

Welcome to Planning



“Welcome to the first edition of the Department of Planning & City Development’s e-newsletter. I hope that this quarterly review of the work of the Department will be a useful way for you - whether you’re a resident or a business in Westminster – to find out more about what we are doing.

Our aim as a Department is to protect and build a world class city that residents, workers, businesses and visitors can all feel part of.

Westminster is home to 11,000 listed buildings, a world heritage site, 54 conservation areas, a diverse business economy and almost a quarter of a million residents. Given this immense diversity and pressure for development it’s no wonder that the Planning and City Development Department is at the centre of sustainable development of the world’s greatest city.”

Councillor Robert Davis DL, Chief Whip and Cabinet Member for Planning

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60 second interview

Rosemarie MacQueen – *The new Director of Planning & City Development (PCD)*



Rosemarie MacQueen was appointed Director of PCD on 1st May 2007 and has worked at Westminster since 1979. During her career, Rosemarie has worked in all areas of planning such as conservation and design, development control

and policy. She has also enjoyed success academically, with qualifications in sociology, architecture, planning and management studies. Read on for a quick insight into the thoughts of our new Director.

What prompted you to start a career in planning?

Working in Harlow New Town for a social work charity and studying for a sociology degree gave me an insight into the relationship between people and the urban form. Initially though, it was an interest and appreciation of architecture that began my career path within planning.

You have enjoyed success in both the private and public sector. How different are they?

Both sectors have provided a useful insight into how planning is conducted. The private sector allowed me to focus my full attention on one project and, therefore, become deeply enmeshed in its detailed management, programming and delivery. Conversely, the public sector has given me the opportunity to be involved in numerous projects at

any one time, with differing deadlines and diverse outcomes. Over the years, however, the differences between the two have become less marked and both have allowed me to meet many people, understand the needs of planning in both sectors and of course provide me with the skills and experience to become the new Director of P&CD at Westminster.

What role does Central Government play in planning?

Central Government is crucial for setting the national strategy and policy context for development, for managing change and encouraging economic diversity. Planning legislation and guidance should set out succinctly and clearly the goals, aspirations and direction for planning. However, there should also be an acceptance that not all areas of the country should be treated the same - Westminster cannot be compared to a rural area where planning issues differ immensely.

What are your views on the future of planning in Westminster?

Exciting projects include the development of Victoria, Chelsea Barracks, planned improvements to Leicester Square, new proposals for ORB (Oxford Street, Regent Street and Bond Street), the implementation of our housing strategy and building schools for the future. Westminster is an exciting city to live and work in, and planning will need to be innovative and forward thinking in order to deal with the changes that lay ahead.

Other interests apart from planning?

Music, reading, walking and looking, world travel and Gaelic culture!

Local Development Framework

Westminster's Core Strategy will be one of the principal documents of the Local Development Framework (LDF). It will set a clear vision for the pattern and location of development in Westminster, and build on the plans and programmes of our partners to deliver this vision over the next 10-15 years.

We are in the process of identifying the main planning issues that the Core Strategy will need to cover, and are drawing up alternative spatial policy options to tackle them. It is important to us that the local community is given opportunities to participate in the development of these issues and options from the outset. We have identified six strategic issues as a starting point for discussion. Details of these, and our 17 draft options for tackling these issues, are available at:



Bowater House - Knightsbridge

www.westminster.gov.uk/ldf/documents/core_strategy.cfm

Although public consultation formally ended on 29th June 2007, as part of our ongoing frontloaded consultation, we are happy to receive comments by 31st July 2007.

Planning White Paper



The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published a Planning White Paper on 21st May 2007, which sets out a series of proposed reforms to the planning system to be taken forward in the next three years.

The main proposals include reforming the procedures for dealing with national infrastructure projects, which relate to large scale proposals that, on the whole, will not be applicable to Westminster.

