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## FOREWORD

We are thrilled to be publishing our new public realm and placemaking vision for Victoria: People Wanted.

'Public Realm' - two words often used, arguably not often understood. When designed well, public realm can help tie places together, blurring the lines between the public and private areas. The right public realm can make an area a place. And importantly, a place where people want to be.

There is good and bad in London, but thankfully we are increasingly seeing more of the former. Great, inspiring places - somewhere to recharge, regroup, refuel. Often it's the buildings that get a lot of the focus, but the 'bits in between' are just as important to get right and greater consideration must be given to these areas that play such important roles in our society.

Tourists spend arguably as much time walking to their next cultural destination as they do within the museums, galleries, shops, restaurants and theatres. Similarly, workers make up that daily army that criss-cross across our urban centres. The morning and evening ritual and the desire to find that moment of calm in the busy working day make this army major public space 'consumers'.

You've probably already deduced that here at the Victoria Business Improvement District (BID) we are big fans of high quality public spaces. With 10 years of delivering for Victoria under our belts, and public realm enhancement (and creation) being a key focus during that time, we appreciate the link between pleasant surroundings and successful places.

We believe that public spaces play a vital role in strengthening our societies - and should be designed to function with people at their very heart.

Historically public space has been used to develop democracy serving as places where anyone, regardless of income or position, could meet, discuss, demonstrate, celebrate and publicise their causes. Today, public spaces, especially in busy, urban areas like Victoria, are important areas for communities to come together, to share experiences, coalesce around identities and movements and feel 'at home'.

The creation of new spaces, and enhancement of existing ones, is therefore a significant responsibility and also rare opportunity to create a vital piece of our urban fabric.

At the BID we take this responsibility seriously and we are therefore incredibly proud to be unveiling "People Wanted". This new publication builds on our latest strategy which has served us well since we launched it back in 2015, but reflects some big changes we are seeing across society. In just a few short years we have changed how we are working, living and playing, with much more of a blended approach to work and life. "People Wanted" reflects changing trends, the incorporation of innovation and technology into our lifestyles at a much more all-embracing level, and how all of this changes the spaces we exist in.

This document considers the socio-economic transformation we are seeing in society and then proposes an approach to evolving our public spaces across Victoria. There are some significant, long term projects covered here, not least looking at the railway station and the surrounding area and there are smaller interventions proposed too. When considered together they provide a comprehensive blueprint for this fascinating part of the capital.

Ultimately, this document sets out an ambitious vision for the future of Victoria as a place - a destination people want to visit. A place curated with care and consideration through partnership and a 'people first' mentality.

**Ruth Duston, OBE, OC**  
Chief Executive, Victoria and Victoria Westminster BIDs







Hyde Park  
Corner Station

Green Park

St James Park

Whitehall

Westminster  
Station

Buckingham  
Palace

Birdcage Walk

Parliament  
Square

Palace of  
Westminster

Belgrave  
Square

Grosvenor Place

St James Park  
Station

Toothill Street

Westminster  
Abbey

Palace Street

Castle Lane

Victoria Street

Lower Belgrave Street

Victoria  
Station

Victoria Street

Westminster  
Cathedral

Victoria  
Station

Horseferry Road

Millbank

Eccleston Street

Elizabeth Street

Buckingham Palace Road

Vincent  
Square

Regency Street

South Eaton Place

Vauxhall Bridge Road

St George's Drive

Belgrave Road

Key Planning  
Issues

Pimlico Road

Ebury Bridge

Pimlico  
Station

KEY:

— Study Area

- - - Victoria BID Area

- - - Victoria Westminster BID Area

Fig.01

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

*Victoria developed from humble origins*

Victoria is a location in London that will be forever associated with its monarchical heritage. Its very name ensures the longevity of that attribute. But it wasn't always so. Whilst today 'Victoria' Street links 'Victoria' Station to a 'Palace' at Westminster, and indeed another 'Palace' lies close to the station, the area itself has much humble origins as marshland. Frequently flooded by the River Tyburn and River Thames, it was slow to be developed, and had an unsavoury reputation as an area beyond Westminster Abbey for many years since the Abbey's completion in the sixteenth century.

*Victoria Street, built to celebrate Queen Victoria and link the area to the Abbey*

Slowly however, the area began to change, and particularly with the land being drained to accommodate Cubitt's vision of Pimlico, it began to be properly integrated into London. Victoria Street, built in the 1800s, was conceived on a celebration of the young Queen Victoria's ascension to the throne, as well as a formal route linking the area more directly and effectively with Westminster Abbey.

