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INTRODUCTION

Planning in Westminster

- 1 The UDP is based on themes that have been consistently followed in our approach to town planning for over three decades. We have recognised the City's unique role and character and the twin role it plays in being both the heart of a World and Capital City with a daytime population of over one million workers and visitors and the home to about 222,000 residents (2003 mid-year estimate). We have restricted metropolitan functions to a central, mixed-use zone but have allowed for change and growth within it. We have given priority to the provision of housing wherever possible and to helping local communities to thrive. We have maintained the distinctive character of the City's localities and communities while placing great emphasis on conserving and protecting our environment and our remarkable historic heritage. In framing our planning policies and in their application, we have taken a firm stand on protecting those things that are of lasting value.

The Global and European Planning Context

- 2 A wide range of factors, operating at a global and European level, influence planning in Westminster. These include changes in economic and environmental conditions and in their regulation. There is likely to be continuing and increasingly rapid change in the global economy and the environment. During the course of the Plan, for example, climate change is expected to become more evident and the further effects of the 'cyber economy' and e-commerce will be felt. There will also be increasing world travel. London will retain its attractiveness for the corporate headquarters of European operations and there will probably be closer integration within the European Union. Economic and environmental policy is likely to be further extended through the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) and European Directives covering social, urban and environmental matters.
- 3 The Human Rights Act 1998 came into force in England on 2 October 2000. It gives effect to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which was ratified by the United Kingdom in 1951 and has been in force since 1953. The Act confers the direct protection of English law in relation to Convention rights. For the purposes of the role of a local planning authority, the relevant provisions are Article 2, the right to life; Article 6, the right to a fair trial; Article 8, the right to respect for private and family life; Article 14, the prohibition of discrimination; and Article 1 of the First Protocol on the protection of property.

The National and Regional Planning Context

- 4 In producing the UDP we have to take into account national and regional planning policies. These are set out in the form of Planning Policy Guidance notes and circulars issued by central Government. They are not replicated in the Plan but they form a policy framework that is interpreted in the light of

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Westminster's unique character and circumstances. Where policies in the Plan are in line with national and regional planning guidance this is not specifically spelt out. Where national and regional guidance has been taken into account but, in the light of local conditions, the City Council considers that there are good reasons for departing from it, those reasons are set out.

- International Context** provided through the European Union:
- (a) EU Directives
 - (b) Human Rights Act 1998
 - (c) European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)
- National Context** provided by the Government through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and the Department for Transport (DfT):
- (d) Acts of Parliament
 - (e) Government Circulars
 - (f) Planning Policy Guidance notes
 - (g) 'Our Towns and Cities: the future – Delivering an urban renaissance': (see paragraph 1.17 of Introduction)
 - (h) The Planning Green Paper – 'Planning: delivering a fundamental change (2001)' and Government policy statements, 'Sustainable Communities: Delivering through Planning' and 'Making The System Work Better: Planning at Regional and Local Levels' (see paragraphs 1.18-1.24 of Introduction)
- Regional/Strategic Context** provided by the Government Office for London (GoL) and the Mayor of London/Greater London Authority (GLA):
- (i) Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9)
 - (j) The London Plan (2004): Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (SDS): see paragraphs 1.23-1.25 of Introduction
 - (k) RPG 3A- Supplementary Guidance for London on the protection of Strategic Views
- Westminster UDP Part 1:** Strategic Planning Aims and Policies
- Westminster UDP Part 2:** Detailed Development Control Policies

- 5 Planning Policy Guidance Note 11: 'Regional Planning' issued in February 1999 outlines the procedures for preparing Regional Planning Guidance (RPG), which is the framework which local authorities use to prepare their fifteen to twenty year development plans. Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG 9, March 2001) emphasises London's

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role as a financial, commercial, tourist and cultural centre. It states that the planning system should continue to provide for development that maintains London's 'World City' status and that it should take account of London's strengths and make provision for potential growth through policies to provide land and infrastructure and to promote mixed-use schemes. It advocates linking major new business activity with public transport facilities. This ensures that new economic activities are accessible to the labour supply. RPG 9 also states that plans should discourage major development in areas poorly served by public transport or where unacceptable congestion on the road network could result.

- 6 RPG 9 emphasises the importance of London as a place to live. It states that boroughs should encourage developments that will enhance London as a place in which to live and work while conserving its environmental features. Boroughs should "maximise the contribution" London can make to meeting the region's housing needs. Inner London, including Westminster, is identified as an area where there should be an increased emphasis on encouraging more housing to reduce the growth of longer-distance commuting.
- 7 Throughout much of the period of the preparation of this plan, the main strategic planning context has been provided by Strategic Guidance for London Planning Authorities (RPG3), which was issued in May 1996 by the Government Office for London. This document, plus two other documents on the Protection of Strategic Views (RPG3A, issued in October 1991) and on Strategic Planning Guidance for the River Thames (RPG3B/9B, issued in February 1997) were fully taken into account in preparing the plan.
- 8 The Greater London Authority (GLA) and Mayor of London came into being on 3 July 2000. The Mayor is responsible for strategic planning in London and his duties include producing and keeping under review a spatial development strategy for London, which he has decided to call 'The London Plan'. Following an examination in public, the final version of the London Plan: the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, was published by the Greater London Authority in February 2004. By virtue of paragraph 2.20 of Government Office for London Circular 1/00, the main regional guidance of May 1996 is no longer 'extant'. The City Council has redrafted appropriate parts of this plan in response to these changed circumstances. The City Council believes this development plan to be fully in general conformity with the spatial development strategy for Greater London.
- 9 The London Plan sets out six objectives for Greater London. These are:
 - 1 to accommodate London's growth within its boundaries without encroaching on open spaces

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- 2 to make London a better city for people to live in
 - 3 to make London a more prosperous city with strong and diverse economic growth
 - 4 to promote social inclusion and tackle deprivation and discrimination
 - 5 to improve London's accessibility [particularly by public transport]
 - 6 to make London a more attractive, well-designed and green city
- 10 In addition, the London Plan sets out in Policy 5B.1, a series of strategic priorities for the Central London 'sub-region', an area covering seven boroughs in the heart of London. These priorities are:
- (a) to promote and protect the vital mix of culture, government, leisure and commerce together with its historic buildings, housing, open spaces and public realm that are central London's unique attraction for residents, visitors and business
 - (b) to sustain, enhance and promote the unique scale and mix of activities and settings of the Central Activities Zone which form the core of London's wider offer as a world city and as a capital city
 - (c) to identify capacity to accommodate new job and housing opportunities and appropriate mixed-use development
 - (d) to maximise the number of additional homes, including affordable housing, by exceeding housing provision targets set in the plan and by securing mixed and balanced communities
 - (e) to promote and intensify retailing, services, employment, leisure and housing in town centres and opportunities for mixed-use development
 - (f) to plan for and secure the necessary financial resources to deliver planned transport infrastructure for the sub-region, including local schemes that improve public transport, walking and cycling connections to town centres and employment locations
 - (g) to improve the variety, quality and access to available employment sites to meet the identifiable demands for employment land
 - (h) to ensure that social and community infrastructure is retained, enhanced and expanded where needed

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- (i) to ensure that new development is sustainable, safe, secure and well-designed, improves the environment, particularly air quality, and takes account of the sub-region's outstanding heritage
- (j) to identify areas suitable for tall buildings
- (k) to plan for waste services, as far as possible in line with the principle of self-sufficiency

Civic Renewal

- 11 In September 2001, the Leader of the City Council launched the Civic Renewal programme, setting out five interwoven programmes for the City for the next ten years. These five policy programmes are (1) Customer First; (2) City Investment; (3) Education Guarantee; (4) Clean Streets, and (5) City Guardian.
- 12 Within these five policy programmes there are over eighty individual targets and initiatives. These targets and initiatives are reviewed on an annual basis, via the Leader's Speech to the Annual Meeting of the Council. Policies in the UDP have a key role to play in delivering the corporate aims and objectives of the Civic Renewal programme. In particular, the UDP will contribute to the City Investment Programme by:
- (a) providing the lead in high quality urban design (policies STRA 27 and DES 1)
 - (b) assisting with investment in our infrastructure (policies STRA 7 and SOC 9)
 - (c) maintaining the balance between necessary modernisation and the protection of our heritage (policies STRA 28-30 and DES 9-10)
 - (d) initiating Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and developing future partnership opportunities with business in the City (policies STRA 6 and SS 14)
 - (e) encouraging the suitable development of the retail stock and implementing improvements in the public realm (policies STRA 24 and TRANS 3)
 - (f) recognising the conflict that exists between the need to upgrade theatres whilst minimising any adverse effects on our theatrical heritage (policies STRA 12 – 13, TACE 6 and DES 9-10)
 - (g) implementing local area based improvement programmes that take a holistic approach to the streetscape and come up with planned improvements, e.g. new specially designed street furniture, lighting,

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new roads and pavements and the introduction of green areas or public art (policies STRA 23, TRANS 3 and DES 7)

- (h) implementing sensible and workable housing policies that continue to meet our targets for generating new housing including affordable housing (including key worker housing for teachers, nurses and policemen) (policies STRA 14-15 and H 4)
- (i) developing a new business quarter in the Paddington Special Policy Area, combining offices, leisure, healthcare and residential facilities and recognising the strategic importance of Paddington for London and the scope it offers to regenerate an important part of the City (policies STRA 8, STRA 9, PSPA 1-7 and NWW 1-3)
- (j) supporting public transport including CrossRail and promoting cycling and walking (policies STRA 21 and TRANS 3, 4, 5, 8-10)

13 It will contribute to the Clean Streets Programme by:

- (k) finding new and additional ways to recycle waste (policies STRA 35 and ENV 12)
- (l) providing new on-street public urinals in areas with a vibrant nightlife (policies STRA 7 and SOC 8)
- (m) undertaking greater enforcement of the public realm against selfish and anti-social behaviour by some businesses and individuals (policy STRA 39)

and to the City Guardian Programme, by:

- (n) generating new housing including key worker housing for police officers (policies STRA 14 -15 and H 4)

Westminster's City Plan

14 The Local Government Act (2000) places a duty on local authorities to prepare 'community strategies' for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas, and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK. It also gives councils new powers to "do anything they consider likely to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their areas". The City Council, in conjunction with key public and private sector partners (the 'Westminster City Partnership') published a community strategy, 'Westminster's City Plan', in May 2002. The City Plan has six key aims that will deliver the Partnership's shared vision for Westminster:

1. Putting the customer first
2. Investing in your City

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3. Investing in your education
4. Cleaning and greening your City
5. Guarding your City and
6. Promoting a healthier Westminster

15 Alongside the Westminster City Plan, the Westminster City Partnership has produced a 'Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy' (2002). This Strategy will translate the targets and priorities for the City as a whole into actions to improve the more disadvantaged communities in the City. A Local Area Study (2002) provides the baseline analysis for the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. In conjunction with both the Civic Renewal Programme, and the Westminster City Plan, the UDP can play a key role in promoting and improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of Westminster. Given Westminster's World and Capital City function, it can contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK.

Our Planning Strategy

16 The planning strategy of the UDP is guided by the following six planning aims. They are not in order of importance but are interlinked and no one aim should be considered in isolation.

1 Enhancing the attraction of central London

The strategic role of the West End as a World Class city centre of historic interest will be enhanced by retaining its character of mixed commercial, cultural and other activities.

2 Fostering economic vitality and diversity

The vitality and diversity of Westminster's economy are crucial elements in the nation's prosperity. These will be fostered by allowing the upgrading and renewal of commercial buildings in the City and new development at Paddington.

3 Building sustainable communities

Sustainable residential communities will be achieved by building more homes, safeguarding residents' amenities, protecting residential uses from commercial activities and maintaining and encouraging a full range of accessible local services and shopping facilities.

4 Integrating land use and transport policies and reducing the environmental impact of transport

Reducing the need to travel, reliance on the private car and the environmental impacts of transport, while ensuring safe, accessible, sustainable and convenient travel, by integrating land use and transport policies.

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5 Ensuring a high quality environment

The quality and character of Westminster's built, landscaped and natural environment will be preserved and enhanced. This applies particularly to its historic fabric, which is one of London's major assets as a World City.

6 Working towards a more sustainable City

The sustainable development of the City will be achieved by meeting economic, social and environmental needs in a balanced and integrated way.

- 17 The strategic policies in Part 1 of the Plan reflect these six aims and provide a strategic development framework for at least fifteen years. Part 2 of the Plan develops these aims into detailed policies to guide development for a period of at least ten years. We have split Part 2 into separate chapters. However, several topics overlap, and you may find policies referring to a particular issue in more than one chapter.

POLICIES STRA 1 – STRA 4: ENHANCING THE ATTRACTION OF CENTRAL LONDON

Aim

- 18 To enhance the strategic role of the West End as a World Class City centre of historic interest by retaining its character of mixed commercial, residential, cultural and other activities.