Other proposals include:

- Changes to householder permitted development rights
- Increasing the cost of planning application fees
- Streamlining the process of appeals and introducing appeal fees
- Changes to LDF processes
- An updated guidance note on economic development

These proposals could potentially change the way planning is carried out in Westminster and we will be responding to the Government on these and other matters and would urge our residents and businesses to do the same. The public consultation closes on Friday 17th August 2007 and any comments should be addressed to the Department for Communities and Local Development.

To access the full document visit www.communities.gov.uk

Planning advice

Our GIS web pages are a useful tool to aid your understanding of planning in Westminster

Our interactive map service shows planning related operations within Westminster. These include:

- Planning cases
- Planning teams
- UDP policies
- Conservation areas
- Building control

Visit

www.westminster.gov.uk/maps

How to use:

- Select the appropriate subject area from the drop down menu, e.g. UDP Policies and then press 'Select'.
- You will be prompted for either a street or postcode to focus your search but you can also select the whole of Westminster.
- Fill in the details according to your requirements and then select "Get Map" or "Select the whole of Westminster".

Your results will be displayed within a new window which can be manipulated by changing the scale and adding new data. The mapped data will help explain what planning policies or cases affect certain areas and if necessary, a particular property.



Current consultations

Conservation audits: Consultation on the Queensway Conservation Audit ended on the 29th June 2007. However, other audits coming up over the next year include the Palace of Westminster, Hallfield Estate, Dorset Square, Broadway and Christchurch Gardens, Knightsbridge Green, Albert Gate and Knightsbridge.

Copies of all audits can be found on our website at: www.westminster.gov.uk/planning



Metropolitan Views – a supplementary planning document identifying views of importance in the city - has now been through a pre-drafting consultation exercise. The document explains the council's policies in protecting such views. It is due to go out to full consultation at the end of July 2007.

Further details on the content and timetable for production of this document can be found on our website at:

www.westminster.gov.uk/ldf/documents/metropolitan_views_spd.cfm

Following a pre-drafting consultation exercise last year, **Statues and Monuments** has also been drafted and is now out to full consultation. This new supplementary planning document will ensure that applications received for new statues, monuments and memorials are appropriate in terms of design and location. More information can be found on our website at:

www.westminster.gov.uk/ldf/documents/statues_and_monuments_spd.cfm

Planning and City Development - the teams

The Department is made up of the following teams:

- **Development Planning Services**
- **City Planning Group**
- **Cross River Partnership**
- **West End Team**
- **District Surveyors.**

The Department provides a wide range of the services associated with the built environment under the Planning Acts, the London Buildings Acts, the Building Regulations and related legislation.

Development Planning Services (DPS)

Within DPS, there are three area planning teams which cover the city and deal with over 10,000 planning applications a year:

- North Team deal with areas NW1, NW6, NW8, W2, W9, W10, W11
- South Team covers SW1, SW7, WC2, EC4 areas
- Central Team cover the W1 area.

DPS also has a Planning Enforcement Team which ensures compliance with statutory requirements and DPS also maintains the statutory register of planning applications.

City Planning Group (CPG)

This group provides a multi-disciplinary focus for the development, co-ordination and review of planning, economic and environmental policy and strategic schemes within P&CD, including the UDP and LDF.

Cross River Partnership (CRP)

CRP is an alliance of 14 partners on both sides of the river in Central London. It provides regeneration solutions, conditions for economic growth and social and physical links. Their work focuses on three main areas, transport, regeneration and employment. The council is the accountable body for CRP.

Visit
www.crossriverpartnerships.org
for more information.

West End Team (WET)

WET help to secure the West End as a world class location through improvement programmes and initiatives. These include maintaining the public realm, encouraging investment, protecting local residents, working with businesses and protecting the area's historic appeal.

District Surveyors

Our professional staff are divided into 'front line' building control teams covering the geographical areas of Westminster North, Westminster South and Special Projects, and have in support specialist teams of mechanical and electrical engineers, and street naming and numbering officers. The team ensure that building regulations and allied legislation are complied with.

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