*Area was imagined to be a forward thinking, innovative and dynamic place*

Imparting a deep sense of monarchical grandeur to the area, Victoria Street gave the naturally adopted name of "Victoria" to its surrounds. It has stayed ever since, and indeed was quickly reinforced when the new railway station (actually two stations) arrived shortly after Victoria Street and, almost inevitably, was christened 'Victoria' Station. The area was seen as forward looking, innovative, dynamic and synonymous with the excitement and desire for progress associated with the new monarch and prospered during Victoria's long reign.

*The changes in economy had an effect on Victoria*

Times change, and its effects can be felt in many ways. Victoria experienced the ebb and flow of the economic, social and technological development cycles that are the mark of time passing. Structural circumstances in the economy evolved, and Victoria began to change with it, as did other parts of London.

*The railway and increase of motor vehicles changed Victoria*

Much as the coming of the railway transformed Victoria at that time, the coming of the motor vehicle in mass numbers nearly a century later also brought change. Whilst not solitary factors in themselves, the increasing domination of the car, allied with the rather monolithic architectural styles of the 1960s and 1970s helped to set Victoria on a trajectory that, though perhaps positive at first, in the long run brought a perceptual sense of decline. Victoria Street was transformed by large monolithic office blocks that served to divorce people (visually and physically) from their ability to enjoy their

built environment. Monarchical association remained, but Victoria Street lost its sense of human scale and architectural grandeur.

*Victoria began an areas to pass through rather than stay*

More cars and traffic came. Roads and streets were 'engineered' with the priority given to traffic and keeping it moving. Victoria lost its sense of dynamism, innovation and progress which had characterized it as an area for so long. Soon it began to become regarded as an area to pass through rather stay. Clearly today 'Westminster' continues to flourish as an area of central government functionality, but also without the urban vitality that denotes and leads to holistically successful places.

*Victoria is changing*

However, Victoria never lost its sense of 'potential', even if not enacted upon for a long time. In more recent years this has begun to be addressed, and a renewed sense of optimism and vigour has returned to the area. The significant transformation brought by Landsec through its developments at Nova and Victoria Street have helped return Victoria to London's consciousness as a location in which to live, work or visit. This has been complemented by other developments such as those by London & Oriental at Buckingham Gate and Northacre on Victoria Street. In addition, Transport for London has recently completed the significant upgrade of Victoria Underground Station and the potential for transformational change in and around the mainline station at Victoria itself is being explored. The renovation and renewal programme for the Palace of Westminster too has brought renewed interest and focus to Victoria, and appreciation that the opportunity for holistic place making should be seized to return Victoria to its rightful place in London's urban anatomy and help it realise its full potential once again. Public realm, as part of placemaking, is very much seen as fundamental element in helping that progressive evolution succeed.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

### *Two Business Improvement Districts*

The Victoria Business Improvement District (VBID) and Victoria Westminster Business Improvement District (VWBID) were established in 2010 and 2018 respectively. The VBID executive team is responsible for both areas. A central theme of their work is enhancing and improving the public realm - a key element in their collective overall objective of positioning the combined areas as a vibrant and thriving destination.

### *Opportune time to prepare a renewed Public Realm Strategy for the two BID areas*

VBID had previously prepared a Public Realm Vision, Public Realm Vision for Victoria by Publica, published in early 2015. With the coming of the new VWBID, it was considered opportune and timely to prepare a revised and renewed strategy that both updated the previous one and extended its coverage to include the new bid (see Fig.01). In March 2019, VBID commissioned BDP and Urban Flow to undertake this task.

### *Optimise public realm's role in creating a place*

Building upon the 2015 study, the purpose of the new strategy is to explore and optimise the public realm's role in active placemaking, acting as a catalyst for helping encourage further economic development, investment and interest in the area.

- to review and update the 2015 strategy in the light of changing contexts;
- prepare a public realm vision and strategy for the combined VBID and VWBID areas, including relevant areas beyond their boundaries;
- establish current public realm conditions across the study area;
- develop a strategic framework to guide future public realm projects and initiatives in both areas;
- review and update as necessary the set of overarching principles presented in the 2015 study;
- present a set of conceptual placemaking and public realm project ideas to suggest how the vision could take form on the ground;
- take account of other strategic projects or initiatives in the area; and
- explore emerging structural trends in key sectors and explore how the public realm could positively respond to them.