WORLD CLASS CITY STATUS

POLICY STRA 1: WORLD CLASS CITY STATUS

It is the City Council's aim:

To foster Westminster's key World Class City roles as a centre for international organisations, headquarters, business services, housing, retailing, medicine, education and other professions, media, arts, culture, entertainment and tourism, and to allow sustainable developments that promote them.

Reasons

- 19 The London Plan states at paragraph 1.2 that "London is a world city and acts as one of a very small number of command and control centres in the increasingly interactive network of transactions across the world economy." London's economic future is strongly linked to those of New York and Tokyo. The Introduction to the London Plan sets out the

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characteristics that make London unique. Westminster, at the heart of London, makes a significant contribution to London's uniqueness.

20 According to the London Plan, London is:

- (a) one of the three world financial centres, Europe's financial capital and the world's most economically internationalised city
- (b) the most culturally diverse city in the world
- (c) the largest city in the European Union
- (d) the United Kingdom's centre of government, culture and tourism as well as business
- (e) a city with a vast heritage of historic buildings, townscape, waterways and an environment that attracts visitors from all over the world
- (f) a city with an unsurpassed range of arts and cultural activity
- (g) a United Kingdom and international centre for the creative industries and the new knowledge economy
- (h) a safe and green city
- (i) a world centre of academic excellence, providing research and consulting services internationally
- (j) a hub of unsurpassed international transport connections
- (k) a city where there is the important advantage that its main language, English, is as close to an international language as exists in the world today

21 Westminster's contributions to these roles include:

- (a) a total of 210,000 jobs in Westminster are in the banking, insurance and finance sectors
- (b) almost 120 languages are spoken by residents of the City. It has the largest Arabic community in London
- (c) just under 3% of Greater London's resident population of 7.2 million, and 14.1% of Greater London's 3.9 million jobs are based in the City
- (d) many of the functions of the State and the Monarchy, including Parliament, Whitehall and the courts. It has four of the ten leading

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free public attractions and four of the ten leading paid attractions in Greater London. Over 90% of the 27 million visitors who come to Greater London in a year visit Westminster

- (e) some 10,300 buildings which are listed as having special architectural or historic interest, and fifty-three Conservation Areas, which cover 76% of the City's area. It has a 5.6km frontage to the River Thames and 6.4km of canals
- (f) as well as its major museums, galleries and concert halls, the City has thirty-eight theatres with seating capacity for 41,000; 68 cinema 'screens' with capacity for 18,000; and sixteen of Greater London's 24 casinos. It has some 2,600 premises, including public houses, bars, restaurants and cafés whose use falls within Use Class A3
- (g) over 50,000 jobs in advertising, radio and television, publishing, entertainment and related fields
- (h) some 250ha of historic Royal Parks, and nineteen historic squares and gardens
- (i) three universities, the London Business School, teaching hospitals, the headquarters of significant numbers of professional and learned institutions, the offices of specialist and research organisations and consultancies of national and international importance
- (j) four main line railway termini, with two, Paddington and Victoria, having direct connections to Heathrow and Gatwick Airports; ten out of twelve London Underground lines, including the network's busiest station at Victoria

22 Westminster, therefore, plays a key role in sustaining London as a World Class City. It has retained its original functions as the seat of the Court and of Government, together with the Royal Parks and its much sought after housing districts. It has retained many of its original buildings from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and many twentieth century buildings have been of the highest standard. It is the heart of a capital city, set in the nation's most densely populated region and is the pre-eminent retail and entertainment area for Londoners and for visitors from across the whole country and, increasingly, for international visitors. Westminster's entertainment and cultural venues accommodate displays and performances ranging from the established to the innovative and from high culture to popular arts and entertainment. The River Thames, the Regent's and Grand Union Canals and the Royal Parks are also essential elements of London as a World Class City. These elements collectively form a vital part of the overall appeal of London to residents, workers and visitors and are essential to London's continued success.

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- 23 Tourism has become a major economic sector in its own right and is based on Westminster's historic and other attractions. In terms of Westminster's international and national competitiveness, the need for an environment attractive to visitors and investors, which meets sustainable development objectives and high quality residential areas, are of great importance, as is the image presented by the main routes into Westminster by road, rail and waterway.
- 24 Westminster contains prestige locations for headquarters and for professional and other firms. International businesses continue to favour London as their European base. The UDP should provide for them and for the continued growth of sectors such as media, arts, culture and entertainment, which are already well established in Westminster. The financial centre of London continues to be based in the City of London and, although some major financial companies have located in Westminster, the Plan does not specifically set out to accommodate major growth in this sector.
- 25 Policies in Part 2 of the UDP do, however, seek to accommodate the changing requirements of the economy. These will be met through the refurbishment and renewal of business premises and also through a limited number of new, large 'state of the art' business premises such as those permitted in the Paddington Special Policy Area as can be seen at Chapter 5. This approach is consistent with the London Plan which identifies the Central Activities Zone (including the City of London), areas for regeneration, Opportunity Areas (such as Paddington) and Areas for Intensification (such as Victoria), as the areas where some of the additional capacity for London's growth will be provided.
- 26 Westminster makes a substantial contribution to London's 'World Class City' status through the provision of high-quality housing and the protection of residents' amenities and quality of life. The importance of extensive high-quality residential districts, close to the heart of the City, and of high environmental and amenity standards to the success of world cities was stressed in the authoritative study of world cities: 'London: World City', published by HMSO in 1991.

CAPITAL CITY STATUS

POLICY STRA 2: CAPITAL CITY STATUS

It is the City Council's aim:

To foster Westminster's capital city roles as the seat of Government and national administration, and as a centre of national professional and cultural excellence, and to allow sustainable developments that promote them.

Reasons

- 27 At the heart of the capital city, Westminster has a unique function as the home of the nation's political, professional and cultural life. It contains a range of large and small cultural facilities including museums, galleries, halls, theatres, cinemas, clubs and the institutes of professional, cultural and political agencies. A range of smaller facilities and businesses supports these. At the centre of the capital city, these uses are exposed to powerful, globally driven economic pressures which may, at times, lead to their loss. A Westminster location provides opportunities for close and complex links between these uses. This would not be possible if the activities were broadly dispersed. The concentration of such uses in Westminster also reduces the need to travel and encourages use of public transport.
- 28 This approach is consistent with the London Plan which states, at paragraph 1.10 that "The future of London has enormous importance for the UK as a whole. This partly reflects its capacity to attract economic activities, including the higher levels of global business, which simply cannot be attracted elsewhere in the UK. It is also true of significant elements of London's roles in government, tourism, culture and learning. London acts as a gateway to the rest of the United Kingdom for business and visitors. For example, it accounts for 75 per cent of all international arrivals to the United Kingdom." _

WESTMINSTER'S CENTRAL AREA

POLICY STRA 3: WESTMINSTER'S CENTRAL AREA

It is the City Council's aim:

To protect and enhance the strategic role, historic character, and social and cultural importance of the central part of Westminster through the designation of a Central Activities Zone and Central Activities Zone Frontages.

Reasons

- 29 Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) says, at paragraph 4.6, that "future development in London should support and develop London's role as a world business and commercial centre and as a centre of international and national importance for retailing, tourism, education, heritage, culture and the arts". It should also "maximise the advantages for the Region as a whole of proximity to London's national and international service economy and businesses and to the range of other facilities it offers". Central London as a whole provides many of these facilities.

The Central London sub-region

- 30 The London Plan considers that some of the most serious issues and opportunities facing London are best addressed at a level that lies somewhere between the boroughs and London as a whole (paragraph 5.1). In recognising that many boroughs, including Westminster, already look wider than their own boundaries, plan with their neighbours and work with sub-regional institutions, the London Plan identifies a 'flexible' concept of five sub-regions as the best way to develop the strategic policies in the London Plan and to provide the focus for implementation. The whole of Westminster is in the Central London sub-region (along with Kensington and Chelsea, Camden, Islington, Wandsworth, Lambeth and Southwark). However, the London Plan acknowledges that some issues do not fit exactly within defined boundaries and to this end designates a 'Central Activities Zone' (CAZ) (paragraph 5.3). In line with the London Plan the UDP maintains a Central Activities Zone (CAZ) and CAZ Frontages (see Map P.1, Map 1.1 and the Proposals Map).

The Central Activities Zone

- 31 Paragraph 5.25 in the London Plan states that "the Central Activities Zone is the focus of London's wider linkages with the rest of the South East, as well as the wider UK and world. Sustaining its role as the core location for international business and finance and as a national transport node is crucial for the wider South-East and for the Country." Paragraph 5.26

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states that “The Central Activities Zone contains a range of activities such as central government offices, headquarters and embassies, which are unique to the centre of the capital and form distinct quarters. The largest part of London’s financial and business services sector is based in the Zone, as are the offices of trade, professional bodies, institutions, associations, communications, publishing, advertising and the media. Other uses and activities, such as those associated with tourism, are more concentrated, or on a larger scale than elsewhere in the capital. There is particular concern to secure and enhance the breadth, depth and quality of the offer of London’s two ‘international’ shopping centres, . . . centred on Oxford Street and Knightsbridge, and to sustain and manage strategic clusters of entertainment activities in line with the broader objectives of this Plan.” Paragraph 5.27 of the London Plan says “These activities are at the heart of London’s world city role and should be protected and their appropriate expansion supported.” Policies in Part 2 of the UDP support and reflect this approach.

- 32 Paragraph 5.28 of the London Plan states that “Very often, mixed-use developments are especially valuable in the Central Activities Zone.” However, it continues “Large areas of housing or local businesses are less dominant in some parts of the Zone. These nevertheless play a vital part in sustaining the international, national and regional importance of central London. The intensification of commercial activities should be supported in ways that harmonise with the residential environment within the Zone.”
- 33 Policies in Part 2 of the UDP reflect and support this approach. Chapter 1: Westminster’s Central Area sets out how the City Council has interpreted the London Plan on appropriate Central London Activities and deals with the provision of mixed uses within commercial schemes. All proposals will be subject to local considerations of amenity, character and function, conservation area and other sustainable design principles.
- 34 It is important to note that the CAZ is not a homogenous or uniform area and needs to be considered in ways that take this varying nature into account. In order to provide additional background on the CAZ and to assist users of the Plan in applying the policies on Westminster’s Central Area the City Council has produced a supplementary planning guidance note. To reflect the different character and function of areas within the CAZ, eight ‘sub-areas’: Soho, Covent Garden/ Strand, St James’s, Mayfair, South Marylebone, Victoria, Knightsbridge/Belgravia and Millbank have been identified and area profiles developed. Supplementary Planning Documents and Area Action Plans may be prepared as part of the new Local Development Framework (LDF).

Outside the Central Activities Zone

- 35 Paragraph 5.48 of the London Plan (2004) states that “Outside the main growth areas, Central London is characterised by a mix of residential and other activities, which relate better to the local economy and communities than to the national, regional and international roles of activities prevalent in the CAZ.” It continues, “This plan [the London Plan] contains policies to protect and manage these local, smaller scale land uses and activities, recognising the contribution they make to the character of Central London and the often acute development pressures they face. Accordingly boroughs should resist large-scale redevelopment in the Central London sub region outside the Central Activities Zone, Opportunity Areas, Areas for Intensification, Strategic Employment Locations and town centres.” Paragraph 5.20 of the London Plan also states “There are also vulnerable neighbourhoods, largely just beyond the Central Activities Zone but some within it, which contain long-standing communities and valuable small businesses that could be displaced by outward growth from the zone. These should be protected and growth channelled into the areas designated for it.” The London Plan also notes, at paragraph 5.20, that “Despite its overall affluence the [Central London] sub-region contains some of the highest and most extensive concentrations of deprivation in the country” and “these must benefit from new opportunities flowing from major growth elsewhere in the sub-region.” The policies in Part 2 of the UDP support and reflect this approach.

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

POLICY STRA 4: MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

It is the City Council’s aim:

- (A) To maintain and enhance the mix of uses in central Westminster**
 - (B) To require the equivalent provision of housing when increases in commercial floorspace are proposed in the Central Activities Zone (CAZ) and on the CAZ Frontages**
 - (C) To promote mixed use development in the Paddington Special Policy Area**
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Reasons

- 36 National Planning Policy Guidance Note 1: ‘General Policy and Principles’ (PPG 1, issued in February 1997) states at paragraph 8, that “mixed-use development can help create vitality and diversity and reduce the need to

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travel. It [mixed use] can be more sustainable than development consisting of a single use. Local planning authorities should include policies in their development plans to promote and retain mixed uses, particularly in town centres, in other areas highly accessible by means of transport other than the private car and in areas of major new development.” In ‘Sustainable Communities: Delivering through Planning’ (2002), the Government has reinforced its commitment to sustainable development, to “deliver in a sustainable way key Government objectives” and to “create and sustain mixed and inclusive communities” (paragraph 3).

