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1 introduction

OBJECTIVES

Urban quality is a key characteristic for London's success as a residential, business and visitor centre. This is dependent to a large extent upon the spatial characteristics that give the capital its uniqueness and identity. A crucial dimension of this, is the impact that high buildings have on the skyline. Research has shown that the debate about high buildings is not purely an economic one, albeit that this is an important consideration. For some, the absence of high buildings is seen as a distinct advantage, enabling the character and quality of the city to be maintained. For others, a resistance to high buildings is seen as a direct threat to the competitiveness of cities in the future.

The urban renaissance agenda potentially complicates this evaluation in parts of our cities where the built fabric is precious and where there is discernible critical capital that make a place special. Critical capital is defined as those key resources that are fundamental to the fabric of the character of the city whose protection and upkeep are of primary concern. One of the dilemmas set by the urban renaissance agenda, is how to achieve appropriate urban density, yet maintain the special characteristics of a place. The development of higher buildings may be considered by some as a response to achieving urban density that should be explored, but it is not the only solution.

The three objectives of this study are:

- To assess the implications of high buildings in Westminster in terms of the City's planning objectives, their physical impacts and their contribution to a quality environment;
• To identify views, panoramas and prospects of metropolitan and local importance in and across Westminster; and
• To develop appropriate planning policies for the future control of high buildings and important views in the City.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The context within which the high building debate is set, originates from a number of key sources. In particular: the principles of the Urban Task Force’s ‘Urban Renaissance’; the spatial context provided by the Greater London Authority (GLA); and the more specific advice provided by the London Planning Advisory Committee, (LPAC, May, 1999).

The report of the Urban Task Force, although not dealing specifically with high buildings, provides a signpost for the issues facing urban planning over the coming decades. Their vision is simple, they believe that:

“...cities should be well designed, be more compact and connected, and support a range of diverse uses – allowing people to live, work and enjoy themselves at close quarters – within a sustainable urban environment which is well integrated with public transport and adaptable to change.” (Task Force, 1999)

It is likely that the Spatial Development Strategy for London will carry forward these principles and provide a common spatial framework for the Mayor’s strategies and policies. This will reflect London’s capital and World City roles and include a framework for the general location of ‘strategically significant’ development which the Boroughs will be required to generally conform with.

Research (LPAC, April, 1998) underpinning The Robin Clement Memorial Advice (LPAC, May, 1999), stated that “There is no overwhelming evidence to suggest that there is a need for radical change in London’s skyline through the addition of high buildings in order to secure, sustain or enhance London’s importance as a World City or to create a new image of London for Londoners or the World”, (page 4). The Advice made a number of recommendations to local planning authorities including the need to identify and illustrate areas appropriate for high buildings where relevant, and identify metropolitan views and panoramas. The Advice was endorsed by the Minister for London, Nick Raynsford, in 1999.
There is therefore a requirement for Westminster City Council (WCC), as part of the review of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), to examine which areas, if any, are considered to be appropriate or inappropriate for high buildings. This report is the result of that process.

The adopted UDP states clearly the current position with regard to the development of high buildings in the Borough. The thrust of the policy is that proposals for high buildings or structures that are not in keeping with the established scale and character of Westminster will not be acceptable. This position is a long standing one that has been examined several times during previous reviews of the development plan (see Appendix A for full extract).

This study is an independent analysis of Westminster and high buildings. However, bearing in mind the Council’s adopted policy, it is clear that even the notion of evaluating areas that are inappropriate and appropriate for high buildings, as advised by LPAC, is one that sits uncomfortably against this long standing background of blanket resistance.

Whilst the study was underway, a number of applications for buildings significantly higher than their surroundings were discussed with the Council by their promoters. This study is independent of those discussions and an evaluation of those proposals did not form part of this work.

**APPROACH**

The process of examining the policy for high buildings has encompassed a wide range of activities aimed at:

- Understanding the issues;
- discussing and debating the opportunities and constraints;
- urban design analysis and identifying policy options; and
- synthesis and establishing a direction for policy.
The study was undertaken over a period of 20 weeks. Key areas of work were:

- A workshop to discuss Westminster’s skyline (see Appendix B for contributors);
- the identification of Metropolitan Views and panoramas;
- preparation of a series of sieve maps relating to existing statutory designations and accessibility;
- strategic urban design analysis; and
- a planning policy review.

In addition, a number of discussions were held with architects and engineers in relation to design quality and functional characteristics for high buildings. This included an investigation of the information required as part of a planning application for high buildings. All of the discussions undertaken as part of this study follow an earlier seminar hosted by the Council involving a wide variety of interested parties (see Appendix B). The focus of this study is physical and policy based. It is not based on economic analysis, nor has it involved a detailed study of the carrying capacity of Westminster’s infrastructure.

**STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

Section 2 discusses the factors that may influence Westminster’s skyline. Section 3 presents the importance of views. Section 4 discusses statutory designations in the context of a sieve analysis accompanied by accessibility as a relevant factor. Section 5 presents a checklist for design and function criteria and the content of planning applications. Section 6 describes the implications for UDP policy. Section 7 confirms the conclusions of the study.
2. the skyline

CHARACTERISTICS OR COMPONENTS

The key question to address in examining the skyline of Westminster is: what makes Westminster special?

Westminster’s urban fabric is regarded as precious, characterised by its wealth of historic buildings, together with low and mid rise buildings that are consistent with Georgian and Victorian architecture. There are notable exceptions to this prevailing low to mid rise building height, including landmarks such as Big Ben, the Hilton Hotel, Kensington Barracks and the Hilton Metropole Hotel amongst others. Perhaps ironically, it is the buildings of height at the fringes of Westminster, seen above the general height of the built environment that offer points of orientation to us. This includes Centre Point at the junction of Charing Cross Road and Tottenham Court Road, and the Telecom Tower with its roots firmly in Fitzrovia and the Millennium Wheel on the South Bank.

The Royal Parks, the Great Estates, the quality of the environment, the international flavour and the tradition of Westminster are characteristics which combine to create the unique quality of the City. The exceptional built heritage is reflected in the fact that 75% of the Borough is covered by 51 Conservation Areas, there are 11,000 listed buildings and the Palace of Westminster and its environs are designated a World Heritage Site. The likely detrimental impact on these areas is the reason why the approach to high buildings in Westminster has always been one of resistance. Figure 1 illustrates the spatial characteristics of Westminster, notably, that approximately one third of the Borough is open space, primarily Royal Parks. Figure 2 illustrates the urban grain. The darker areas show where the network of streets becomes intense, whilst the lighter areas, culminating ultimately in the Royal Parks, show where the street pattern
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Urban Grain

Figure 2
becomes less dense. In many instances, the lighter areas coincide with parts of the Borough that have been redeveloped in the last 30-40 years, resulting in the erosion of the traditional street pattern.

