimated to be one of the highest nationally.

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Around a quarter of people in the City (28%) are physically inactive. **Inactivity** is one of the major causes of disease such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer and musculoskeletal problems.

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“Obese children are identified as already having at least one risk factor for heart disease, including high blood pressure, high blood glucose and problems with cholesterol.”  *British Heart Foundation (2013)*

The principal **cause of premature death** is cancer followed by cardiovascular disease (including heart disease and stroke). A significant number of people also die from respiratory disease.

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THE WIDER DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH & WELL-BEING

There are many factors that influence health and well-being. Whilst individual conditions and lifestyle decisions are the principal factors affecting health, the local environment still has a major role to play.

Local environmental conditions, such as air quality and housing conditions can affect health. The built environment can also affect behavioural choices people make. For example active lifestyles can be encouraged by ensuring access to open space and pleasant routes which facilitate walking and cycling.

(adapted from Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991)
PLANNING AND PUBLIC HEALTH


It’s vision is that “All people in Westminster are able to enjoy a healthier city and healthier life”

It recognises that health must be considered in the development of the “Westminster’s City Plan.”

“Our built environment is also important in supporting those who live, work and visit the City to lead healthier lives. For example, our green spaces can provide important respite from the rigours of city life as well as the space for physical exertion.” *

“The built environment provides the infrastructure in which people make healthier behavioural choices.” *

“The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 requires us to promote healthier communities, use evidence to assess health and wellbeing needs, and work with health partners to develop “Westminster’s City Plan”. *

* Westminster Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2013)
PLANNING FOR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Planning policies can play an important part in protecting and promoting health and well-being across a number of areas:

**Access to green and open spaces**
Beneficial for physical and mental well-being. Also helps to ameliorate urban heat-island effect, surface water flooding and air quality/pollution.

**Active travel**
Such as walking and cycling helps people to maintain physical activity. Reduction in vehicular traffic can reduce noise and air pollution.

**Local environmental quality**
Policies aim to reduce noise, air and light pollution, and reduce their negative impact on health and well-being. Poor air quality can contribute to ill health.

**Safer places**
Design of development to take account of crime, security and anti-social behaviour. Incorporating sustainable urban drainage to reduce flooding. Schemes in the public realm to improve road safety.

**Employment**
Deprivation is a key factor for health. Enabling employment and training for local residents can help to tackle inequality and deprivation.

**Local Services**
Protect and improve social and community facilities, such as provision of healthcare, and sports facilities. Local services such as shops and markets can allow access to healthy food.

**Amenity**
Growth in Westminster is often high density and involves mixed use. Protection of amenity, such as daylight and sunlight, is vital for quality of life and well-being.

**Sustainable design**
Design can reduce waste and emissions which contribute to climate change, and help to address air quality and fuel poverty. Design can also take account of the impacts of a changing climate that can impact health, such as overheating.

**Housing**
Securing high quality housing provides safe and healthy homes, and can also address deprivation issues such as fuel poverty and over-crowding.
Health, well-being and personal safety is a theme that is woven throughout all policies. For this reason, this booklet is more of a sign-post to relevant policies in other booklets, as follows:

- **Open Space and Green Infrastructure**
  - Open space and green infrastructure
  - Biodiversity
  - Blue Ribbon Network

- **Public Realm andAdvertisements**
  - Attractive, accessible and secure streets

- **Housing Need, Delivery and Quality**
  - Housing delivery
  - Housing quality
  - Specialist housing

- **Social and Community Uses**
  - Social and community infrastructure
  - Public toilets

- **Planning and Pollution Control**
  - Air quality
  - Noise pollution
  - Lighting and Light pollution
  - Contaminated land

- **Affordable Housing**
  - Meeting the need for affordable housing

- **Westminster’s Economy**
  - North Westminster Economic Development Area
  - Inclusive local economy and employment
  - Employment uses
  - Shopping centres

- **Food, Drink, Entertainment, Tourism, Arts and Culture**
  - Food, drink and entertainment uses
  - Shisha premises

- **Energy**
  - Energy infrastructure
  - Renewable energy
  - Managing overheating

- **Transport and Movement**
  - Pedestrians
  - Cycling
  - Public transport infrastructure
  - Highway improvements

- **Flood Risk**
  - Flooding

**Design**
- Design, including sustainability and accessibility
- Landscaping and trees
- Sustainable waste management
Westminster has a daytime population of over one million, including the workers and visitors who enter the City every day. This volume of people, nationally important buildings, visitor attractions and government-related functions give rise to particular security risks, and specific concerns in relation to terrorism.

The Home Office and Communities and Local Government document Crowded Places: The Planning System and Counter-Terrorism (2012) recognises that crowded places are at greater risk from terrorism. There are many crowded places within Westminster and we want to ensure places and buildings are less vulnerable to attack and, should an attack occur, that people are better protected from its impact.

Further guidance is given in Protecting Crowded Places: Design and Technical Issues (2012, Home Office). Its key principles are: better blast resistance, better building management facilities; better traffic management and hostile vehicle mitigation measures; and better oversight.