- 37 Paragraph 10 of PPG 1 states that “Development plans should identify individual sites where development should incorporate a mixture of uses, with a suitable justification, and itemise those uses considered desirable... plans can designate an area, such as a town centre, where developments on suitable sites would be expected to incorporate a mixture of uses. This should include a list of those uses which are considered appropriate. Applications for single uses in such designated areas would need to be justified either in terms of their non-suitability for mixed-use development or in terms of their contribution to the overall mixture of uses within the area.”
- 38 Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: ‘Housing’ (PPG3, issued in March 2000) also promotes mixed-use development and the provision of housing. Paragraph 49 states that “Local authorities should promote developments which combine a mix of land uses, including housing, either on a site or within individual buildings such as flats over shops.” It adds “To increase housing opportunities in town centres, local authorities should identify sites or areas where housing or mixed-use development will be required, including, where appropriate, specifying the proportion of floorspace which should be residential within such developments.”
- 39 Paragraph 51 of PPG 3 continues “Local authorities should promote additional housing in town centres within the context of their overall strategy for each centre, taking into account the existing balance of uses in the centre”.
- 40 New housing in the heart of the City offers unique access to the widest range of employment, leisure and other facilities. These can be reached on foot or by very short journeys on public transport. Although much of the Central Activities Zone has already been developed for commercial use and is the appropriate location for future commercial development, the development of new or additional commercial floorspace can provide opportunities to create new homes and provide other uses.
- 41 The London Plan states, at paragraph 3.124 that “National planning policy strongly supports measures to extend mixed-use development. London’s

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economic growth depends heavily on an efficient labour market and this in turn requires adequate housing provision to sustain it. Lack of housing, especially affordable housing, is already one of the key issues facing London employers. Thus, as a general principle, strategically important employment generating development will be expected to contain a range of other uses, which shall include housing.” The Mayor’s policy on mixed use development (Policy 3B.4) states that “Within the Central Activities Zone and the Opportunity Areas, wherever increases in office floorspace are proposed they should provide for a mix of uses including housing, unless such a mix would demonstrably conflict with other policies in this Plan. Sub-Regional Development Frameworks will give further guidance on the relevant proportions of housing and other uses to be sought.”

- 42 The City Council’s approach to mixed uses is in line with national guidance (PPG 1 and PPG 3), and the London Plan. The approach set out in the UDP will help to reduce the need to travel, encourage the use of public transport, increase the amount of residential accommodation including, where appropriate, affordable housing in the centre of the City and ensure that there continues to be a distinctive mix of uses in the Central Activities Zone and on the CAZ Frontages and the creation of a suitable mix of uses within the Paddington Special Policy Area.
- 43 Whilst the provision of residential accommodation as part of mixed use developments will contribute to the dwellings target set out under policy STRA 14, the dwellings target itself has not been based on receiving a specific number of residential units from mixed use development.
- 44 Policies STRA 4, CENT 3 and COM 2 apply to mixed use development in central Westminster (CAZ and CAZ Frontages). Policies STRA 8, PSPA 2, PSPA 3, NWW 1 and NWW 2 apply to mixed use development in North West Westminster. The Proposals Map and Schedules 1 and 2 in Chapter 12 of the Plan indicate the City Council’s preferred mix of uses on major sites that are likely to be developed in the City during the life of the Plan.

POLICIES STRA 5 - STRA 13: FOSTERING ECONOMIC VITALITY AND DIVERSITY

Aim

- 45 To foster the vitality and diversity of Westminster’s economy by allowing the upgrading and renewal of commercial buildings in the City and new mixed-use development at Paddington.

REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

POLICY STRA 5: REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) To support and encourage growth in Westminster's economy, particularly where such growth is environmentally sustainable**
 - (B) To increase residents' opportunities and improve access to employment**
 - (C) To encourage the participation of residents, businesses, the voluntary sector and other public bodies in the regeneration process**
-

Reasons

46 Offices dominate commercial activity in Westminster. The stock of office floorspace is over 9 million sq m, which accounts for over a quarter of all floorspace in the City. Between 1990 and the beginning of 2002 over 1.2 million sq m of office floorspace was constructed in larger schemes in Westminster. This represents the renewal and modernisation of over 12% of the existing office space and has led to the addition of nearly 280,000 sq m to the stock. At January 2002 almost 350,000 sq m of office floorspace was under construction in larger schemes in the CAZ with a further 130,000 sq m with planning permission. Construction has also started on the first phase of large scale developments in the Paddington Special Policy Area. This could provide a further 300,000 sq m of new larger modern offices as part of mixed developments. Pressure for development and regeneration within Westminster will, therefore, continue over the lifetime of the Plan.

47 Westminster encompasses a diverse range of areas. Some of these are mixed, containing a variety of housing and economic activity, while others are predominantly residential. These vary from areas of some of the most expensive housing in the country to those where residents lack the types of skills required for better paid jobs and experience high levels of unemployment. There is a particular need, therefore, to increase the chances of employment for Westminster residents. This is particularly so in the north west of the City where unemployment is high, compared to the rest of the City, and problems of skills mismatch and access to employment are evident.

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- 48 National policy, through the Local Government Act (2000) and the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, is placing an increasing emphasis on a co-ordinated approach to area-based regeneration involving all those who are involved in, or have impacts on, an area. The City Council will support these initiatives in co-operation with the Local Strategic Partnership, in implementing the Community Strategy (The Westminster City Plan) and the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

POLICY STRA 6: PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

It is the City Council's aim:

To achieve the aims and objectives of the UDP and implement its policies by forming partnerships, developing joint initiatives such as Business Improvement Districts and lobbying to ensure effective co-ordination with London boroughs and other public, private and voluntary sector agencies.

Reasons

- 49 One of the key features of regeneration strategies has been the development of joint local partnerships to agree and deliver co-ordinated local strategies, appropriate to the characteristics of the area concerned. Various partnerships have been successful in winning funding for a variety of regeneration schemes. The City Council has become increasingly involved in partnerships and joint initiatives with the voluntary sector and other agencies such as the health authority and police services, in the regeneration process. This is likely to continue in the lifetime of this Plan.
- 50 In 1995, the City Council, along with the London Boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark and the Corporation of London, created the Cross River Partnership (CRP). The CRP also includes other public and private sector organisations and key groups such as the Port of London Authority, the London Tourist Board, London Transport and Network Rail. The CRP aims to balance economic and social opportunities to the north and south of the Thames; restore the Thames as a unifying feature for central London; improve transport links across the Thames; create job opportunities for local people in leisure, arts and business, and improve the quality of the environment.

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- 51 As a member of the partnership, the City Council supports the aims of the CRP. Where the CRP's work has land use implications, the City Council will negotiate with other partners so that the schemes meet the aims of the UDP policies.
- 52 The 'New Life for Paddington' SRB Round 5 programme began in July 1999. It is a seven-year programme run by Paddington Development Trust, with grant funding of £13.5m and is supported by all the relevant public, private, voluntary and community organisations. The programme area covers the Westbourne, Queen's Park and Harrow Road Wards of the City as well as the Paddington SPA and an additional smaller-scale community capacity project in Church Street. The programme has a key aim to reduce and remove barriers preventing local communities from accessing opportunities arising from the general London economy and, in particular, the redevelopments at Paddington.
- 53 Under the Local Government Act (2000) all local authorities are required to set up a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). LSPs are cross-sectoral, cross agency umbrella partnerships which are focussed and committed to improving the quality of life and governance in a particular area. In Westminster, the community strategy issued by the Local Strategic Partnership is 'The Westminster City Plan'.
- 54 A major area of work handled by the LSP has been the drawing up of Westminster's Neighbourhood Renewal strategy identifying five main areas of concentrated deprivation: Church Street, Queen's Park, Westbourne and Harrow Road wards and particular pockets of deprivation in South Westminster. The LSP has also overseen the distribution of the government's allocation to Westminster of the government's Neighbourhood Renewal Funding which is currently programmed until 2006. The Church Street Area has progressed furthest among the Neighbourhood Renewal Areas and has already published its own Action Plan and successfully bid for £2.65m Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder funding from Central Government.
- 55 The Government has included legislation as part of the Local Government Act 2003, allowing for the formal establishment of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). The City Council has been actively engaged in setting up three BIDs in Westminster. Under SRB Round 6 the City Council is the accountable body for the 'Circles Initiative' for five pilot BIDs in Central London, two of which are in Westminster. One is between Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square, and the other is centred on Praed Street, Paddington. BIDs are American in origin and practice and are seen as a key element of the City Council's Civic Renewal agenda as an example of effective partnership working with the private sector. Three areas in Westminster will seek to become formal BIDs during 2004/5: Praed Street and Piccadilly Circus/Leicester Square from the pilot SRB areas, and

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New West End Company proposals covering Oxford Street, Regent Street and Bond Street.

- 56 Where specific physical projects have been identified these are included as projects in the Plan. However, many of the projects will not involve physical change as they are focused on management of the public realm, and social inclusion programmes. The overall aims of all these partnerships are consistent with the aims of the UDP.

PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND BENEFITS

POLICY STRA 7: PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND BENEFITS

It is the City Council's aim:

To secure planning obligations and the provision of related benefits in all appropriate types of development. These should:

- (A) have an identifiable connection with the development**
 - (B) be in line with the policies in Part 2**
 - (C) be appropriate to the location, scale and nature of the development**
 - (D) seek to mitigate the economic, environmental, transportation, social and community consequences of the development**
-

Reasons

- 57 Under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, local planning authorities have the power to enter into planning obligations with any person interested in land in their area for the purpose of restricting or regulating the development or use of the land. PPG 1 (February 1997) states at paragraph 36, that "Planning obligations are useful instruments, where they are necessary to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind, as they can enable a property owner to overcome obstacles which would otherwise prevent planning permission from being granted. Planning obligations should be directly related to the proposed development."
- 58 Policy 6A.4 in the London Plan states that "The Mayor will, and boroughs should, reflect the policies of this plan [the London Plan] and include

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appropriate strategic as well as local needs in their policies for planning obligations.” The City Council supports this approach in principle. However, it is considered that within the overall context set out in the London Plan the boroughs should remain the principal and lead agencies in assessing impacts and needs. The City Council will work with the Mayor and especially his agencies on identifying needs, impacts and mitigation measures.

- 59 New developments in the City will bring new residents, visitors and workers, which will put pressure on the local environment and on existing social and community facilities and create demand for new ones. It is important, therefore, that an appropriate and accessible range of services and facilities for existing and future local communities is maintained. This includes training and education, arts, cultural, health, social, community, recreation and leisure services and facilities, refuse collection and cleansing and community safety initiatives such as CCTV. The City Council will seek to ensure that the impacts of new developments on these services are minimised and that developers contribute to the provision of additional services and facilities where appropriate to ensure that the Council’s aims are met. Illustrative examples of acceptable benefits, not in order of priority, include the provision of or contribution to:
- (a) training and education facilities/schemes
 - (b) social and community facilities, including new public toilets
 - (c) arts and cultural facilities
 - (d) new and improved amenity or public open space
 - (e) improvements to the City’s infrastructure, public transport and the public realm
 - (f) off-street coach parking
 - (g) land for agreed road improvements
 - (h) environmental improvements including repaving footways, and landscaping/tree planting on the highway
 - (i) pedestrian and cycle access
 - (j) the conservation and refurbishment of buildings not forming part of, but related to, the development or its immediate area
- 60 New development or the physical alteration of a building may also provide opportunities for the enhancement or conservation of properties that are important to the character of a building or an area but not part of the development and therefore not normally subject to planning control by conditions. In certain cases, therefore, proposals that provide these types of improvements to buildings and to the environment adjacent to the building may be taken into account.

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- 61 Where redevelopment proposals have been on a scale significantly greater than the normal standard of redevelopment, the City Council has undertaken studies to assess the impacts of the developments on current and planned service provision. This has happened most notably in the Paddington Special Policy Area where the City Council has set up a Social and Community Fund Account (SCFA) as a mechanism for delivering planning benefits. Where other significant developments are planned in other parts of the City, similar mechanisms will be set up. This will enable the City Council, working alongside developers, to assess the type and range of benefits likely to be required and to manage their delivery.
- 62 The provision of benefits or the offer of obligations will not make developments that are contrary to the Plan's policies acceptable to the City Council. Policies in Part 2 of the Plan and our emerging Supplementary Planning Guidance, 'Section 106 Toolkit', set out in more detail when and how the City Council will require and secure benefits and obligations. The City Council will have regard to Circular 1/97: 'Planning Obligations' on the seeking and acceptance of planning obligations, as well as SRB and other bidding guidance and emerging Government advice and legislation.

PADDINGTON SPECIAL POLICY AREA

POLICY STRA 8: PADDINGTON SPECIAL POLICY AREA

It is the City Council's aim:

To grant planning permission for Central London Activities as part of the overall aim of promoting mixed-use development in the Paddington Special Policy Area.

Reasons

- 63 The London Plan identifies Paddington as an Opportunity Area that has capacity to provide some 23,000 new jobs and 3,000 new homes. As the London Plan states, "Paddington is a major national and commuter rail terminal, which has good links with Heathrow and London rail services. CrossRail 1 would extend links to the City and eastwards. The area has a distinct 'canal-side' character to build on. Existing developments have already begun to respond to the site's scope for high density, good quality, business and housing development. Proposals for the renewal of St Mary's Hospital and the relocation of the Royal Brompton and Harefield Hospitals should support the creation of the largest health campus in London." (Paragraph 5.38).