The seminar and workshop held at the beginning of this study highlighted a variety of comments and options for the future skyline:

*varied but controlled, interesting, inspiring, distinctive, memorable, exciting, bold, elegant, recognisable, high(er), co-ordinated with London, human scale and sustainable, beautiful, unique to London, ever changing, not static, have fewer stumps with more clarity, coherent, positive, balanced...*

(Source: seminar 6th January 2000)

On the other hand, concerns about the skyline of the future included:

*that the sense of place could be destroyed, views from the Royal Parks could be damaged, beware design disasters, existing important buildings could lose their sense of scale, the skyscape is an important element in the character and quality of London, at the moment high buildings pop up anywhere as a result of lack of strategic planning and an urban design vision for London...*

(Source: workshop 9th May 2000)

The combination of all of the factors previously outlined, and the comments expressed above, leads us to support the view that the need to maintain and enhance the heritage assets of Westminster should be the fundamental test and concept against which to assess any development.

In theory, a positive but selective approach to high buildings could be possible if locations can be identified where the quality of the existing townscape is not challenged, where a balance between policy objectives may be achieved, and there are benefits in terms of strategic recognition afforded by the presence of high buildings.

The task that has been set by LPAC has been for Westminster to examine where high buildings might and might not be appropriate. In terms of form, the debate at the seminar, the workshop and through LPAC's research referred to earlier, was essentially about clusters, individual or iconic buildings, or a combination of both.
SPATIAL OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS LONDON – A CLUSTER HYPOTHESIS

High buildings by their very nature have a potential impact well beyond their immediate vicinity. Ideally in assessing the effect of high buildings in Westminster, reference will be made to a strategic review for London. In the absence of a review and in an attempt to give some strategic context to this study, the outline below is the basis of a hypothesis which might inform any three dimensional spatial strategy.

A number of types of spatial opportunity exist within London for high building locations. They are:

- Clustering at points of intense commercial pressure and/or accessibility; and/or
- In strategic locations scattered across Greater London with the potential for high buildings either as clusters or individual iconic buildings.

Existing clusters on the whole, reflect commercial considerations. In comparison to other European cities, there are very few planned clusters in London, and even less that are planned to define important gateways or transport nodes. Figure 6 discussed later in this report, illustrates the location of the taller buildings in Westminster. It demonstrates how these buildings have emerged, scattered across the Borough with little or no suggestion of the creation of a coherent cluster.

Little support has been expressed to date within the study for a policy that would identify specific sites that could accommodate individual iconic and higher buildings, nor did the Advice recommend such an evaluation. Rather, it is considered that if such sites are brought forward by the market, they will be determined on their merits within the adopted policy framework. The concept of clustering is one, however, that requires further exploration. Whilst it is not the role of this study to consider the whole of the high buildings strategy for London, it is helpful however, to explore a possible wider context within which Westminster might fit.

London's Central Area

London’s ‘Central Area’ as defined in RPG3 corresponds with the central London functions, and broadly corresponds with points of high accessibility. RPG3 urged Boroughs to co-ordinate UDP policies across the Central Area. Between 1997 and 1999, LPAC reviewed policies for the Central Area and in 1999 produced Guidelines and a Co-ordination Diagram for Central London Boroughs. The Central Area as currently defined by LPAC and endorsed by the Government in January 2000, includes Nine Elms, the
South Bank as far as Elephant and Castle and as far as the London Bridge area. This definition is one over which the City of Westminster has previously expressed concerns.

There are a number of gateways to the Central Area which at a strategic level could offer opportunities for higher density development and which therefore, but not necessarily, could be in the form of high buildings or clusters of high buildings. It is possible to identify a typology from this strategic analysis comprising four tiers of opportunity across the Central Area.

**Potential First Tier**

The first tier would only exist within the boundaries of the City of London Corporation, denoting the financial centre of London. Heights, context and silhouette profiles would need to be considered to create one or more ‘City clusters’, if this was considered a desirable and achievable objective. This would in effect be London’s equivalent of Manhattan in New York.

**Potential Second Tier**

The second tier, or next level down, could be smaller clusters denoting the transport and international gateways into the Central Area. This includes second tier opportunities that have the ability to contribute to a coherent structural ‘whole’ for Central London. For example, Paddington, Victoria, Kings Cross and Euston transport termini. Others that could also fall into this category include Waterloo, (the South Bank) and London Bridge. The same could apply to the Canary Wharf complex, albeit that this is physically beyond the Central Area.

**Potential Third Tier**

The third tier would be the lower level within the Central Area represented by clusters denoting the next level of gateways such as Liverpool Street, Broad Gate and also the Elephant and Castle.

**Potential Fourth Tier**

A fourth tier might possibly relate to Metropolitan centres beyond these Central Area tiers such as Croydon, Stratford and Hammersmith.
This gives a 'snap shot' and theoretical view of where Westminster might fit into the London-wide picture. It would be important that the policy position derived from such a typology was not too mechanistic as there will be exceptions to such a strategic concept. For example, Waterloo as the Eurostar terminal is a second tier, but may be considered to be too sensitive due to its close physical relationship to the Thames. Similar concerns would exist in relation to London Bridge and Charing Cross. It could also be argued that the Canary Wharf complex should challenge the first level tier and offers the gateway function. Liverpool Street is also connected to Stansted International Airport.

To some extent this approach would support high density development or high buildings in these locations to enhance international and national connectivity. The validity of an approach that structures the Capital with reference to height only may of course be challenged, but for the purposes of this study, it is helpful to consider where and how other high buildings may emerge, and what if any relationship, Westminster should have to other high building locations.

However, if such an approach were to be accepted or suggested as a starting point, then these tiers would identify specific parts of the Central Area in terms of importance, physically emphasised and defined by high buildings. They would signpost the heart of the Central Area and the gateways, and represent or reflect major structural features in London.

The implications of this approach for Westminster, would suggest that there are two areas with the potential for high buildings: Paddington could form one new second tier cluster; and Victoria, already characterised by a number of buildings which are significantly higher than the prevailing building height, another.