Fig.02 - Creation of a Renewed Public Realm Vision and Strategy



## 1.4 APPROACH

### *It's all about people*

This vision document looks to complement the earlier vision strategy and further develop areas of the framework in which improvements to the public realm can be considered. This has been done with people in mind. The vision puts a strong priority on the perspective of people, and is in reference to the desire that this document is about attracting people into the area as a destination in which they feel welcomed, wanted and engaged. This is reflected in the title of this study and underpins the direction of this work and the focus of the document.

The study area has extended beyond the BID boundaries as illustrated in Figure O1 to further develop relationships with the areas surrounding the BIDs.

### *Four overarching steps to creating this vision*

The document has four overarching steps to develop a logical narrative towards developing a vision strategy for the area, which we have defined as understanding the place, understanding the changing context in which public realms schemes need to be developed, development of principles to guide future projects and illustrating examples of what projects could look like to provide a benchmark of aspiration.

### *Understanding the place*

Understanding both the physical and physiological dimensions of the spaces and places within the study area is key to identifying areas of potential improvement and enhancement. It looks to further the analysis undertaken in the previous vision and enhance our understanding of what shapes the physical character and, rather importantly, the perception of the public realm in Victoria and Westminster. In order to best respond to the desire to address the needs of people this should be undertaken within the context of people's day to day experience of places they occupy.

### *City life and its evolving context*

The needs of city dwellers are continually evolving as our cities respond to rapid urbanisation and increasing densities, changes in its inhabitants lifestyle aspirations and technological advancements. This document looks to capture an understanding of these current trends as it is certain that these will inform the requirements of public realm schemes looking to improve the lives of the citizens and visitors to our city.

This document looks to review the current trends associated with the sectors of work, retail, living and transport as these are typically sectors that are seeing significant

change which will have an impact on the public realm of the area. The vision aims is to identify what the public realm response to these changing trends should be in a manner in which can be easily applied to public realm projects. Whilst distilling a complex range of evolving trends into a cohesive set of required responses is challenging, it is never the less an important step to address the more obvious needs and emerging gaps in the provision of public realm space and the emerging requirements of the people who use it.

It should be noted that a separate and more detailed document has been produced on this topic. The materials referenced in this vision are a summary of the studies wider analysis and findings. For further information regarding this area of work please refer to the document PEOPLE WANTED – CHANGING STRUCTURAL TRENDS document.

The solution to the question of how the public realm should respond to changing trends has been addressed by reviewing the range of required responses to these trends and identifying commonalities in the public realm responses to them. Once these commonalities have been identified, these need to be distilled into a set of focused responses, or design principles, that provide the overall mantra to the document. These are the principles that should be incorporated in to the future public realm interventions of all scales ensuring a cohesive identity for the area emerges, one which serves it.

### *Identifying common threads to define design principles*

### *Example projects*

Not to be seen as actual design proposals, these outline studies that reflect how the principles could inspire public realm responses at various levels of intervention. There have been developed to act as a thought catalyst and first spark towards attracting partners and stakeholders towards a common objective. They should be seen as a sequence of studies to define the level of aspiration. However these projects should not be viewed as an isolated sequence of projects, they are all considered to be contributing towards a larger cohesive vision for the public realm in the study area.

They have been classed into groups of small, medium and large scale interventions and cover a range of priority projects at each level. This is not an extensive list and many more opportunities exist in applying this vision to the streets and spaces of Victoria and Westminster.

*Timeframes*

The various scales of intervention will be intertwined with the degree to which other influences will impact the delivery of change. Whilst larger project ambitions will take increased time to develop consensus of approach, small scaled interventions can be enacted quickly and the benefits seen quickly.

There are projects which are reliant on linked projects that would either unlock current blockage or act as the catalyst for change. For example the creation of an improved space around Victoria Station would be sensibly tied to redevelopment works of the station itself.

The strategic reallocation of traffic routes will require strategic city level planning, modelling and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, and building agreement and this will require appropriate time. Whilst the introduction of seating areas within the network of side streets, for instance, is something that would require less engagement and strategic decision making.

Therefore using the illustrative projects as a reference for the level of intervention, these have been grouped into time periods to demonstrate how a range of outcomes from this vision strategy could come to be realised in the short, medium and long term.

## 1.5 REPORT STRUCTURE

The documents structure broadly reflects the order of the approach to the work as outlined in section 1.4. The diagram (Figure 04) reflects the workflow directions and illustrates how the various influences and components have been connected into each other to ensure a linear and logical development of the design principles, example projects, and next steps.