Addressing any potential risks from terrorism is of critical importance. However, it is important that this is done in ways that are proportionate to the level and type of risk in Westminster and which balance these risks with other policy concerns.

“Community safety zones are intended to bring businesses together to consider security and counter terrorism concerns. They are business equivalents of neighbourhood watch schemes. There are currently four in Westminster, covering the West End, Victoria, Paddington and Queensway.

“In conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, sites within the setting of listed buildings or scheduled monuments and registered parks and gardens, it is necessary to consider impact on character and on historic fabric.”


“Incorporating good counter-terrorism protective security measures is also good crime prevention.”

PLAY SPACE

Outdoor play facilities in Westminster are generally located within public parks and spaces, within housing estates and in private garden squares.

An audit of open and play spaces (Open Space Strategy, 2007, Westminster City Council) identified 57 play spaces; 28 of these had private access only, and only two provided facilities designed specifically for disabled people. The strategy identified areas deficient in play space, and priority areas for additional play space and informal play areas. Given this shortfall in provision, where new play space is provided it should be designed with care, and address a range of users.

Within the dense urban fabric, opportunities for formal play provision may be limited, and use of spaces for informal play can help to meet the needs of children and young people.

“Children and young people’s participation in physical activity is important for their healthy growth and development. It can reduce the risk of chronic conditions (for example, obesity) and improve their general health and wellbeing.”

Promoting physical activity for children and young people (2009) NICE

“All children and young people should engage in moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for at least 60 minutes and up to several hours every day”

Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity from the four home countries’ Chief Medical Officers (2011)
As noted on page 9 above, most policies that address aspects of health, well-being and personal safety are found in other booklets, as this is a cross-cutting issue.

**Policy S29 Health, Safety and Well-being**

Development should ensure that the need to secure a healthy and safe environment is addressed, including minimising opportunities for crime and the risk of terrorism, and addressing any specific risks to health or safety from the local environment or conditions, including overheating in a changing climate. Developments should also maximise opportunities to contribute to health and well-being, including supporting opportunities for improved life chances and healthier lifestyle choices.

The council will resist proposals that result in an unacceptable material loss of residential amenity and developments should aim to improve the residential environment.

All new housing, and where possible refurbishments of existing housing, will provide a well-designed, high quality living environment, both internally and externally in relation to the site layout and neighbourhood.

All development will protect and, where possible, improve the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and will not create a harmful increase in sense of enclosure, overlooking or cause unacceptable overshadowing of gardens (front and back), public open space, or adjoining buildings, particularly those in residential or educational use.

Development will not result in a material loss of daylight/sunlight to habitable rooms serving existing dwellings or other residential uses, or to educational buildings where affected rooms have a particular requirement for natural light. Development will not be allowed where the resulting level of light received by an existing dwelling taken as a whole is unacceptable.

Development will not result in a material loss of daylight/sunlight to neighbouring properties where that loss would prevent the effective operation of the lawful use of those properties.

The development of major infrastructure projects (and where appropriate, other projects with significant local impacts) will need to mitigate, avoid or remedy environmental and local impacts, both in construction and operation.

The council will have regard to BRE’s Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight – a Good Practice Guide (2011).

The quality and quantity of natural light is important for well-being, and neighbouring developments can have a negative impact on this through obstructing daylight or by blocking sunlight through most of the year. A lack of natural light can significantly affect health.

Adopted policy: Westminster City Plan: Strategic Policies S29

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SECURITY

Westminster’s nationally important buildings, visitor attractions, government related functions and high volume of residents, visitors and workers give rise to a range of different security considerations.


See also Design Booklet for policy S28 Design, which considers design measures to reduce opportunities for crime.

POLICY CM29.3: SECURITY MEASURES IN HIGH-RISK DEVELOPMENTS

Where a significant potential vulnerability to terrorism has been identified, whether because of location, nature, proposed use or otherwise, development will ensure that appropriate counter-terrorism measures are integral to its design, and are incorporated within its curtilage and in any associated public realm. Where appropriate, this may involve retrofitting existing buildings and spaces. Measures may include:

1. use of blast resistant materials (particularly glazing) and design;
2. building layout to secure servicing, utilities and other functions vulnerable to attack;
3. use of CCTV and public address systems;
4. effective access control for goods vehicles and other vehicles in service areas and (where provided) to underground car parking;
5. appropriate arrangements and provision for evacuation and invacuation;
6. use of sensitive and imaginative traffic management and urban design measures including street furniture and appropriate soft landscaping to prevent opportunities for, and minimise the potential impact of, attacks.

Where appropriate, the council will use planning conditions and request legal agreements to ensure design measures are incorporated where there is a significant vulnerability to terrorism including effective management of access to both private space and those accessible to the public.

Additionally, as appropriate and on the guidance of the Metropolitan Police, the council may introduce additional security measures for specific buildings or parts of the public realm.

All security measures will be proportionate to the risk and designed sensitively to respect the surrounding context and public realm, with particular regard to safety, convenience and directness of pedestrian flow.