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- 64 The UDP supports this approach, as the developments under way and planned generally meet the criteria suggested in the London Plan. For example, they enhance local environmental quality, are substantial but are within the context of the site and its surroundings and integrate with the surrounding neighbourhood. The aspirational employment and housing figures are also likely to be met.
- 65 The City Council supports the implementation of CrossRail 1 and recognises that it offers significant local and strategic transport benefits. Paddington is, however, already an important transport interchange for London. The Heathrow Express service has made Paddington an international terminal as it provides a gateway to central London from Heathrow Airport. Further transport opportunities could arise with the development of CrossRail 1. This will provide a rapid link between east and west and will greatly increase accessibility to the West End and the City from Paddington. Ensuring that access to and interchange between existing public transport systems are improved and that new services are fully integrated will be a key strategic objective in planning the Paddington Special Policy Area (PSPA). This will be especially important if CrossRail 1 is cancelled or its implementation delayed, in which case other new services and station facilities will be needed.
- 66 All development proposals in the PSPA should, therefore, consider local transport movement and improvements to the environment both around the station and in the surrounding communities. To address these matters, the City Council and London Transport have undertaken the Paddington Area Transport Study (PATS). The City Council is also working with Network Rail and the British Airports Authority (BAA) to develop proposals for long-term vehicular access (LTVA) to Paddington Station, which directs growth in traffic on to the major roads and away from residential areas.
- 67 To meet the 3,000 new homes target in the London Plan, housing, as well as commercial development, should play a significant role in development proposals for the PSPA. The provision of housing within the PSPA will help in establishing more new housing on 'brownfield' (previously developed) sites. Related to the provision of housing is the aim of maintaining an appropriate and accessible range of services for existing and future local communities in the PSPA. In line with paragraph 2B.19 of the London Plan, policy STRA 7 sets out the strategic policy for the delivery of planning benefits in the PSPA.
- 68 Detailed policies for the PSPA are set out in Chapter 5. To set out in more detail the range and mix of uses that would be acceptable on the major sites in the PSPA, a series of planning briefs have been produced for key sites. These provide for an overall mix of complementary uses and take an integrated long-term approach to the new demands for access created by

the proposed developments and transport links. All developments should take into account the unique opportunities offered by the area's excellent and improving public transport links and the potential for wider regeneration.

SPECIAL POLICY AREAS

POLICY STRA 9: SPECIAL POLICY AREAS

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) to maintain and enhance the distinctive character and function of the City by defining special policy areas**
 - (B) to protect and encourage specialist uses, as set out in the relevant chapters in Part 2 of the Plan, in specific areas of Westminster**
-

Reasons

- 69 Policy 5B.3 in the London Plan states that "Clusters of specialist activity in and around the Central Activities Zone must be defined in UDPs and their activities protected and supported." The City Council has long protected and encouraged specialist uses in defined 'Special Policy Areas' (SPAs) within the City, including media and fashion uses in the Creative Industries SPA, medical uses in the Harley Street SPA and institutional uses in the Portland Place SPA. In reviewing the Plan and in conformity with the approach in the London Plan, the City Council has identified a new Arts, Culture and Education SPA around the Royal Albert Hall and Imperial College (see Chapter 8: Tourism, Arts, Culture and Entertainment). The specialist wholesale showrooms of East Marylebone are now included in the Creative Industries SPA (see Chapter 2: Commerce). In conformity with policy 4C.26 of the London Plan, a Thames Policy Area has also been identified (see Chapter 11: River Thames).
- 70 A new North West Westminster Special Policy Area (NWWSPA), based on the regeneration area in the north west of the City, has also been designated. This new SPA aims to encourage local employment opportunities, adopts a more flexible approach to commercial development, provides a further location for small-scale business uses outside the CAZ and seeks to improve the environment. The new SPA meets one of the identified programmes in the Civic Renewal White Paper, which is to "recognise the strategic importance of Paddington for London and the scope it offers to regenerate an important part of the

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City”. Policies for the NWWSPA are set out in Chapter 5: Policies for North West Westminster.

- 71 The NWWSPA is also in line with the London Plan, which identifies parts of North West Westminster as among the most deprived parts of London and states, at paragraph 2.11, “It is the responsibility of boroughs to identify these (areas for regeneration) and set policies for tackling them through UDPs and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies.” Paragraph 2.12 states that “Areas for Regeneration are often found close to Opportunity Areas and boroughs should make links between the two to assist those living in the former to take advantage of the employment and other opportunities created in the latter. Some areas may need improvements in public transport to help their residents access job and other opportunities. However, the provision of jobs in the areas themselves is also important. This could encourage social enterprise and the active involvement of the voluntary and community sectors. Policies to support local small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) can be of particular importance to the black and minority ethnic business sector.”
- 72 The London Plan continues, “Whilst some parts of Central London are extremely affluent, there are significant concentrations of deprivation in the rest of the sub-region. In planning for these areas, boroughs should identify links that will enable their residents to benefit from the growth in nearby Opportunity Areas.” (Paragraph 5.41). Policies in Chapter 5 identify the links between the Paddington SPA developments in a defined ‘Opportunity Area’ with the wider, more deprived ‘Area for Regeneration’ in the north west of the City, including areas over the borough boundary in North Kensington.

SHOPPING IN WESTMINSTER

POLICY STRA 10: SHOPPING IN WESTMINSTER

It is the City Council’s aim:

To enhance the vitality, viability and diversity of Westminster’s shopping centres and maintain and increase the number and range of shops in the City.

Reasons

- 73 PPG 6: ‘Town Centres and Retail Development’ (June 1996) and PPG 13: ‘Transport’ (March 2001) both emphasise the importance of town centres. Both state that town centres should be the focus for retail, employment,

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leisure and other appropriate uses in order to limit the need to travel and to encourage linked trips. PPG 6 states that UDPs should define different types of centres and the policies for each. PPG 6 also says that plans may distinguish between primary and secondary frontages in centres. While primary frontages may be restricted to a high proportion of retail uses, in particular those uses in Class A1 of the Use Classes Order (1987), there should be more flexibility of use in secondary frontages.

- 74 The London Plan identifies in paragraph 3.226 the following hierarchy of town centres in London: International, Metropolitan, Major, District and Local/Neighbourhood. The Plan states at paragraph 3.224 “The Mayor supports the Government’s policy of promoting consumer activity in town centres. These offer an accessible yet competitive range of retail and personal services. Healthy town centres with a mixture of uses, including residential, employment, libraries, primary health care centres, educational establishments, bars, restaurants, cinemas and other leisure activities offer attractive focal points for their surrounding communities. Town centres are also more sustainable than out of centre shopping developments, which generate significant traffic volumes but tend to be inaccessible for many people, particularly Londoners without access to private transport.” The City Council will review retailing and town centre policy in consultation with stakeholders as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) which the Council will be preparing in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 75 The policies in the Shopping and Services Chapter are arranged by dividing the City into two areas: the Central Activities Zone (CAZ) and the CAZ Frontages; and outside the CAZ. Within the CAZ there are two designated International Centres. These are the West End and Knightsbridge and they top London’s shopping hierarchy. These centres’ most important retail frontages- Oxford Street, Regent Street, Bond Street, and all the retail frontages in that part of Knightsbridge in Westminster, have been designated as ‘Primary Frontages’. Class A1 uses in these frontages receive a very high level of protection. Elsewhere in the CAZ and the CAZ Frontages the policy, though less strong, still affords a high level of protection for A1 uses.
- 76 Outside the CAZ and the CAZ Frontages, the City Council has designated seven District Centres on the basis of their size, catchment, character and function. They have a range of comparison and convenience shops together with a mix of service uses and restaurants and pubs. Some have street markets. All serve local residents but some also serve visitors and workers and also attract shoppers from outside the local area. The District Centres have Core and Secondary Frontages, with Core Frontages having a high proportion of A1 uses and the Secondary Frontages having a greater mix of uses.

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- 77 Below the District Centres, there are thirty-nine designated Local Centres, all outside the CAZ. These are smaller than the District Centres but do not always have a purely local function. Though most are mainly comprised of convenience shops with some service uses, restaurants and pubs, some are speciality centres which attract shoppers from outside Westminster, and others reflect their proximity to the CAZ by meeting the needs of workers and tourists. Some Local Centres have designated Core Frontages in which A1 uses are given a very high level of protection. Outside the Core Frontages the policy protects convenience shops and permits changes that would not harm the vitality or viability of the centre or undermine the balance of uses. Individual or parades of shops outside the designated centres are also given a very high level of protection as these are the local convenience shops which provide a vital service, are important to less mobile residents and are important, therefore, for sustainable communities.
- 78 It is important to maintain the number and range of shops in Westminster's shopping centres to ensure their continued vitality and viability. The City Council wishes to increase the number of shops in order to serve its growing population. In addition, shops serving the day-to-day needs of residents are particularly vulnerable to pressure from other uses, primarily those serving visitors or workers. These not only include ticket agencies, bureaux de change and internet cafés, etc., but class A1 uses such as coffee shops and sandwich bars. Because there are many different demands for ground-floor shop premises, a large stock of such premises needs to be retained to ensure that residents' needs are met.
- 79 Other measures which can enhance vitality and viability are: ensuring that there is an appropriate mix of uses in centres; minimising the problem of long-term vacancy; new and improved retail floorspace; town centre management schemes; and environmental improvements to the public realm. Policies in the Shopping and Services Chapter in Part 2 deal with these issues and Appendix 7.4 contains an evaluation of the health and environmental status of shopping areas in Westminster. Some of Westminster's shopping areas extend across the City's boundaries into neighbouring boroughs and the City Council will work with neighbouring authorities to pursue common objectives for these shopping areas.
- 80 The London Plan is specific that boroughs should undertake town centre 'health checks' on a regular basis. The Mayor's intention is that through partnerships with the boroughs and other agencies, a close health-check on the vitality and viability of centres will be kept. Health checks were undertaken of Westminster's centres in 1997 and 2002, and will be updated on a regular basis. Health checks provide the data by which the effectiveness of policies can be measured and on which future policy changes are based.

SHOPPING IN THE WEST END AND KNIGHTSBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL CENTRES

POLICY STRA 11: SHOPPING IN THE WEST END AND KNIGHTSBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL CENTRES

It is the City Council's aim:

To maintain and enhance the West End and Knightsbridge as shopping centres of international importance, whilst balancing the requirement for shopping with other activities that contribute to the character and function of Central London.

Reasons

- 81 The West End and Knightsbridge are London's two International Centres: only part of Knightsbridge is within Westminster, the greater part falls within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. These two centres are at the top of the hierarchy of London's network of town centres as set out in the London Plan on Map 3D.1. Central London's national importance as a shopping area is chiefly based on the shopping facilities in the West End and Knightsbridge. Both International Centres depend on the unique variety of shops for their international status, which means they attract shoppers from all over the world as well as from this country.
- 82 In addition to the Primary Shopping Frontages of Oxford Street, Regent Street and Bond Street, the West End also contains other famous shopping streets, both large and small, whose names have long been recognised all over the world. These include Piccadilly, Savile Row, Carnaby Street and Covent Garden. They attract tourist and national markets, and Londoners. Shopping is the top attraction for visitors to London ahead of cultural attractions (Westminster Visitor Survey 2001). Shops in the main shopping thoroughfares, and smaller 'speciality' shopping streets, as well as individual shops supporting local business and residential communities, are given a very high level of protection in the UDP.
- 83 The West End contains a range of activities that attract and serve the public, from shops, restaurants and bars, to banks, art galleries, theatres and cinemas. It is this lively mix of uses in parts of the West End, like Soho and Covent Garden, which contribute to the character of the West End and make it one of the most attractive visitor destinations in the country if not the world. Pubs, bars and restaurants provide evening and

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night time leisure facilities, a service to workers and shoppers and contribute to the vitality of shopping streets in the West End. However, the growth in the numbers of restaurants and bars and the activity generated by them, is now threatening the sustainable balance of uses - compromising the attraction of the West End as a world class city destination.

- 84 The City Council will seek to ensure the continued success of the West End and Knightsbridge International Centres by managing the mix of uses and, through schemes of environmental improvements, by working in partnership with businesses and landowners as it has done in Oxford Street, Regent Street, Bond Street, Strand, Carnaby Street and Jermyn Street. The “transformation of the West End” and the “effective management of the West End” are two key aims of the City Council’s City Investment Programme set out in the Westminster City Plan (2002). The development of major shopping facilities that would adversely affect the success of the West End and Knightsbridge, including those proposed outside the City, will therefore be resisted.