This theoretical argument is of course only one part of the story and as stressed earlier, is essentially beyond the scope of this study. Specific tests must be undertaken in relation to each proposal to assess the impact of the development of high buildings. This involves the consideration of the qualities and characteristics of each Borough within which a cluster opportunity might emerge, the importance of views being one such consideration discussed in section 3.
3. the importance of views

APPROACH TO THE ANALYSIS

The visual impact of high buildings can be the most intrusive and emotive, particularly within a sensitive setting such as much of Central London. The analysis of views in Westminster has been undertaken at a number of levels.

Strategic Views

The strategic level is determined by Strategic Views as indicated by RPG3 Annex A: Supplementary Planning Guidance for London on the Protection of Strategic Views. There are 10 Strategic Views in London, 8 of which relate to views to St Paul’s Cathedral and the remaining 2 relate to views to the Palace of Westminster. Three of the views affect Westminster considerably and are shown on Figure 3. These are:

- Primrose Hill to the Palace of Westminster
- Parliament Hill to the Palace of Westminster
- Richmond Park (King Henry’s Mound) to St Paul’s Cathedral

Two other views marginally affect Westminster. These are:
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Key
- Parks & Open Spaces
- Squares
- Main routes
- Westminster boundary
- Areas affected by Metropolitan Views
- World Heritage Site
- Strategic Views
  1. Parliament Hill to Palace of Westminster
  2. Primrose Hill to Palace of Westminster
  3. Richmond Park to St. Paul's
  4. Primrose Hill to St Paul's
  5. West Pier to St Paul's

Views - Strategic and Metropolitan

Figure 3
- Primrose Hill to St Paul’s Cathedral
- Westminster Pier to St Paul’s Cathedral

The other five are:
- Greenwich Park to St Paul’s Cathedral
- Blackheath Point to St Paul’s Cathedral
- Parliament Hill to St Paul’s Cathedral
- Kenwood to St Paul’s Cathedral
- Alexandra Palace to St Paul’s Cathedral

The criteria under which Strategic Views are identified states that they are “Views of national significance from well-known public places, cherished by both Londoners and visitors, featuring an exceptional landscape or townscape including visually prominent historic landmarks.”

The protection includes the direct line of sight from the viewpoint to the point of interest. It extends to a minimum of 300 metres on either side of the line of sight. The backgrounds to each strategic view, known as ‘Wider Setting Consultation Areas’ have also been defined.

The importance of these views has not been challenged in this study. They are accepted as a given, where Westminster will normally refuse permission if a proposed development impacts upon them and will normally resist development within the wider setting and background consultation areas which would adversely affect strategic views.

**Metropolitan Views**

The metropolitan level is influenced, though not dictated by, further guidance within RPG3 and LPAC Advice, (May 1999). Both these documents urge each London Borough to protect views, especially where they affect a number of Boroughs by identifying them within their UDPs. The Thames is thought to be a
particularly sensitive area and this is reflected in Strategic Planning Guidance for the Thames (RPG3B, 1997):

"In central London its banks are lined with prestigious and historic buildings, reflecting London's status as the national capital and a world city. It assumes the scale of a major river, retained by substantial embankment walls, and crossed by numerous bridges... there are, in addition, views across or along the River that are important to the local scene. Local landmarks such as historic buildings and churches, can be important skyline features particularly on the curve of the River, and it is important that their setting is not damaged by inappropriate new development..." (RPG3: Annex B: Strategic Planning Guidance for the Thames, 1997).

LPAC's criteria for the designation of Metropolitan Views are as follows:

- Contribute significantly to the image and built environment of London and to the enjoyment of London by Londoners and by visitors.
- Publicly accessible viewpoint or area.
- Well known and visited or have the potential to be so.
- Be from a specific identified viewpoint (or in the case of a Prospect, from a specified area) to an identified landmark or panorama (LPAC, May, 1999).

These criteria have been adopted in this study as a basis for selecting Metropolitan Views within Westminster. The question has arisen however, over when is a local view a Metropolitan View and whether the LPAC criteria can be relied upon to make this distinction. Examples identified during this study include: views of Buckingham Palace, Palace of Westminster, Whitehall and Horseguards; and panoramas and prospects from: Telegraph Hill in Nunhead, Brockwell Park, within the Royal Parks, the River and the Bridges.

Metropolitan Views for the purposes of this study are defined as those where views contain buildings, major public open spaces or monuments of London wide significance i.e. they contribute to the character and quality of London in addition to the local character and quality of Westminster.
Local Views

Views at a local level are dictated by local circumstances and the nature of the historic fabric. In practice, the evaluation of such views commenced in 1989 when LPAC asked Boroughs to identify a variety of views subsequently described in London's Skyline & High Buildings (LPAC 1989), see Appendix C. This evaluation has continued with WCC's recent and ongoing Audit of Conservation Areas. The Royal Parks have contributed to this debate over the years (Colvin and Moggeridge, 1998).

Identifying all locally 'important' views across Westminster is open to much debate and in the main could be construed to be heavily subjective. Views by their very nature are variable in terms of location, position and content. They often include the context of the building as well as the building itself. Views of an object can be obtained from more than one position and the number of positions can increase the closer one gets to the object, as the work by the Royal Parks demonstrates. Inevitably this places reliance upon the detailed work undertaken in the Conservation Area Audits for this very fine level of analysis.

The hierarchical approach to determining where high building development would be unacceptable, therefore, would be to identify the areas where high buildings would have a 'negative impact' on important views.

Hence, the first stage of the 'views analysis' was to omit those areas considered to be 'adversely affected' by the development of high buildings. As mentioned earlier, this is not an exact science due to the variable nature of views, particularly when trying to pre-empt the impacts of undefined proposals and draw a correlation between height and distance across a varied townscape. The fact remains that high buildings in certain locations will impact upon views and if these potential areas of impact could be identified this would provide the first layer of the assessment.