Counter-terrorism measures need to be considered at the design stage; early engagement in pre application discussion with crime prevention advisors will help to identify issues.

CCTV alone should not be the only option to improve the safety and security of development. Instead a range of security measures should be proposed; along with a decommissioning strategy to remove installations once they are no longer needed.

Invacuation is finding safe places inside buildings.

Westminster’s exceptional built environment and heritage assets need to be respected in any proposal submitted for counter-terrorism measures in order to maintain a balance between security and sensitive design.
SECURITY

Security equipment will only be acceptable within the public realm where there is no reasonable alternative, and the Council must be satisfied this is the case through robust justification provided with the planning application. This will include a full risk assessment produced by security specialists and supported by the Metropolitan Police. Some security and surveillance equipment will require specific consents or permits from the council and others through various types of notification.

Over a million people enter Westminster every day resulting in many locations which are crowded and therefore recognised by the government as more at risk from a terrorist attack.

A review of the Council’s use of CCTV found that there are benefits such as people’s perceptions of safety and security. However, a significant number of cameras and future provision of cameras needed careful consideration and CCTV alone should not be the only option to improve the safety and security of development. Instead a range of security measures should be proposed.

For example, through use of wifi rather than cable-based equipment.

POLICY CM29.4: SECURITY MEASURES IN THE PUBLIC REALM

Security enhancements that the City Council is satisfied must be within the public realm, will be designed sympathetically to respect the surrounding context and public realm, with particular regard to safety, convenience and directness of pedestrian flow.

New CCTV will meet the following criteria:

1. the camera is dealing with a specific security problem, including reducing an identified terrorist threat;
2. there is robust intelligence supporting the use of cameras;
3. the security problem can be evaluated, to enable the removal of the camera when no longer required;
4. there is robust intelligence supporting the use of cameras;
5. there are sufficient resources available to maintain the camera and monitor the images from it;
6. the camera and the images it captures comply with legal obligations on privacy and data protection; and
7. the visual impact of cameras, particularly on heritage assets, are minimised through choice of technology, design and siting.

Westminster’s exceptional built environment and heritage assets need to be respected and a balance struck between security and sensitive design.

The Home Office issued a Surveillance Camera Code of Practice in June 2013 for relevant authorities. Other operators and users of surveillance camera systems encouraged to adopt the code voluntarily.

See also policies on ‘Managing events in the public realm’ and ‘Attractive, accessible and secure streets ‘Public Realm and Advertising Booklet"
New playspace is required in housing developments (policy CM14.1 Housing Quality) and on strategic sites (policy CM35.1 New Open Space and Green Infrastructure and addressing Deficiencies).

Informal play may, where appropriate, include ‘play streets’ within a housing area (such as a street with no through traffic where potential conflict with other users is minimal), a piece of robust sculpture, or similar innovative solutions.

New play space should aim to be in accordance with the Mayor’s “Shaping Neighbourhoods: Play and Informal Recreation Supplementary Planning Document”

**POLICY CM35.2: PLAY SPACE**

New play space should be designed to best practice standards, and take account of:
1. size and scale of the space;
2. natural daylight and sunlight;
3. meeting the needs of various age groups;
4. access for children with learning difficulties and disabilities; and
5. safety (including flooring and other materials) and natural surveillance.

Opportunities for informal play and play within more natural environments will also be secured where it is more appropriate or not possible to secure formal play areas.

Opportunities will also be encouraged where appropriate for facilities suitable for adults including outdoor gyms and fitness trails.
Have Your Say

This booklet is part of the informal consultation for developing the statutory policies in Westminster’s local plan. It builds on previous consultation on the City Management Plan. Further information can be found at westminster.gov.uk/planning-policy.

This booklet only includes the proposed policy. However, Westminster’s local plan will include supporting text based on text within this booklet. This includes:

- Introductory text, setting out the background to the topic.
- Policy application: guidance as to how the policy will be applied, including details of how things will be measured or calculated etc.
- Reasoned justification: this is an explanation required by law to accompany a policy, setting out why a policy is applied.
- Glossary definitions: the statutory definitions used for terms that are included in the policies.

If you wish to discuss the issues raised in this booklet, please telephone 020 7641 2503.

To comment on anything in this booklet, please email planningpolicy@westminster.gov.uk or write to us at:

City Planning
11th Floor
Westminster City Hall
64 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6QP

Your comments will form part of the statutory record of consultation and will be made available on our website and to the public. Your contact details will not be made available, but we will use them to stay in touch with you about future policy development. If you do not want us to stay in touch, please let us know in your response.

Reading List

Crowded Places: The Planning System and Counter-Terrorism (2012) The Home Office and Department for Communities and Local Government


National Planning Policy Framework (2012) Department for Communities and Local Government


Planning Practice Guidance (2014) Department for Communities and Local Government

Promoting physical activity for children and young people (2009) National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)


Secured by Design UK Police initiative

Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight – a Good Practice Guide (2011) BRE


Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity from the four home countries’ Chief Medical Officers (2011)


Westminster Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2013)