TOURISM, HOTELS AND VISITOR ATTRACTIONS

POLICY STRA 12: TOURISM, HOTELS AND VISITOR ATTRACTIONS

It is the City Council’s aim:

- (A) To maintain and improve the range of tourist facilities, visitor attractions and hotels in Westminster**
 - (B) To seek improvements to hotels throughout Westminster without detriment to residential amenity**
 - (C) To restrict further hotels in areas that already have an over-concentration**
-

Tourism, Hotels and Visitor Attractions

- 85 The London Plan recognises in paragraph 3.241 that “Central London, particularly the West End, is the home of most tourist attractions and hotels, although cultural attractions have recently spread to areas such as the South Bank.” The Plan also recognises at paragraph 3.143 that “London is a world leader in attracting high value overseas visitors and is an important gateway to the UK’s regions and nations. London’s tourism also provides employment opportunities and quality of life benefits for

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- London's communities. It helps attract and retain talent and corporate location decisions that ensure economic competitiveness.”
- 86 Paragraph 3.143 in the London Plan says that “As well as maintaining the central core of activities, there are opportunities to spread tourism activity and facilities into town centres outside central London to areas such as the suburbs.” This will help relieve pressures on central London as well as provide more affordable hotel development capacity and contribute to broader regeneration and sustainability objectives.
- 87 Policy 3D.6 in the London Plan seeks the provision of 36,000 additional bedrooms in Greater London by 2016 and to improve the quality, variety and distribution of visitor accommodation and facilities. In Central London strategically important new hotel and tourist facilities should be provided in ‘Opportunity Areas’ such as Paddington.
- 88 Westminster currently contains over 40% of the capital’s hotel bed spaces. In Westminster since 1995, about 3,000 additional bedrooms have been built, and planning permission has been granted for some four hundred more (April 2004). Since 1995, of all London’s new hotel rooms that have been built or are currently under construction, just under one-fifth have been provided in Westminster. UDP policies have not, therefore, prevented Westminster from making a significant contribution to the London-wide total and are allowing for the needs of the tourist industry.
- 89 The UDP seeks to preserve and enhance the conditions that help to maintain Westminster’s strategic role within the London tourist industry without detriment to local residents. This will be achieved by supporting the London Tourist Board’s strategy to encourage the dispersal of tourism to those areas outside Westminster which are seeking to promote it. The City Council will also confine significant hotel and tourism development within Westminster to appropriate locations within the CAZ, the defined CAZ Frontages and the Paddington SPA. Further opportunities may also be available in the North West Westminster Special Policy Area.
- 90 The London Plan recognises the pressures that can arise from the concentration of visitor facilities in certain areas. It states in Policy 3D.6 that Boroughs should “resist further intensification of provision in areas of existing concentration, except where this will not compromise local amenity or the balance of local land uses.” In addition to the large and smaller hotels in the CAZ, there are a considerable number of hotels in predominantly residential parts of Westminster, particularly in Bayswater and Pimlico, in what are otherwise residential streets. Policies in Chapter 8: Tourism, Arts, Culture and Entertainment deal with hotel development within these predominantly residential areas. Within these areas outside the CAZ, where existing hotels are causing adverse effects on residential amenity, their conversion to housing will be encouraged.

ARTS, CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT

POLICY STRA 13: ARTS, CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) To maintain and improve the range of arts, culture and entertainment uses in Westminster**
 - (B) To restrict further late-night entertainment uses in areas that already have an over-concentration**
-

Arts, Culture and Entertainment

- 91 Policy 3D.4 in the London Plan says that UDPs should identify, protect and enhance London's "strategic cultural areas and their settings" and should "where appropriate, support evening and night time entertainment activities in central London, City fringe areas and town centres, and where appropriate manage their impact through policies such as Entertainment Management Zones (EMZs)." It adds that new provision should be "focused on areas with deficiencies in facilities." In line with the London Plan, the City Council recognises Covent Garden and Soho in the CAZ as a strategic cluster of particular importance, and Part 2 of the UDP has given due regard to meeting these strategic needs.
- 92 Paragraph 3.233 of the London Plan says that London's role as a world city is supported by a number of internationally important cultural institutions, including museums, galleries and theatres which are among London's major tourist attractions. Together with their setting, these "should be protected and enhanced."
- 93 Paragraph 3.236 of the London Plan says that "The capital's vibrant night time economy is a major contributor to London's world city status, and there is an increasing demand for services to be provided later in the evening. Tackling the wide range of associated issues, especially that of disturbance, will require a real commitment to effective, integrated action by a range of agencies. Different approaches will be needed to address local circumstances . . ."
- 94 The approach in the London Plan supports the City Council's integrated response to tackling the wide range of issues associated with the night-time economy. Although no EMZs have been designated in the UDP, the approach taken by the City Council in establishing a forum of agencies to co-ordinate issues affecting entertainment areas conforms with that envisaged in the London Plan.

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- 95 The effects of the night time economy on Westminster's residential communities are particularly pronounced as the City contains the largest concentration of entertainment and late night premises in London and possibly the UK. The majority of these uses are inside the Central Activities Zone (CAZ) in Soho and Covent Garden. Significant numbers are also found on the Edgware Road and in Bayswater and Queensway/Westbourne Grove. As a result, these areas have become 'saturated' with entertainment uses and their character is being eroded as is the amenity of residents. As is the case with hotels (see paragraph 1.92), demonstrable harm can be caused. For these reasons these three areas have been identified as 'Stress Areas' and are shown on the Proposals Map. The policies that apply in these areas are set out in Chapter 8: Tourism, Arts, Culture and Entertainment.

POLICIES STRA 14 - STRA 19: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Aims

- 96 To build sustainable residential communities by preventing the loss of housing to other uses, building more homes, safeguarding residents' amenities, protecting residential uses from being encroached upon by commercial activities and maintaining and encouraging a full range of accessible local services and shopping facilities.

PROTECTING AND PROVIDING HOUSING

POLICY STRA 14: PROTECTING AND PROVIDING HOUSING

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) To prevent the loss of housing to other uses
 - (B) To seek the maximum amount of housing by securing a minimum net addition of 19,480 new homes between 1997 and 2016
 - (C) To seek 30% of this new housing to be for affordable housing
 - (D) To encourage empty property to be brought into use, particularly for housing
-

Reasons

- 97 The residential population of Westminster has increased for the first time in the last decade for 100 years, from about 187,700 in 1991, to 222,000 in 2003 (mid year estimate 2003). It is projected to continue to rise to 300,400 by 2016 (GLA projections) so it is important that housing should continue to be the highest priority in the Plan. Housing in Westminster is important for five main reasons:
- (a) there are many long-established residential communities in the City
 - (b) Westminster's long-established residential communities are as important to the diversity and vitality of the City as its commercial, governmental and cultural activities
 - (c) the cost of transporting workers to and from Central London is a powerful argument for keeping the maximum amount of housing in Central London
 - (d) the development of more housing in the City will help to relieve pressure to build housing in the Greenbelt and the rural areas outside London
 - (e) there is substantial demand for housing in Westminster
- 98 The City Council has contributed to the GLA's 'Housing Capacity Study' (2000), the results of which were agreed by the boroughs. The additional homes target for Westminster, derived from the study and set out in the London Plan is 19,480 new homes between 1997 and 2016.
- 99 About 5,600 new homes were built in Westminster between 1997 and 2001, making the target set out in the London Plan for the period 1997 – 2016, equivalent to an additional 13,900 units between 2002 and 2016. The target in STRA 14 therefore accords with the London Plan which similarly states that the targets should be minimum provision targets and that boroughs should include policies to exceed them.
- 100 The dwellings target in STRA 14 will only be met if housing is given the highest priority in the UDP. The City Council will monitor progress made towards these targets and the other indicators referred to in PPG 3 as set out in STRA 38. It will work with the Mayor in reviewing them by 2006, as set out in the London Plan.
- 101 Government figures (1996 DTLR population projections) show that throughout England, there will be an increase of 4.1 million households between 1991 and 2016. The figure for Westminster is 37,000 households. More recent projections from the GLA show an increase in the number of households in Westminster of nearly 64,000 households between 1991 and 2016. This shows the need to maximise the amount of new housing in Westminster.

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- 102 The London Plan has adopted a strategic target that 50% of all new dwellings London-wide should be affordable. “This target includes affordable housing from all sources and not just that secured through planning obligations” (paragraph 3.37). Policy 3A.8 states that “boroughs should seek the maximum reasonable amount of affordable housing when negotiating on individual private residential and mixed-use schemes and that boroughs should have regard to the need to encourage rather than restrain residential development and the individual circumstances of the site.”
- 103 The City Council considers that the 30% target set out in STRA 14(C) will maximise the amount of affordable housing in Westminster because it already takes into account many of the factors listed in policy 3A.8. This is explained in Policy H 4 of the Housing Chapter.
- 104 Government guidance is aimed at concentrating most additional housing development within urban areas and on re-using previously developed land and buildings. As all housing development in Westminster is on so-called ‘brownfield land’, the City Council will make an important contribution towards meeting the Government’s 60% target for housing on previously developed land and buildings.
- 105 The City Council’s Housing Needs Survey, published in September 2001, estimated that there were 11,533 households in housing need, of which 5,412 households required affordable housing and a further 1,717 priority homeless households in temporary accommodation. The survey found that a total of 3,293 units of affordable housing are required each year to meet the need for affordable housing arising from residents within Westminster. This is greater than the total supply of all new housing in Westminster, which is a situation common to other London Boroughs. The City Council cannot meet all of its housing need within its own boundaries and so will work in partnership with other local authorities to tackle this huge need, but is also keen to achieve as much affordable housing as possible in Westminster. However, the competing demands for sites by other uses restricts the amount of affordable housing that can be achieved to about 30% of the total new housing that will be provided in the City.
- 106 One of the best means to meet the increase in population is by ensuring that existing housing is occupied and lived in. There are some 2,500 empty homes in the private sector in Westminster and about 15,000 second homes. This represents a waste of resources when there is so much demand for housing. The Council does have an empty property strategy and encourages owners of empty homes to let or sell them so that they can be occupied. As a last resort, the City Council will consider compulsory purchase of homes which are empty and which have an adverse effect on the environment.

A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES

POLICY STRA 15: A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES

It is the City Council's aim:

To require a variety of housing types to meet current and future demand for housing. This will include a variety of sizes and tenures.

Reasons

- 107 In order to meet the full range of housing needs within their areas, the London Plan says that UDP policies should seek to ensure that new developments offer a range of housing choices, in terms of mix of housing sizes and types, and homes which are accessible and suitable for use by people with disabilities and older people, in order to help promote mixed and balanced communities and redress the shortage of accessible and wheelchair accessible housing in London.
- 108 Household projections show that the resident population of the City is due to increase in all population age groups. Much of the increase in households comes from single person households although there is expected to be only a slight reduction in the average household size in contrast to the rest of the UK where the number of single person households is rising. Whilst one or two bedroom dwellings will meet much of this demand, there will be single person households that require larger accommodation, as will families with children. Homes built now will last for over 100 years. It is essential that they meet current and future housing demand. The Council will, therefore, require a variety of sizes of housing that will also provide a flexible resource for future housing demand. This will include large and small dwellings, hostels and dwellings built for people with disabilities so that they can stay longer in their own home. For this reason, policy H 8 of Chapter 3: Housing, in Part 2, states that new homes should be built to 'Lifetime Homes Standard'.
- 109 The London Plan states that affordable housing comprises: social housing; intermediate housing (sub-market housing which is affordable by households on incomes of less than £40,000 as at 2003/4); and in some cases, low-cost market housing, and specialist provision such as workers' hostels and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). In Westminster the supply of affordable housing for households on incomes of less than £40,000, compared to demand, is very small, so the Council has to prioritise households within this group. It has defined key workers as the

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element within this group as those most in need of affordable housing in Westminster and will seek a percentage of housing for this group as set out in policy H 4.

- 110 As paragraph 1.108 explains, there is a huge demand for affordable housing in Westminster. Every year, the City Council reviews the supply of accommodation available and the eligibility for re-housing those with recognised priority housing needs. The City Council will continue to face high levels of demand. The City Council's overall housing strategy is set out in the Housing Strategy Statement submitted annually to the Government Office for London.

THE RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT

POLICY STRA 16: THE RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT

It is the City Council's aim:

To protect and improve the residential environment and residents' amenities and make the best use of the City's housing stock.

Reasons

- 111 The high dwellings target and the Government's policy to increase the amount of housing built on brownfield sites could be detrimental to the residential environment of Westminster. It is vital to ensure that the residential environment in Westminster is enhanced so as to encourage people to continue to live in the City. Developments of too many units or too many storeys could prejudice this. It is essential, therefore, that new housing development provides a good living environment for the potential occupants and does not adversely affect the surrounding residential environment. Issues of concern related to environmental quality for residents include design in the public realm, security, overlooking, privacy, daylight and sunlight and noise.
- 112 There are very high levels of activity in parts of the City and this is spreading later into the night, brought about through changes in working hours, lifestyles, and by central Government deregulation. The problems associated with such uses have intensified in recent years and are largely due to the increase in the number, concentration and size of entertainment premises, the numbers of people attracted to them and the deregulation of licensing hours. The increase in the numbers of residents living in the City, and in the CAZ in particular, has added to the potential for conflict. While the City Council acknowledges the need for a range of

entertainment facilities, the amenity of residents and areas must be safeguarded.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

POLICY STRA 17: NOISE

It is the City Council's aim:

To reduce noise levels in Westminster below maximum noise levels set out in the World Health Organisation 'Guidelines for Community Noise'.