An analysis of the character of Westminster in the context of Metropolitan Views suggests that they fall logically into two categories: panoramas from the Royal Parks and London Squares; and the backdrop to the river and key note buildings such as the Palace of Westminster. The reason for this classification is that there are large areas of the Borough where the urban grain is so tightly formed, that it is difficult to appreciate anything other than a very local view, identified in the Conservation Area Audits. This urban form is one of the characteristics of Westminster that contributes significantly to its overall character.
Views from the Royal Parks and Open Spaces

The size of these ‘impact areas’ was taken in the first instance as a 300 metre radius from the centre of squares/gardens and a 600 metre radius from the edges of Royal Parks. These distances were based on the ‘Grosvenor Square Concept’, where the heights of the buildings surrounding the square are approximately 20 metres. A building of 75 metres centrally placed in the square would be visible over the roof tops 300 metres away and therefore the reverse is also true. The 600 metre radius has been adopted to reflect the fact that with regard to the Parks, the open distance across which the view is taken is considerably longer. It is accepted that this could be more or less than 600 metres at different points along the perimeter, but a strategic guideline is considered necessary to achieve consistency. The reference to 75 metres is drawn from The Robin Clement Memorial Advice, page 5, Table 1, Mechanism for consultation. Figure 3 illustrates the application of this guideline.

This rule of thumb is less relevant to the south of the Borough due to the general absence of Squares directly south of St James’s Park. However this area forms the backdrop to the Palace of Westminster World Heritage Site when viewed from the south bank of the Thames.

For many of the open spaces, the analysis is relatively straight forward as the concept of a 360 degree view is possible, albeit that many of the squares have a sense of enclosure which was suggested earlier on Figure 2. For consistency, the illustrations show the application of this rule. However, there is arguably one exception to this, namely, Paddington Green, because the view is interrupted by the A40 Motorway which ‘breaks through’ the urban structure in this location and creates a barrier along the southern edge of the Green.

Views from the River Thames

The River Thames is a special case. It is significant in determining areas of impact. The predominantly small scale and residential nature of buildings fronting the river between Putney Bridge and Vauxhall Bridge provide a low rise townscape which restricts the potential for high buildings. Between Vauxhall and Tower Bridges however, more opportunities exist but the concentration of heritage and historic built fabric also increases. Keynote buildings in Westminster with a relationship to the River include the Tate Gallery, Westminster Abbey, Palace of Westminster, Whitehall Court and the Savoy Hotel (Proposed River Thames Special Policy Area Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance, WCC, 1999). As such, from the south bank of the River, the backdrop zone along the opposite bank forms a Metropolitan panoramic
view into Westminster. The backdrop to the Palace of Westminster and its environs, a World Heritage Site, is considered to be of Metropolitan significance and worthy of protection.

The backdrop is also discussed in the Robin Clement Memorial Advice. It states that “Concern over the impact of high buildings extends from the subject of these designations to the areas around them. The skylines created by these need to be considered for protection from the detrimental impact of new development proposed within the area of their setting. The height of any new buildings has to be a particular consideration where this would impinge on the backdrop of World Heritage Sites...It is important that these adjacent areas and backdrops are protected to maintain the integrity of the view”, (LPAC, May 1999, para 4.4)

Buildings such as Portland House are occasionally visible from the south bank. Any building higher than Portland House (approximately 106 metres) would be visible over the roof line of the Palace from the banks of the river. Buildings of this height, south of St James’s Park have the potential to impact upon the Westminster skyline. The geometry of the Thames at this point is such that as a result of the curve, from Westminster to Vauxhall, this entire backdrop area to the World Heritage Site would be affected by buildings of a similar height to Portland House. Buildings of this scale would have a negative impact on views, as illustrated on Figure 4.

The analysis demonstrates that if the importance of views is accepted in Westminster, then there are large parts of the Borough where high buildings would not be acceptable. This effectively means that some 65% of Westminster would not be acceptable for high buildings. The remaining 35% of the borough lies within the north west quadrant, illustrated on Figure 5.

The views analysis suggests therefore that the theoretical contention that there may be two potential second tier opportunities for high building clusters in the Borough, may be refined down to one; Paddington. Any further new high building development of a similar height to Portland House (Ref: Figure 4) in Victoria will be visible in the backdrop of the World Heritage Site. New high buildings in this location would need to satisfy the criteria set down in the Conservation Area Audits and design policies described in the development plan. The relationship of high buildings to Westminster Cathedral will be a commanding local factor in discussions with regard to future development, high or otherwise.
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Key

- Background zone to views from Buckingham Palace *
- Sensitive zone views to Queen Victoria Memorial *
- Viewing corridor for Westminster Cathedral *
- Sensitive Backdrop zone to World Heritage Site
- World Heritage Site

* After Royal Parks study

Viewing Zones Across World Heritage Site

Figure 4
4. Sieve analysis

The examination of views is only one part of the total picture. In identifying areas sensitive to high buildings LPAC identified 9 impact considerations. These included:

- Conservation Areas;
- Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land including Royal Parks and their settings;
- Listed Buildings and their settings;
- London Squares (as designated by the London Squares Preservation Act 1931);
- St. Paul's Cathedral as protected by policy relating to St Paul's Heights;
- Strategic Views;
- Important Local Views, Panoramas and Prospects;
- Historic Parks and Gardens (as on register held by English Heritage); and
- World Heritage Sites, their buffer zones and backdrops.

(Source: LPAC, May, 1999)
Westminster High Buildings Study

Key
- Red routes and strategic routes
- A40 (M)

Main Routes

Figure 8
Westminster High Buildings Study

Key
- Area remaining as Fig. 7
- Access zones
  - 400m (5 minutes)
  - 800m (10 minutes)
- Tube Stations
- Mainline Stations

Figure 9

Access Zones
All of the above, according to LPAC, could be adversely affected by the location of high buildings in close proximity. In the case of WCC, the role of River Thames and the Canal network must also be considered. Figure 6 illustrates the location of these impact considerations in Westminster and identifies the location of the tallest buildings concentrated in the south east and north west areas of the Borough. Figure 7 illustrates the area remaining after Conservation Areas have been removed as areas that are unacceptable for high buildings. The Conservation Area Audits are in the process of preparation and adoption, as such there may be changes to the boundaries shown on Figure 6 over time.

The accessibility sieve (major routes, main line and LUL stations), illustrated on Figures 8 and 9, is based upon the premise that the points of greatest accessibility are likely to be those where a greater density and intensity of development might be achieved. The issue here is drawing the parallel between density and access. Walking zones (not as isochrones) are indicated – 5 minutes from an LUL station and 10 minutes from mainline stations. Strategic routes and red routes formed the basis for bus routing. Together these criteria have refined the other sieves to support areas mainly along primary routes. Figure 10 illustrates the areas remaining after the accessibility sieve.