Reasons

- 113 Noise is an aspect of amenity that affects everyone. While much of the high level of noise in Westminster is generated by transport, including road and rail traffic, aircraft and water transport, there is an increasing tendency for noise and vibration to be emitted from clubs, restaurants, pubs and bars. This causes problems late in the evenings and particularly at night and in the early hours of the morning when residents and visitors are trying to sleep.
- 114 Policies ENV 6 and ENV 7 in Chapter 9: Environment, in Part 2 of the Plan, set out how we will seek to reduce noise levels below specific maximum noise levels set out in the World Health Organisation (WHO) 'Guidelines for Community Noise' (1999). The WHO Guidelines are based on research on levels above which noise can cause serious or moderate annoyance and sleep disturbance. Those applied in the policies are L_{Aeq} daytime: (07.00-19.00) 55 dB; evening (19.00-23.00) 50 dB; night (23.00-07.00) 45 dB.
- 115 In addition to the WHO guidelines, the City Council will apply policies ENV 6 and ENV 7 in line with PPG 24: 'Planning and Noise' (1994) and will use other national standards as appropriate. The City Council will also have regard to the Mayor's Ambient Noise Strategy (2004).

CRIME AND SECURITY

POLICY STRA 18: CRIME AND SECURITY

It is the City Council's aim:

To reduce the fear of crime, actual crime and nuisance for residents, businesses and visitors.

Reasons

- 116 Crime and the fear of crime are important and increasing concerns of residents, business and visitors. They have a very great effect on people's perception of places and their desire to live or work there, or to visit. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires community safety to be considered in all decisions made by local authorities including those on planning applications. Policy 4B.1 in the London Plan says that developments should be "safe for occupants and passers-by." Paragraph 4.40 of the London Plan states that "Developments should be safe and secure, taking into account the objectives of 'Secured by Design', 'Designing out Crime' and DoE Circular 5/94 [Designing out Crime]." Policies in Part 2 of this Plan deal with this matter in more detail.
- 117 In April 1999, following public consultation with the Metropolitan Police Service, the Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster Health Authority and the Inner London Probation Service, the first Westminster Community Safety Plan (1999-2002) was published. Following consultation and crime auditing during 2001 and 2002, a new three-year 'Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy' was published in April 2002. Local Community Safety plans, based mainly on police sector boundaries within Westminster, have also been developed to support the City-wide plan. Westminster's Community Safety Plans (1999-2002) and (2002-2005) and the Local Community Safety Plans will be material considerations in the determination of planning applications.

LOCAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

POLICY STRA 19: LOCAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

It is the City Council's aim:

To protect and encourage an appropriate and accessible range of community facilities and shops which will meet the needs of residents, workers and visitors.

Reasons

Community facilities

- 119 In order to build sustainable communities it is essential that an appropriate and accessible range of local community services and facilities are provided. These include shops, schools, religious buildings, sport, play, recreation, open space, community facilities, health services and services like car repair workshops. While these facilities are important for residents, workers and visitors will also use them. The City Council recognises that some facilities, such as universities and hospitals, are important beyond Westminster's own boundaries.
- 120 The London Plan places particular priority on ensuring that as London develops and changes, the planning process takes into account the needs of communities. Policy 3A.15 in the Plan says that adequate provision should be made in Unitary Development Plans for a wide range of community facilities, particularly in major areas of new development and regeneration. It goes on to state "Policies should seek to ensure that appropriate facilities are provided within easy reach by walking and public transport of population that use them. The net loss of such facilities should be resisted."
- 121 Community facilities are best sited close to where people live and work so that people who need them, especially the less mobile, can get to them easily and safely. However, some facilities, such as day centres for people with learning disabilities, are more specialised. There may not be enough local demand for these facilities, so they must be provided at accessible locations in Westminster where they can be easily reached by public transport. Access by road and private transport may also be important; some people with learning disabilities have to be escorted and some people with physical disabilities cannot use public transport.
- 122 Community facilities can be particularly important for people with special needs. The NHS and Community Care Act (1990) encourages the

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development of community facilities to help people with special needs carry on living in their own homes where possible. This means that communities need day care, sport, leisure and health and education facilities that are easy to reach and use. Appropriately designed housing is also essential for those with special needs (see STRA 15 and Chapter 3: Housing).

- 123 Westminster's proximity to central London means that many of these uses have to compete with strong pressure to change to other more metropolitan uses. Policies in Part 2 of the Plan, therefore, seek to use planning powers, wherever possible, to protect existing local services and provide for new ones on redevelopment or in new development schemes.

Health

- 124 Health is also an important issue. The Health Act 1999 creates a new duty of partnership between health and local authorities in providing health care services and initiatives for health improvement. The Greater London Authority Act 1999 requires that the London Plan shall have regard to and shall promote "the health of persons in Greater London."

- 125 The London Plan states at paragraph 3.80 that "London's health service is vital to maintaining London as an exemplary, sustainable world city. Its influence goes far beyond the primary role it plays in delivering health care." It states in Policies 3A.17 to 3A.20 that Unitary Development Plans should:

(a) promote the objectives of the NHS Plan, Local Delivery Plans and Modernisation Programmes and the organisation of health care in the borough. This should be in partnership with the strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and local strategic partnerships and with voluntary and community organisations involved in delivering health services

(b) support the provision of additional healthcare within the borough as identified by the strategic health authorities and primary care trusts

(c) promote the continued role of London as a national and international centre of medical excellence

(d) have regard to the health impacts of development proposals as a mechanism for ensuring that major new developments promote public health within the borough

- 126 Although the Middlesex Hospital is due to relocate to a new purpose built hospital in Camden in 2005, the renewal of St. Mary's Hospital including the relocated Royal Brompton and Harefield Hospitals will create the largest health campus in London. Westminster also contains many private

medical facilities, which operate outside the National Health Service. These increase the range of health facilities available in Westminster and are important to the national and local economy. Many of these facilities are concentrated around Harley Street. This area is internationally famous for its concentration of medical uses, in particular medical consulting rooms.

POLICIES STRA 20 - STRA25: INTEGRATING LAND USE AND TRANSPORT AND REDUCING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF TRANSPORT

Aim

- 127 To reduce the need to travel while ensuring safe, accessible, sustainable and convenient travel by integrating land use and transport policies.

Reasons

- 128 In transport terms, Westminster is unlike the rest of the country or indeed the rest of London. For example:
- (a) Westminster's functions as the home of Government and the commercial, cultural and administrative centre for the nation require the movement of people and goods on a large scale and without undue delay
 - (b) the density of land use and movement in Westminster means that many journeys are short and can be made on foot. As well as the large number of journeys that are made solely on foot, walking forms part of most journeys: for example, from the bus stop, station or parking space to the final destination
 - (c) accessibility to public transport services in Westminster is exceptionally high. There are four main line termini (Charing Cross, Victoria, Paddington and Marylebone) in Westminster, every Underground Line (except the East London Line and the Waterloo and City Line) passes through Westminster and there are 74 day time and 57 night time bus routes operating in Westminster. While these transport services bring hundreds of thousands of people to work, shop and visit each day, they do so sometimes too slowly, unsafely or in overcrowded conditions
- 129 A lot of people have to travel to, from and within Westminster. As well as having an estimated daytime population of over one million people, Westminster is the home of 222,000 residents (MYE 2003). However, Westminster's residents make less complex demands on the transport system. In general, they should be able to live much the same sort of life as other Londoners: they need to be able to travel conveniently to shops,

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schools, leisure or work, or to see friends. Many of their journeys are short and can be made on foot or by bicycle – although such journeys are not always perceived as very safe or pleasant. For longer journeys, public transport is convenient, but it must be maintained and improved, especially at interchanges.

- 130 The UDP incorporates the policies and proposals of the City Council, as traffic and highway authority for most of the City of Westminster, and has regard to PPG 13: 'Transport' (March 2001), the White Paper on Transport 'A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone', the Mayor's Transport Strategy, the London Plan and the National Air Quality Strategy. All these, but particularly the White Paper, emphasise the need for integrated land use and transport policies and recognise the need to cut car use and to encourage the use of other forms of transport. The City Council's transport policies are in line with Government guidance and with more recent guidance from the Mayor as set out in the Mayor's Transport Strategy and the London Plan. Examples of better integration of land use and transport might include major developments being sited at, or close to, major public transport interchanges, or the preservation of local services such as surgeries, schools and shops in local centres so that residents do not have to travel long distances or use cars to reach such services. It might also include the concept of Transport Development Areas (TDAs) where, for example, a more dense development, possibly with less parking than usual, close to transport hubs would be allowed. The City Council has long allowed higher density developments within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ). The whole of the CAZ is highly accessible by public transport and the City Council applies maximum parking standards. The whole of the CAZ and highly accessible areas outside it like the Paddington Special Policy Area could, therefore, be said to be the equivalent of TDAs in Westminster.
- 131 Council's transport policies are in line with Government guidance and with more recent guidance from the Mayor as set out in the Mayor's Transport Strategy and the London Plan. Examples of better integration of land use and transport might include major developments being sited at, or close to, major public transport interchanges, or the preservation of local services such as surgeries, schools and shops in local centres so that residents do not have to travel long distances or use cars to reach such services. It might also include the concept of TDAs where, for example, a more dense development, possibly with less parking than usual, close to transport hubs would be allowed. The City Council has long allowed higher density developments within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ). The whole of the CAZ is highly accessible by public transport and the City Council applies maximum parking standards. The whole of the CAZ and highly accessible areas outside it like the Paddington SPA could, therefore, be said to be the equivalent of TDAs in Westminster.

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- 132 The UDP contains the strategic and local aims and policies for transport in Westminster. The City's Interim Local Implementation Plan (ILIP) sets out how the City Council intends to implement the Mayor's Transport Strategy over the next five-year period.
- 133 The ability of the Plan to achieve its strategic transport objectives will depend to a significant degree on the effectiveness of the aim to reduce traffic, which is key to much of the Plan's transport strategy. However, far-reaching traffic reduction without complementary improvements to the public transport system would reduce accessibility. This is contrary to the aims of the Plan. The City Council remains opposed to congestion charging in Central London and has serious reservations about its operation. The City Council believes that there are other ways of reducing traffic congestion, which would address those concerns. Nevertheless, the City Council will work with the Mayor, Transport for London and other London boroughs and agencies to introduce appropriate and effective measures. The policies on traffic reduction are, therefore, closely related to those on public transport, traffic and environmental management.

INTEGRATING LAND USE AND TRANSPORT

POLICY STRA 20: INTEGRATING LAND USE AND TRANSPORT

It is the City Council's aim:

To reduce the need to travel, whilst improving access to facilities and services, by integrating land use and transport policies in co-operation with other bodies across London.

Reasons

- 134 The City Council will seek the co-operation and support of neighbouring boroughs, other transport authorities and private operators in pursuit of its broader planning and transport aims and objectives. This will help to ensure that central London becomes a safer, more pleasant place in which to live, work and visit, and maintains and strengthens its position as a national and international centre for business and tourism. The Interim Local Implementation Plan (ILIP) sets out how an integrated approach to transport initiatives and programmes, at the local level, will be achieved.

WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

POLICY STRA 21: WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) To improve environmental quality, safety and directness of routes for pedestrians and cyclists**

 - (B) To improve the quality, reliability, efficiency, safety and accessibility of public transport by promoting and supporting proposals that integrate, improve and extend bus, Underground and rail networks and services, and river services**
-

Reasons

- 135 Walking and cycling are the methods of travel that have the least damaging effect on the environment. A good public transport system, including river-based services, is essential for meeting the economic and social needs of the City's businesses, workers and residents. Improvements to existing bus and train services and the provision of new rail and light rail links, such as CrossRail 1 between Paddington and Whitechapel, CrossRail 2 (formerly the Hackney Southwest Line and before that the Chelsea-Hackney Line) and the Cross River Transit, are urgently needed. They will help to improve efficiency and reliability and to increase capacity, thereby reducing congestion on both road and rail networks. It is also necessary to improve the accessibility of public transport, both in terms of access to individual vehicles and in terms of the proximity of the public transport services to homes and to the destinations people wish to visit. Good information provision on the public transport services available will also encourage greater use of such services.

REDUCING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF TRANSPORT

POLICY STRA 22: REDUCING THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF TRANSPORT

It is the City Council's aim:

To protect and improve environmental quality, by reducing the use of all motorised vehicles and encouraging modes of transport and types of engine and/or fuel which cause less pollution and congestion.