The definition of height remains inconclusive, save the one set down in the UDP, namely that high buildings are those that are significantly higher than their surroundings. A further refinement that acknowledges localised constraints and design issues needs to be undertaken in relation to potential parameters for height. It is clear however, that in the areas shown on Figure 10, any high building proposals would be very visible in the near views and become visible in the distant views i.e. at a height of approximately 25-30 storeys (100-120 metres). Buildings over and above this height have a significant impact upon distant views.

It would be tempting to set a building height limit using this knowledge. However, such a limit would also need to be based upon the physical and carrying capacity of the area in terms of economic viability, transport infrastructure, land use and mix of uses, the need and impact on the immediate local area, in addition to whether or not buildings can be seen from different parts of the Borough. The impact of new development on views also depends upon the form and nature of development. It could be argued that the impact of a slender building on the skyline is far less than that of a 'bulky' building. The design of the building or structure may enable it to be acceptable, even where the initial reaction to it may be rejection on the grounds that it can be widely seen across the Borough.
To some extent the 'sieve analysis' ratifies the 'views analysis', but of equal importance, it adds a further refinement to the process. The result is to omit all but the north west quadrant of the Borough. This includes Paddington, but is not exclusive to Paddington. That is not say that individual 'signature' buildings could not be proposed in the excluded areas, but there will be a strong presumption against their acceptability and they would be on an 'exceptional' basis and subject to stringent tests, as set out in adopted policy.

Even though Conservation Areas are considered unacceptable for high buildings, inevitably locating a high building on the edge of an Area may have the same impact upon the Area as if the building was within it. The ultimate end result of such an approach would be to say that none of the Borough is acceptable for high buildings on this basis. However, the specific benefits or harm caused by development can only be considered when one is faced with a particular proposal. This analysis demonstrates that if Advice given by LPAC is to be reflected in the UDP, then the remaining areas in the north west quadrant fall into the latter category, i.e. where the least harm might result from the development of high buildings in Westminster.

Finally, the sieve analysis is not intended to arrive at 'appropriate' sites for high buildings. Rather it is a tool for identifying unacceptable areas on a wider scale based on the criteria. The identification of specific sites would only come through a detailed urban design analysis in the knowledge of the unacceptable areas.
5. design, function and planning applications

DESIGN AND FUNCTION

At the heart of establishing checklists for the design and functional aspects for high buildings lies the need to stimulate quality in design. This is vital because of the impact that high buildings have on their environment at all levels.

In relative terms, the checklist can only form one part of the approach to quality which must be founded on the broader framework of Westminster’s UDF. However, it is worth noting some of the advice given by the DoE (now DETR), and others when considering quality:

“Good quality is good economics. The building which gleams in the sun of its first summer, but is decayed and strained before its fifth, is a challenge to the judgement of its owner and designer. The wise investor considers the cost of maintenance, the availability of replacement materials, adaptability and longevity...... Developers and their professional advisors are not merely expressing their wider responsibilities but also their financial advantage when they build to attract and build to last: better tenants, higher capital value over lower maintenance. Good architecture need not be more expensive. Nor need it be more difficult to realise”. (DoE, 1994).
Or as Lord Palumbo stated when he was Chairman of the Arts Council...

"Good design doesn’t cost more. But if something is well designed and has presence... it will last. Give a good architect a budget, and he will design within it. It’s no more expensive to build a quality building.” (Cowan, 1991)

The Royal Fine Art Commission tried to set down broad criteria when describing What Makes a Good Building in 1994. They included factors such as order and unity, expression, integrity, plan and section, detail, and integration. The Task Force (1999) also provides a checklist of spatial master plan design issues. LPAC’s assessment considerations for high buildings are as follows:

“A planning application for a high building or structure should be accompanied by a design statement which assesses the proposal in relation to local context, and the impact on views, the skyline, local landmarks and historic buildings. The proposal should also be assessed in relation to sustainability considerations, ranging from how the building operates (energy efficiency, for example), to its contribution to mixed use development, and to accessibility for a range of people with different levels of mobility”. LPAC’s design considerations state that a high building should be:

- Of outstanding architectural quality.
- Secure and complete a well designed public realm.
- Well located in terms of public transport accessibility.
- Be set in the context of an urban design analysis, including the impact on local, medium and long distant views.
- “Emphasise or contribute to a point of civic or visual significance (including a cluster) or a centre of urban activity or regeneration, both locally and in relation to the immediate area and wider area from which it will be visible”.
- “...contribute positively to the image and built environment of London”
- Enhance the skyline by ensuring that the roof top is of high quality.
- Normally be of major significance in meeting regeneration objectives.
Many of these objectives are encapsulated in Westminster’s adopted UDP.

The approach to views and sieves described in section 3, is directional from a strategic view point, whilst the approach to design and functional aspects relates more closely to the notion of control on the ground. It is inevitable that the latter is based upon comparison, as it is only when things are compared with each other that we instinctively know a good building from a bad building.

The basis of this approach must be an assessment of the existing situation, which identifies the strengths, and weaknesses of an area, and the role that a high building might have in enhancing strengths and overcoming weaknesses. To a certain extent, the criteria for each proposal will vary according to the specifics of the local and its environs, and the proposal itself. However, the work that has been undertaken during this study, leads to the conclusion that there are two levels of design and functional criteria specifically in relation to high buildings that should be considered:

**Strategic design and function criteria**

Strategic criteria should show positively that the proposal:

- Enhances existing heritage assets and does not detract from them.
- Is of the highest design quality.
- Contributes at a strategic level to London as a World City i.e. the relationship to any future spatial objectives for London.
- Enhances the skyline through the profile of the building and the use of materials. The roof and the ground floor are considered to be of particular importance. Transparent, slender structures are more likely to be acceptable than bulky, solid structures, particularly given that the potential long distance views of high buildings.
- Is capable of being accommodated within the carrying capacity of the area. This will include an evaluation of the contribution to regeneration, transport, and services infrastructure. It should also include the contribution of the development to sustainability.
Local design and function criteria
Local criteria should show positively that the proposal:

- Contributes to the urban design objectives of the local area through its relationship to urban grain, definition of points of activity, reinforcement of character and street frontages, improvement to legibility and permeability.
- Is highly accessible and improves the quality of the pedestrian environment through its relationship to the ground, relation to existing patterns of movement on foot, impact on micro climate and the pedestrian environment and has active live edges at grade.
- Enhances the public realm with high quality landscape treatment. This relationship will be part of the opportunity to improve place and identity at the ground level in addition to the skyline.
- Supports a mix of uses appropriate to the local area.
- Contributes to local objectives for regeneration.
- Enhances the local skyline and Metropolitan and Local Views.
- Minimises additional trips by car and demonstrates that cars and servicing can take place within the basement of the building wherever possible.
- Minimises the impact of shadowing on adjacent buildings and areas.
- Does not impact upon telecommunications or aircraft operations.
CONTENT OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

"A planning application should take the local planning authority through the thought processes that have gone into the design. It should be submitted in a form that demonstrates how the proposal responds to the site, the locality and the policy context." (DETR, 2000)

In addition to the normal requirements in relation to planning applications, applications for high buildings should include a number of elements in order to fulfil DETR's goal:

- A design statement which will include: development context; location; development objectives; urban design principles; architectural philosophy; relationship of existing and proposed land and building uses; treatment at roof top/crown; ground floor treatment and relationship to street vitality; public realm strategy; scale and massing; materials; lighting (day and night time); and approach to public art. This statement should be accompanied by a model of the development, ideally in a computer generated format.

- A movement statement which will include traffic impact assessment illustrating the existing situation and the situation with the development in place including: infrastructure and services; the strategy for public transport; on and off site highway works; servicing; car parking; and pedestrian movement demonstrating pedestrian comfort levels (i.e. applying Fruin principles for example, before and after the new development accessibility). This should be accompanied by the urban design analysis to demonstrate the impacts upon permeability and connectivity of the new development.

- A building services strategy which will include: building systems and enclosure; building life cycles; energy consumption and efficiency; lighting (day and night time); telecommunications; micro climate (wind, sunlight, daylight, shadowing, privacy and overlooking); and ground conditions.

- A heritage statement which will include: relationship to heritage assets illustrating any effects on the character of listed buildings; Conservation Areas; Scheduled Ancient Monuments; World Heritage Sites; archaeology; London Squares; Royal Parks; Canals and the River Thames. This should include nature conservation and ecology where relevant.

- An economic statement which will include: the business case for high buildings; numbers of jobs; and impact upon regeneration objectives.
• A policy statement which will include: land use; open space; ground floor uses; high buildings; mix of uses and sustainable development.

• A statement indicating the relationship to views (Strategic, Metropolitan and Local). This will include: agreement with Westminster with regard to relevant views; photomontage analysis which will show the proposal fully rendered, (an outline of the building is unlikely to be sufficient); 3 dimensional computer model illustrating the proposal in its context; and the relationship of the building to other high buildings or structures. Artists perspectives would be useful, but should not be relied upon as a technical evaluation of the appearance of the proposal.

• A construction and demolition statement including processes, techniques, movement of material, impact on site and off site.

Collectively these statements effectively represent an Environmental Impact Statement.
6. Implications for existing UDP policy

**EXISTING POLICY**

For the purposes of this study, emerging UDP policy can be translated into three clear geographical areas:

- The Central Activities Zone (CAZ), towards which new office development and other Central London activities are to be directed, (and to a lesser extent, CAZ frontages);
- the Paddington Special Policy Area (PSPA), which provides opportunities for office development including major new buildings, mixed use development and other Central London activities; and
- all others areas which include primarily the established residential areas outside of the above policy designations.

Underlying all of the above is one of Westminster's key policy objectives and that is the need to maintain and enhance residential amenity. Applications for high buildings will always be tested against this priority. Consequently, the effect of new development on existing residential neighbourhoods will

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continue to direct applications for non residential high buildings towards commercial areas. Figure 11 illustrates adopted policy in the UDP in relation to the high buildings study.

WCC's existing land use objectives would suggest that in theory, locations within the CAZ, the PSPA and to a lesser extent the CAZ Frontages, would be the most suitable for high buildings. It should be noted though, that this guidance is driven by land use and not by the form of buildings, albeit that by definition such development will be high density. This distinction becomes blurred in relation to new residential high buildings, as in pure land use objectives, such development would not be restricted to the policy areas defined in the UDP.

Bearing in mind that this study leads to the conclusion that the majority of Westminster is unacceptable for high buildings; this raises the question, what changes are necessary to UDP policy?

The findings of this study lead to the conclusion that as much of the Borough is considered to be unacceptable for the development of high buildings, a radical overhaul of adopted policy is not necessary. Consequently, the restrictive approach to high buildings in Westminster should be maintained. However, there are weaknesses within the current policy and it is considered necessary to strengthen and focus policy with regard to views, design and functional considerations.

Selective parts of the north west quadrant of the Borough have been identified where the constraints to high building development that apply elsewhere in Westminster are less apparent. If a specific policy change was to be considered it might involve a new designation for high buildings, as a topic in their own right, perhaps as Supplementary Planning Guidance or a change in the boundary of the CAZ and or the PSPA, or the introduction of a series of areas to complement the PSPA.

The first option would clearly not be appropriate in the context of the overall conclusion with regard to policy. A change in the CAZ boundary is also not supported as this would go to the heart of UDP policy and land use planning for the Borough. The PSPA enables development with CAZ characteristics to proceed. An extension to the PSPA would need to be significant if it was to reflect the sieve analysis and might even suggest a revision in the CAZ boundary. Similarly a network of newly designated areas would have the same effect, i.e the review of CAZ. Moreover, a reduction in the PSPA is currently being discussed as part of the review of the UDP.
In the light of this, it is not recommended that any of the existing policy boundaries be amended on the basis of the high buildings policy alone.

If changes were to be made, given the scale of the implication for the land use objectives of the UDP as a whole, then the enquiry into the UDP would be the proper forum to discuss what would be a fundamental change in policy direction.

Even though limited areas of the north west quadrant of the Borough have emerged as theoretical locations for new high buildings, they are not without their problems due to the intrinsic physical character of the Borough. It is not considered possible therefore, to acknowledge parts of the north west quadrant in the UDP through a formal change in policy, as suggested by LPAC Advice.
7. conclusions

WESTMINSTER AS A SPECIAL PLACE

Without exception, the participants to this study, and indeed the work of LPAC, commented that high buildings have a major impact on the environment and their contribution to quality can be either highly successful, or in the worst case extremely damaging. It is important to remember then, that as part of the consideration of a high buildings policy for Westminster, there is an over-riding need to ensure that there is no detrimental impact upon the historic fabric of the Borough and its intrinsic qualities as a place.