POLICY STRA 23: REDUCING TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND IMPROVING SAFETY

It is the City Council's aim:

(A) To reduce traffic levels through comprehensive traffic and environmental management schemes

(B) To improve road safety by implementing accident remedial measures incorporating, where appropriate, facilities to help pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, buses and commuter coach services

Reasons

136 Central London suffers from unacceptably high levels of through traffic and traffic congestion. This results in poor air quality and associated health concerns, noise, slow and unreliable buses, large numbers of accidents, and inadequate facilities for vulnerable road users, including cyclists, pedestrians (including wheelchair users), and motorcyclists. Nevertheless, the City Council must bear in mind that, whilst motorcycles make a valuable contribution to transport in Westminster, they do also bring many of the problems that cars bring in terms of creating safety and environmental problems. Despite improvements in public transport efficiency in recent years, the rail systems remain overcrowded, costly and subject to regular disruption. There is a perception that, if anything, these problems are getting worse.

137 The City Council has over many years attempted to reduce these problems and create a better environment for residents, workers and visitors by adopting a restraint-based parking policy and investing heavily in road safety, traffic calming, bus priority and traffic and environmental

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improvement schemes. It is also active in progressing initiatives for reducing traffic emissions and improving air quality through enforcement and persuasion and by example. These measures, while achieving significant local improvements, are thwarted by the underlying problem of very high commuter and through traffic and by the use of cars for short journeys such as shopping and school journeys, which are particularly polluting. The City Council therefore welcomes the inclusion in the Mayor's Transport Strategy and in the London Plan, of traffic reduction targets, which it will adopt. However, the Council can do little to provide the reliable, reasonably priced, efficient, integrated and secure bus, rail and Underground systems which are essential to London's economy, vitality and amenity and its competitiveness as a World City with a sustainable and healthy future.

- 138 With regard to coaches, the City Council recognises that coaches make a legitimate contribution and that they use road space as efficiently as buses, but remains concerned about their impact on congestion and the environment. While the issue of coach stations and a strategy for coaches, in general, is a strategic matter for central Government, the Mayor and the GLA to consider, the City Council is a signatory to the 'Central London Coach Strategy' (March 1998).
- 139 The City Council is opposed to transferring the problems of Victoria Coach Station to another single hub coach terminal. The City Council does not believe that a suitable site exists in central London to provide a single hub coach terminal to cater for all London's coach passengers in view of the likely traffic and environmental impact of such a terminal. Instead it supports alternative arrangements with dispersed terminal facilities at appropriate locations across London.

SERVICING, DELIVERY AND COLLECTION

POLICY STRA 24: SERVICING, DELIVERY AND COLLECTION

It is the City Council's aim:

To reduce the numbers and environmental impact of servicing, delivery and collection vehicles, whilst providing for the essential needs of Central London Activities.

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Reasons

- 140 Westminster's complex and dense land-use pattern, its varied activities and the volume of competing demands for transport mean that, in order to keep the transport system efficient while satisfying the requirements of residents for reasonable environmental conditions, vehicle use must be reduced.
- 141 However, the roads must always allow emergency vehicles and essential service vehicles, such as those used for refuse collection and cleansing, to reach all parts of the City. There will also be a need for businesses to be serviced and for goods to be delivered and collected. The City Council acknowledges that the use of private vehicles is necessary for some essential Central London Activities and will endeavour to meet their requirements while seeking to reduce their environmental impact.

PARKING CONTROL

POLICY STRA 25: PARKING CONTROL

It is the City Council's aim:

To control on and off street parking within the requirements of the traffic reduction policy. Preference will be given to the special requirements of residents, people with disabilities and those essential Central London Activities for which the use of private vehicles is necessary.

Reasons

- 142 The City Council has five main reasons for controlling parking provision:
- (a) to support the overall objectives of traffic restraint/reduction by helping to minimise the adverse social, economic and environmental impacts of vehicular traffic
 - (b) to improve road safety
 - (c) to establish and maintain a fair system which protects special needs where these exist, such as the needs of residents, doctors, hospitals and people with disabilities
 - (d) to acknowledge the unsuitability of some areas for parking, especially by heavy vehicles
 - (e) to promote development which supports more sustainable travel choices and reduces the need to travel
- 143 In controlling and co-ordinating parking so as to reduce the overall level of parking, an adequate provision of parking space for essential and priority

users must be maintained. This will help to support and enhance local economic activity. The amount of off-street parking provided or retained in new developments should accord with the requirements of the traffic restraint/reduction policy, as well as ensuring that parking spaces that are genuinely needed to allow a development to function are provided off-street. For these reasons the City Council will seek to apply the parking standards set out in Chapter 4: Transport.

POLICIES STRA 26 – STRA 31: ENSURING A HIGH QUALITY ENVIRONMENT

Aim

- 144 To preserve and enhance the quality and character of Westminster's built, landscaped and natural environment.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO FACILITIES AND BUILDINGS

POLICY STRA 26: IMPROVING ACCESS TO FACILITIES AND BUILDINGS

It is the City Council's aim:

To ensure that all users and visitors have access to individual buildings and developments. Particular regard will be paid to the needs of people with disabilities.

Reasons

- 145 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 brought in new rights of access for disabled people to goods, facilities and services. From 2004, service providers will have a duty to make reasonable adjustments in relation to the physical features of their premises to overcome barriers to access by disabled people. 'Physical features' includes anything on the premises arising from the building's design or construction or from an approach to, exit from or access to, such a building. For further details about the implications of the Act for building designers and for design advice see the Centre for Accessible Environments' publication 'Designing for Disability' 1999, Part M of the Building Regulations, and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation publication 'Meeting Part M and Designing Lifetime Homes'. Good access benefits everyone, not only people with short or longer term disabilities but also, for example, carers with children and elderly people.

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- 146 Age and disability are related and as the numbers of elderly people increases so the prevalence of disability will also increase. There are no accurate figures for the number of disabled people within Westminster but it is known to be much higher than the 6,000 on the City Council's Disability Register. The 2001 Census recorded over 26,000 residents (about 15% of the population) as having a long-term illness. National estimates are that 10% of adults have some disability (including mental disability). Disabilities that limit mobility are the most prevalent.
- 147 Helping people to remain active and independent in the community depends on making the whole environment more accessible. The City Council will strive to make the environment not only more attractive visually, but also safer, more convenient and more accessible. The constraints imposed by the historic nature of so many of the buildings in Westminster can make this a challenge but this can often be overcome by adopting an innovative approach to design solutions. PPG 15: 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (September 1994) states that "it is important in principle that disabled people should have dignified easy access to and within historic buildings" (paragraph 3.28). The policies and standards in Chapter 10: Urban Design and Conservation, aim to improve access in all types of development.
- 148 The London Plan stresses the need for the creation of accessible buildings and spaces. Policy 4B.1 states that "boroughs should seek to ensure that developments are accessible, usable and permeable for all users". Policy 4B.5 states that Unitary Development Plan policies should require that developments "can be used by as many people as possible without undue effort, separation or special treatment" and offer the ability "to participate in the development's mainstream activities." The City Council's policy conforms with the London Plan.

STANDARDS OF DESIGN

POLICY STRA 27: STANDARDS OF DESIGN

It is the City Council's aim:

To promote the highest standards of sustainable urban design and architecture in all development and to encourage inventive architecture in the context of Westminster's unique local distinctiveness.

CONSERVATION AREAS AND THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE

POLICY STRA 28: CONSERVATION AREAS AND THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE

It is the City Council's aim:

To preserve or enhance the built and landscaped environment of Westminster; paying particular regard to its historic character, appearance and cultural importance and ecological value.

LISTED BUILDINGS, HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS, AND ARCHAEOLOGY

POLICY STRA 29: LISTED BUILDINGS, HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS, AND ARCHAEOLOGY

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) To preserve or enhance listed buildings and their settings, historic parks and gardens and their surroundings and other features of special or local architectural, historic or ecological interest
 - (B) To investigate, record and protect Westminster's archaeological heritage
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Reasons

- 149 Westminster has a heritage that reflects over 300 years of continuous growth and development. Throughout this period the City has been the centre of Parliamentary and Court life. This has resulted in large areas of the City being of great townscape, architectural and historic interest. Westminster has some 10,300 listed buildings, 5.6 km of river frontage, 6.4 km of canal frontage, 250 hectares of historic Royal Parks and a World Heritage Site encompassing Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. Conservation areas, many of which reflect the distinctive historic localities that make up the City, cover over 76% of the City. Westminster has nineteen historic squares and gardens which are listed in English Heritage's register of gardens of special historic interest.

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- 150 The City Council recognises the intrinsic value of this historic townscape and the fact that the resulting high quality environment is a major factor in Westminster's continuing economic success. The prestige attached to a West End address is among the City's greatest assets and is largely dependent on the high quality environment. The City Council recognises that for Westminster to compete effectively with other major, world-class cities, the built environment must be upgraded, updated and restored as appropriate. But this change should not detract from the qualities of the existing historic townscape, which makes the City such an attractive and valued location for residents, businesses, customers and visitors.
- 151 The City Council will promote the highest standards of sustainable design principles in new developments and in alterations and additions to existing buildings. It will ensure that all developments, particularly with regard to bulk and height, make a positive contribution to the environment, retaining the distinctiveness of different areas and relating well to their surroundings. The City Council recognises the importance of greenery and open space, including their value for nature conservation.
- 152 The London Plan also stresses the need for high quality sustainable design to respond positively to its context. Paragraph 4.37 states "Design quality is central to this and poorly designed schemes will squander London's valuable resources and can blight the lives of users and neighbours." Paragraph 4.41 continues "Good design is rooted firmly in an understanding and appreciation of the local social, historical and physical context, including urban form and movement patterns and historic character. London is highly diverse and constantly changing, but developments should show an understanding of, and respect for, existing character."
- 153 Paragraph 4.62 of the London Plan states "Part of the city's unique character is the juxtaposition of many different types of buildings and spaces and this should be reflected in the way the historic environment is managed. Buildings and places should not be seen in isolation, and the settings of historic assets are often important to their character and should be appropriately protected."
- 154 The City contains valuable archaeological remains of great historic interest. These remains constitute a finite and fragile resource. Their destruction should be avoided wherever possible and should never take place without archaeological excavation and record. Special attention will be given to building proposals in Westminster's Areas of Archaeological Importance.

VIEWS AND HIGH BUILDINGS

POLICY STRA 30: VIEWS AND HIGH BUILDINGS

It is the City Council's aim:

To protect or enhance important and acknowledged views across or within Westminster and to resist inappropriately designed or intrusively located high buildings and other structures.

Reasons

- 155 There are important strategic views of the Palace of Westminster and St Paul's Cathedral and these are protected in the Plan. Other views, particularly those that cross the City boundary, are also identified in the Plan and are recognised as making a valuable contribution to the City scene, particularly along the River Thames, canals and other open spaces, notably the Royal Parks. The latter are particularly sensitive to the impact of high buildings, which detract from their natural landscapes.
- 156 By their very nature, high buildings are capable of having far wider impacts than just on their local surroundings. New proposals for high buildings in adjoining boroughs, in locations such as Waterloo or the South Bank of the Thames could, therefore, have negative impacts on views across or within the City. In addition, Westminster is the location for a unique collection of the country's finest examples of historic buildings and conservation areas, which contribute significantly to local views, many of which are world famous. High buildings will generally be inimical to the preservation of their settings, which are an important part of their special architectural or historic interest and, thereby, devalue these cherished views.
- 157 The London Plan recognises the importance of protecting views in London. In paragraph 4.63 it refers to the importance of strategic views of London and its major landmarks. It states that "These views must be protected and managed in a way that enhances the selected number of genuinely important strategic views, but which also avoids creating unnecessary constraints over a broader area than that required to enjoy the view".
- 158 There are many other valuable views within the City, including views within the Royal Parks, and views of historic set pieces. Such views form part of the appreciation of the local historic environment and will be protected by the City Council. See Policy DES 15 in Chapter 10: Urban Design and Conservation.

THE RIVER THAMES AND CANALS

POLICY STRA 31: THE RIVER THAMES AND CANALS

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) To protect and enhance the character, appearance, biodiversity and environmental quality of the River Thames and its setting**
 - (B) To encourage greater public access to, and activity along, the River Thames and, in particular, the completion of the Thames Path National Trail**
 - (C) To encourage greater public access to the Regent's and Grand Union Canals and, in particular, the completion of the Grand Union Canal Trail**
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Reasons

159 The River Thames and its surroundings are important parts of Westminster and London. The London Plan provides the strategic framework for developing local land use policies to improve the environment and the use of the river. The City Council aims to protect and enhance the townscape quality, open aspect and nature conservation value of the River Thames. It also aims to encourage greater use of the river for transport (which broadens the choice of transport available and can help to ease congestion elsewhere) and for recreation. PPG 25: 'Development and Flood Risk', issued in July 2001, states that plans should set out a strategic approach to flood risk. The City Council will work with other relevant agencies, including the Greater London Authority and the Environment Agency, to ensure that the integrity of the flood defences in Westminster is maintained.