LPAC ADVICE

The task that has been set by LPAC has been for Westminster to examine where high buildings might and might not be ‘appropriate’. There is therefore a requirement for Westminster, and every London Borough, as part of the review of their unitary development plans, to examine, which areas, if any, are considered to be ‘appropriate’ or ‘inappropriate’ for high buildings. These conclusions are a result of that process. However, bearing in mind the Council’s adopted policy, it is clear that even the notion of evaluating areas that are ‘appropriate’ for high buildings, as advised by LPAC, is one that sits uncomfortably against this long standing background of blanket resistance.
THE PROTECTION OF VIEWS

The protection of views is considered important at international, national and local levels. Views in Westminster are particularly special, due to the concentration of many important physical characteristics. For example, the river, the Royal Parks, the Palace of Westminster, and the urban grain of the Borough. The combination of these elements and their juxtaposition makes the rejection of areas for high buildings seem more essential than the identification of areas that could be readily supported or promoted. These fundamental characteristics have been important drivers in this study. They probably make the Borough unique, even when compared to other inner London areas. However, this also makes the identification of areas where high buildings might be ‘appropriate’, as required by LPAC Advice, much more complex.

With this context in mind, there is no overwhelming reason to radically revise Westminster’s restrictive approach to the consideration of high buildings. It is sufficiently robust to reject ‘unacceptable’ proposals and sufficiently flexible to enable high quality proposals to come forward as “exceptional cases” in other locations.

LAND USE OBJECTIVES

The land use objectives which underpin the UDP, effectively deny the opportunity for major commercial development to occur beyond either the CAZ or the PSPA. This would not apply to residential buildings, which in land use terms may occur throughout the Borough.

Analysis of views and character demonstrates that there are very large areas of the Borough where due to their physical characteristics, high buildings are unlikely to be acceptable.

Parts of the north west quadrant of the Borough in LPAC’s terms, might be classified as being ‘appropriate’. The ‘parts’ do not coincide exactly with either of the boundaries of CAZ or PSPA, therefore, if they were to be formally identified in the UDP as locations that are potentially appropriate for high buildings, in order to be consistent with other policy objectives, it would be necessary to either amend the boundaries or create a specific new designation via the UDP, or as supplementary guidance for high buildings.
The identification of these areas in the north west quadrant is not without constraint. A detailed evaluation of the carrying capacity of the area, in particular transport, services and pedestrian movement would need to support proposals for high buildings, together with an assessment of the contribution of a high building to the land use and regeneration objectives of the local area. The definition of height will be subject to evaluation and the impact on Metropolitan and Local Views. A further level of sieve analysis beyond those set out in the LPAC Advice and as used in this analysis, would undoubtedly reduce these parts further.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY**

Given such complex policy relationships, it is not considered that amendments to policy boundaries should be made on the basis of the consideration of high buildings alone, nor is it considered necessary to substantially revise the existing policy for high buildings in Westminster. The adopted policy does not preclude proposals for individual or iconic buildings to come forward in any part of the Borough. It requires that such proposals pass stringent tests if they are to overcome the overall conclusion of this analysis, which is that most of the Borough is unacceptable for the development of high buildings. The policy does however require strengthening and refocusing in several areas.

**METROPOLITAN VIEWS**

Metropolitan views need to be defined to be consistent with LPAC criteria and a further Westminster criteria which is that Metropolitan Views will be those views contain buildings, major public open spaces or monuments of London wide significance i.e. where they contribute to the character and quality of London in addition to the local character and quality of Westminster. Views to Buckingham Palace and the Queen Victoria Memorial are Metropolitan. Prospects from the Royal Parks, London Squares and the south bank and the backdrop to the Palace of Westminster are metropolitan. The Palace of Westminster and its environs is one of only three World Heritage Sites in London.

The distinction between local and Metropolitan Views needs to be made and explained. This should refer to the importance of the Conservation Area Audits for the identification of local views.
The River Thames Special Policy Area Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance requires amendment to incorporate the views analysis undertaken as part of this study. This would enable the views analysis to be adopted as an approach in advance of the UDP i.e. as part of the SPG and is essential in the approach to development that might be taken on the river corridor.

**CONTROLLING HIGH BUILDINGS**

The definition of high buildings should remain as buildings or structures significantly higher than their surroundings, however for clarity it should be stated that the majority of the Borough is characterised by buildings of 6-8 storeys.

In terms of controlling high buildings, it is necessary to reconfirm that most of the Borough will be unacceptable or 'inappropriate' for high buildings. Parts of the north west quadrant of the borough may be acceptable for high buildings, but these are not without limitation and further detailed evaluation would be required.

Where high buildings do not contribute positively to an area, Westminster should continue to promote their replacement with buildings that do make a positive contribution. Marsham Street remains the most well known, but not only appropriate example of this.

**DESIGN AND FUNCTION CRITERIA**

Within this overall policy context, any proposals for high buildings which are put forward should reflect strategic design and function criteria and show positively that the proposal:

- Enhances existing heritage assets and doesn't detract from them.
- Is of the highest design quality.
- Contributes at a strategic level to London as a World City i.e. the relationship to any overall future spatial objectives for London.
- Enhances the skyline through the profile of the building and the use of materials. The roof and the ground floor are considered to be of particular importance. Transparent, slender structures are more
likely to be acceptable than bulky, solid structures, particularly given potential long distance views of high buildings.

- Is capable of being accommodated within the carrying capacity of the area. This will include an evaluation of the contribution to regeneration objectives, transport, and services infrastructure. It should also include the contribution of the development to sustainability.

Proposals for high buildings should also reflect local design and function criteria and show positively that the proposal:

- Contributes to the urban design objectives of the local area through its relationship to urban grain, definition of points of activity, reinforcement of character and street frontages and improvement to legibility and permeability.

- Is highly accessible and improves the quality of the pedestrian environment through its relationship to the ground, relation to existing patterns of movement on foot, impact on micro climate and the pedestrian environment and has active live edges at grade.

- Enhances the public realm with high quality landscape treatment. This relationship will be part of the opportunity to improve place and identity at the ground level in addition to the skyline.

- Supports a mix of uses appropriate to the local area.

- Contributes to local objectives for regeneration.

- Enhances the local skyline and Metropolitan and Local Views.

- Minimises additional trips by car and demonstrates that cars and servicing can take place within the basement of the building wherever possible.

- Minimises the impact of shadowing on adjacent buildings and areas.

- Does not impact upon telecommunications or aircraft operations.
THE CONTENT OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The combination of these elements inevitably leads to the need for comprehensive submissions by applicants to support proposals for high buildings in the form of an Environmental Impact Statement. A fundamental part of the Statement will be the preparation of views analysis, which should be undertaken as full colour rendered montages. A three dimensional model is also required, ideally in a computer generated format.

LONDON WIDE ISSUES

With regard to the London wide positioning of high buildings, approaching the skyline of London through a series of first, second, third and fourth tier opportunities for clusters of high buildings could be said to support the hypothesis that Westminster may accommodate a new second tier cluster at Paddington, in addition to what is arguably an existing cluster at Victoria. However, this would only be within the context of a GLA policy on high buildings that supported the cluster approach.

The physical analysis on the ground does not refute the clusters idea, but in considering the future of high buildings in Westminster, it is clear that a different approach needs to be taken in this Borough from many other Boroughs due to the presence of Westminster’s critical capital. The importance of views is compelling. These factors or differences need to be considered by the GLA, in the context of the general advice about the identification of areas that are ‘appropriate’ and ‘inappropriate’ for high buildings. It is also important to encourage neighbouring Boroughs to co-operate, for instance through cross boundary views analysis to ensure consistency.

A radical change in Westminster’s high buildings policy would appear to be premature and would be undertaken with limited foundations within the continuing debate upon which to consider the far reaching implications that would undoubtedly ensue. Whilst individual London Boroughs such as Westminster can undertake studies such as this one, there can be no substitute for the development of a comprehensive three dimensional spatial vision for London, of which Westminster will form one albeit pivotal, part.
This study has been commissioned by Westminster City Council as part of the review of the Unitary Development Plan; and as such the City Council needs to consider what, if any, changes to UDP policy should be made.

The findings of this study support the current policy, with additional proposals for reinforcing this policy; and does not propose the designation of any areas within the City as specifically appropriate for high buildings. The study sets our rigorous criteria against which any individual proposals for high building which are brought forward, can be judged.

Any strategic review of high buildings in the London-wide context will need to take account of the methodology and findings of this study.
appendices

A  ADOPTED UDP POLICIES FOR VIEWS AND HIGH BUILDINGS (AT JULY 1997)
B  CONTRIBUTORS TO THE SEMINAR AND WORKSHOP
D  BIBLIOGRAPHY
E  GLOSSARY OF TERMS
F  PANORAMIC VIEWS OF WESTMINSTER
ADOPTED UDP POLICIES FOR VIEWS AND HIGH BUILDINGS (AT JULY 1997)

Policy DES2 Strategic Views
A. The City Council will normally refuse permission if a proposed development within a viewing corridor would exceed the development plane between the viewpoint and either the base of the lower drum of St Paul’s Cathedral, or the general roofline of the Palace of Westminster. This will include proposed developments in locations where views are obstructed by existing buildings which exceed height limits.

B. The City Council will normally resist development within the wider setting and background consultation areas which would adversely affect strategic views.

C. The improvement of the views will be sought when the existing buildings of inappropriate height are redeveloped. Where appropriate, Applicants will be expected to provide montage studies of the likely impact of a proposal on the views.
Policy DES3 Local Views

The City Council will normally refuse permission for any developments which will have a detrimental effect on local views of listed or other landmark buildings or groups of such buildings and monuments, in their setting and or against the skyline. Views through and from the Royal Parks, London Squares (including Covent Garden Piazza), River Thames, Regent’s Canal and Grand Union Canal are particularly sensitive.

Policy DES4 Controlling High Buildings

A. Proposals for high buildings or structures that are significantly higher than their surroundings, or will have an adverse visual impact on the settings of listed buildings, or on the character or appearance of conservation areas, squares and the Royal Parks, will normally be refused. In addition, where groups of high buildings already exist, any increase in their numbers will be resisted where they would have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the locality or on strategic or local views.

B. When considering proposals for demolition and redevelopment the City Council will seek opportunities to replace high buildings with lower ones which respond more sympathetically to their urban context.

C. In those situations where the height of the proposed development may, in the City Council’s view, generate potential developmental, overshadowing or micro-climatic problems at street level, or in relation to adjoining buildings, the Council will require information to be submitted that will demonstrate that such problems will not result from the proposed high building.

Proposals for high buildings will be assessed with reference to local views and with particular reference to the sightlines of the strategic views.
appendix b

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE SEMINAR AND WORKSHOP

Seminar 6th January 2000

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appendix c

BUILDINGS IMPORTANT TO LOCAL VIEWS IDENTIFIED AS PART OF THE LPAC STUDY (1989)

1. Westminster Abbey
2. Westminster Cathedral
3. Palace of Westminster
4. St John's Church, Smith Square
5. St Clement Danes Church
6. St Mary le Strand Church
7. Central Hall
8. Royal Albert Hall
9. Albert Memorial
10. Whitehall Court
11. Christchurch, Lancaster Gate
12. St Matthew's Church, Great Peter Square
13. St Peter's Church, Eaton Square
14. St James the Less, Vauxhall Bridge Road
15. Grosvener Hotel, Buckingham Palace Road
16. Western Pumping Station, Grosvenor Road
17. Queens Tower, Imperial College
18. St Matthew's Church, St Peter'sburgh Place
19. St Anne's Tower, Soho
20. Royal Courts of Justice
21. Nelson's Column
22. St Mary's Church, Wyndham Place
23. St Marylebone Parish Church
24. Holy Trinity Church
25. Hilton Hotel
26. St Martin's in the Fields
27. Duke of York's Column
28. St Barnabas Church, Pimlico
29. St Saviour's Church, Pimlico
30. Shellmex House
31. All Souls, Langham Place
32. All Saints, Margaret Street
33. St Mary Magdalene
appendix d

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF KEY DOCUMENTS

Building Design Partnership et al., April 1998. High buildings and strategic views in London. LPAC CON73


Westminster City Council, 1994. Strategic Views in Westminster,
appendix e

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Critical capital
Those key resources that are fundamental to the fabric of the city whose protection and upkeep are of primary concern

Cluster
Group of 3 buildings or more that relate to each other on the skyline

Iconic
Individual and usually isolated building

Strategic view
Views of national significance from well known public places, cherished by both Londoners and visitors, featuring an exceptional landscape or townscape including visually prominent historic landmarks.
Metropolitan View
A view determined by LPAC criteria and views that contains buildings, major public open spaces or monuments of London wide significance i.e. they contribute to the character and quality of London in addition to the local character and quality of Westminster.

Local View
A view that contributes to the local character and quality of Westminster.

Carrying capacity (in this context)
Ability of an area to support new development.

High building
High buildings or structures that are significantly higher than their surroundings.