160 Chapter 4, Part C of The London Plan identifies a Blue Ribbon Network made up of London's rivers, canals and water bodies. The London Plan sees this network as having an essential role to play in delivering all the key elements of the Mayor's vision of an exemplary sustainable world city. Paragraph 4.74 states "Water is a valuable and scarce asset within London and its use must be set within sustainable limits, which prioritises those uses and activities that need a waterside location." It then sets out four principles to guide decision making about these water areas and their environment. In this Unitary Development Plan, the policies in Chapter 9: Environment and Chapter 11: The River Thames, and in the City Council's own supplementary planning guidance on the River Thames,

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are in general conformity with the principles and policies of the Blue Ribbon Network.

- 161 The City Council has defined a Thames Policy Area (TPA) which conforms with that identified in Annex 5 of the London Plan. Broadly, Westminster's TPA covers the river itself and the buildings which line the riverbank. It also covers some areas further from the river, including areas that are linked to it visually, functionally or historically. An appraisal of the TPA has been carried out and is included in the Council's supplementary planning guidance note on the River Thames Area. It should be read in conjunction with the policies in Chapter 11: The River Thames. The City Council will strive to improve public access to, and along, the River Thames and the Regent's and Grand Union Canals. The River Thames and the Regent's and Grand Union Canals are sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation. The river and canal corridors will, therefore, be treated sensitively when considering planning applications.

POLICIES STRA 32 – STRA 37: WORKING TOWARDS A MORE SUSTAINABLE CITY

Aim

- 162 To encourage and support the sustainable development of the City.

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTMINSTER

POLICY STRA 32: THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTMINSTER

It is the City Council's aim:

To seek to achieve sustainable development and to meet the economic, social and environmental needs of the City in an integrated and balanced way.

Reasons

- 163 Following the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, more than 150 nations ratified an action plan called Agenda 21. This commits Governments to work towards sustainable development in partnership with local authorities, businesses, the voluntary sector and local communities. The principle of sustainable development unites economic and social development with care for the environment. The most widely accepted definition of sustainable development and the one that the City

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Council will use is “ensuring that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs”. (Our Common Future, World Commission of Environment and Development, 1987). This means that communities should be made more aware of the natural capital of their areas and should plan to live within their environmental means and reduce their demands on resources. The City Council supports the principle of sustainable development and has approved a Local Agenda 21 strategy and action plan.

- 164 The City Council recognises the need for action and for changes in attitudes at all levels to help tackle pressing global environmental issues. It is likely that further European and other legislation on these issues will come into force during the life of this UDP. The City Council also recognises that environmental considerations form only one part of sustainable development. The other elements: social, economic, cultural and equity considerations are equally important.
- 165 PPG 12: ‘Development Plans’ (December 1999) states at paragraph 4.1 that “The planning system, and development plans in particular, can make a major contribution to the achievement ofnational objectives for sustainable development.” The London Plan states in paragraph 4.3 that “London should become a more sustainable and self-sufficient city, healthier to live in and more efficient in its use of resources. It should also be a better neighbour to its surrounding regions by consuming more of its own waste and producing less pollution.”
- 166 Integrated land use and transport policies in UDPs should aim to achieve environmental sustainability which:
- (a) reduces energy use
 - (b) reduces emissions of greenhouse gases and air pollutants
 - (c) increases the recycling and re-use of waste materials
 - (d) reduces the need for waste disposal (especially over long distances)
 - (e) protects and enhances the natural environment
- 167 The burning of fossil fuels is considered to be one of the main causes of climate change, acid rain and ground level pollution. The City Council supports measures for using cleaner, more sustainable forms of energy and reducing energy consumption, by reducing the need to travel, promoting more energy-efficient modes of transport, and conserving energy through building design. The City Council’s policies are in general conformity with the approach outlined in the Mayor’s Energy Strategy, published in February 2004. It recognises that the planning process offers, among other things, potential to determine the form of new developments.

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- 168 Given its impact on air quality and energy consumption, a reduction in traffic will be particularly important for creating a sustainable environment in Westminster (see STRA 22-STR 23 and Chapter 4: Transport).
- 169 Consistent with the concern to protect the environment, the City Council will require developers to submit environmental impact assessments for proposals that meet the criteria for Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 projects in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999. For all developments, the City Council requires applicants to submit an Environmental Performance Statement: a checklist of environmental effects and sustainability. The City Council also encourages, and for larger developments requires, use of an external appraisal such as the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM). Chapter 9: Environment and policy ENV 2 give further details.

POLICIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

POLICY STRA 33: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND MANAGEMENT OF BUILDINGS

It is the City Council's aim:

To promote the efficient use of materials and reduce energy and water consumption by:

- (A) promoting the construction and management of environmentally efficient buildings and the use of energy efficient heating, lighting, cooling, ventilation and other powered systems**
 - (B) reducing the need to travel and encouraging the use of energy-efficient transport**
 - (C) promoting water conservation measures**
-

POLICY STRA 34: POLLUTION - AIR, WATER AND LAND

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) To improve air quality through Westminster's Air Quality Management Plan and other measures
- (B) To support measures to improve surface and ground water quality
- (C) To prevent the contamination of land and take the necessary steps to ensure that contaminated land is cleaned up

POLICY STRA 35: WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) To promote the reduction of waste, the reuse and recycling of materials, the recovery of energy and materials from waste, and its eventual treatment and disposal by the best practicable environmental means
- (B) To minimise the amount of time that waste is left on the street by requiring adequate storage for waste in all developments

POLICY STRA 36: METROPOLITAN OPEN LAND AND OPEN SPACE

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) To protect and encourage the enhancement of, public access to and enjoyment of, Metropolitan Open Land
 - (B) To protect and enhance the existing provision of open space and to promote its additional provision
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POLICY STRA 37: NATURE CONSERVATION AND BIODIVERSITY

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) To protect wildlife habitats and species within the City
 - (B) To protect those sites designated as being of nature conservation importance
 - (C) To encourage the creation of new wildlife habitats in open space and on and around buildings, where appropriate
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Reasons

- 170 The Greater London Authority Act 1999 requires that the London Plan shall have regard to and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom. The London Plan promotes sustainable design. Paragraph 4.52 states "Sustainable design and construction can reduce the consumption of resources, cut greenhouse gases and contribute to the good health of Londoners. Sustainable design is based on principles which are intended to ensure that buildings are efficient in resource use, recognise the uniqueness of locations, are healthy, adaptable and responsible in protecting the environment, and make the most of natural systems, including for example the use of passive solar design or local ecosystems."
- 171 The drive at the macro level towards higher standards of efficiency and durability in building construction, combined with new statutory requirements for achieving sustainable development, has led to a growing requirement for high quality sustainable construction, not just in architectural design and materials used, but also by using a range of energy efficiency measures. The City Council supports this approach. Westminster's UDP can make a vital contribution to sustainable development by:
- (a) encouraging the design of new buildings that use energy efficiently, facilitate waste recycling and are environmentally sensitive
 - (b) promoting transport policies that reduce the pollution (visual, atmospheric and noise) caused by road vehicles
 - (c) promoting waste management measures that encourage reuse, recycling and minimise the environmental impact of waste storage, transport and disposal
 - (d) improving local environmental quality with landscaping and planting

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- (e) raising the awareness and appreciation of Westminster's natural ecological resources
- 172 The high levels of air pollution in Westminster and the numbers of people affected by it make reducing air pollution a high priority for the City Council; improvements will only be achieved by working in partnership with Government, other boroughs, businesses and other bodies. The City of Westminster Air Quality Strategy and Action Plan 2001 sets objectives and requires measures for reducing air pollution. The Mayor's Air Quality Strategy was published in September 2002.
- 173 Water is a vital resource, crucial for public health, food production and biodiversity. Water consumption in the UK is rising by about 2% a year and the City Council will encourage measures to conserve water, prevent water pollution and protect watercourses.
- 174 Although there is not known to be much contaminated land in Westminster, developers of sites of potential risk will be expected to undertake a thorough assessment of the likelihood of contamination and submit remedial measures before starting on site. In line with emerging guidance and regulations, the City Council has prepared a Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy and will prepare a register of contaminated sites in Westminster.
- 175 The high volume of waste discarded in Westminster and the lack of sites suitable for large-scale waste handling, treatment and disposal within the borough, limit the extent to which the City Council can implement its policies within Westminster. The City Council has taken very substantial measures in recent years to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill, and to increase the amount of materials and energy it recovers from municipal waste. However, further significant changes in waste volumes, methods of collection and methods of disposal are required if the City is to meet its future obligations under the EU Landfill Directive. The City Council will promote measures to reduce the amount of waste generated and to increase the amounts of waste reused or recycled by the most effective and least environmentally damaging means. It will also seek to reduce the environmental impact of waste handling and storage within the City, in particular, to reduce the storage and dumping of waste on the street in terms of both duration and volume. The City Council supports the principle of 'the polluter pays'.
- 176 Local environmental quality is key to sustainable planning. More than 26% of Westminster is open green space, comprising over 440 hectares of parks, public gardens and recreational space. The five Royal Parks take up most of this green space and provide a priceless resource for people and wildlife and are designated as Metropolitan Open Land. The City Council is committed to protecting and enhancing Westminster's

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Metropolitan Open Land, its green and open spaces and wildlife corridors, such as private rear gardens and watercourses. It will also encourage a diversity of wildlife species and habitats and minimise the likely adverse effects of development on wildlife.

POLICIES STRA 38 – STRA 39: RESOURCES, MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE UDP AND TAKING ENFORCEMENT ACTION

Aim

- 177 To monitor change as it affects the City and policies of the UDP; to review the UDP accordingly; take enforcement action where appropriate.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE UDP

POLICY STRA 38: MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE UDP

It is the City Council's aim:

- (A) To monitor change as it affects Westminster and the policies of the UDP. The progress made towards meeting the housing target will be monitored annually
- (B) To review the need to modify the UDP in the light of such changes at least every five years
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Reasons

- 178 Legislation requires us to consider the resources likely to be available to carry out the policies in the UDP. This is necessary in order to ensure that the UDP is realistic and does not contain proposals for development that could not be implemented in the ten to fifteen year plan period.
- 179 The majority of the policies in Part 2 operate in response to development proposals from the private sector. The UDP's implementation does not depend on public spending by the City Council or on any particular rate of economic growth. Because of the very limited amount of land or buildings available for new development within Westminster, the main function of planning is to ensure that the City is used to its full potential but without harm to Westminster's character and function. The UDP emphasises the need to realise opportunities in connection with private sector development schemes.

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- 180 The role of the major landowners in achieving the UDP's objectives is acknowledged. The major estates will be encouraged to develop and implement their land use policies consistent with the UDP and in co-operation with the City Council. Similarly, the City Council continues to undertake many initiatives in association with residents, voluntary bodies and businesses within the City and continues to actively seek sponsorship. The City Council will promote its objectives in partnership with others to bring about improvements to all aspects of the environment and life in the City.
- 181 There are currently 17 recognised amenity societies covering Westminster and 4 other societies who, while not formally recognised, are consulted on major planning applications and policy initiatives. The important role that these amenity societies play in ensuring a high level of participation by the local communities in matters concerning the safeguarding and improvement of the built environment is acknowledged.
- 182 The success of the UDP will rely upon the implementation of proposals for development, for which planning permissions will have been granted. These will have been determined in accordance with the UDP unless material considerations have indicated otherwise. The City Council encourages the submission of proposals that are fully worked up both in terms of design and uses proposed.
- 183 Government guidance (PPG 12: 'Development Plans', December 1999) also requires the City Council to keep under review all those matters that might be expected to affect the development of Westminster or the planning of its development. However, forecasting what is likely to happen is difficult because Westminster, being at the centre of London, is exceptionally responsive to social and economic change. Different policies are likely to retain their validity for different periods. One area of policy, which has seen rapid change in recent years, is entertainment, and such uses will be monitored and reviewed as part of the annual monitoring work, particularly in areas adjoining stress areas. Most policies and proposals in the UDP are for a period of ten to fifteen years, but some, such as those concerned with conservation, may be for a longer or indefinite period.
- 184 The City Council is committed to monitoring change as it affects the City and will be reviewing the effectiveness of the policies in the Plan in achieving their objectives, as development plan documents are prepared for the new Local Development Framework. A monitoring report has been produced for the period from 1997 to 2001. Annual monitoring reports will be required under the new development planning system.

TAKING ENFORCEMENT ACTION

POLICY STRA 39: TAKING ENFORCEMENT ACTION

It is the City Council's aim:

To pursue enforcement vigorously where it appears appropriate to do so. In doing so, regard will be had to the UDP, other corporate initiatives and policies, and to any other material considerations

Reasons

185 Unauthorised development can have a significant effect on the achievement of the City Council's aims and policies. As a result, enforcement is regarded as a matter of the greatest importance. Under Part VII of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Part I of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the City Council can take action to remedy breaches of planning control. Priority will be given to the unauthorised use of residential units for uses such as holiday lets and offices, the protection of residential amenity and the historic environment and enforcement of street management issues.