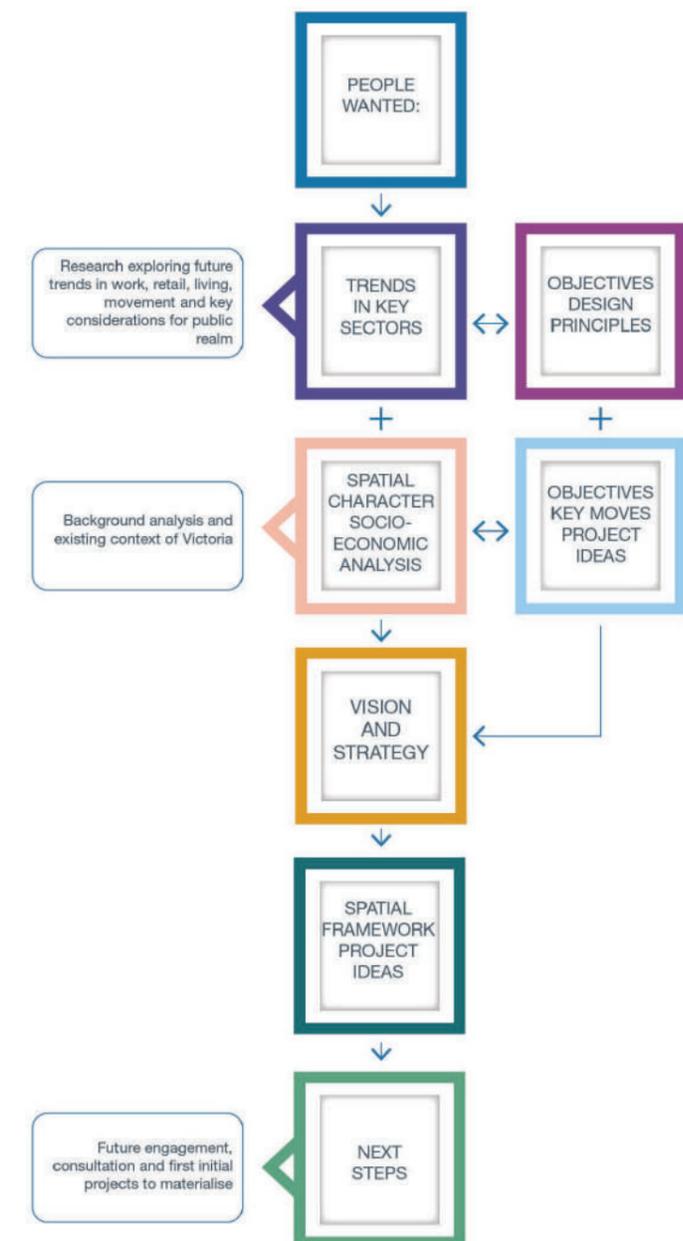


Fig.04 Report Structure





## 2.1 A TALE OF TWO CITIES?

*The study area includes two BID districts*

The study area is made up primarily of the two Business Improvement Districts – Victoria and Victoria Westminster (Figure 05). The contrasts between these two areas is such that the study area might be considered to present something of a ‘Tale of Two Cities’ in terms of experience and physical characteristics.

*The two areas have contrasting characters*

Historically, the Westminster area clustered around the Abbey predates ‘Victoria’, as it became known. Today the contrasts are revealing. Victoria is perceived as the transport interchange area with a more contemporary and commercial feel, and also with more cultural and social amenities for the evenings.

By contrast, Victoria Westminster is defined by its Parliamentary estate and functions, and is architecturally more attractive with a greater degree of heritage architecture at a human scale. There are further contrasts in the evening, with the streets of Victoria Westminster tending to empty of people relative to Victoria, which has a higher level of leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities giving it a much greater degree of relative vitality.

*Victoria Street designed to better connects Belgravia/Pimlico to Westminster*

Victoria Street itself, which opened for use in the mid-1850s, was a celebration of a young Queen Victoria and indicative of a new atmosphere of vitality and innovation associated with her ascension to the throne. It was an urban masterplanning device designed to bring better access and an approach from Belgravia, and the emerging Pimlico area, towards Parliament and Westminster.

*Victoria Street as a great boulevard has been lost*

However, over the years, particularly since the 1970s, this once great boulevard has lost much of its urban integrity and human scale, with the loss of its Victorian mansion blocks and their replacement by monolithic structures for commercial use in the latter half of the twentieth century. More recent developments have addressed some of those issues but there is a point along the street, at around its junction with Broadway, where the transition from ‘Victoria’ to ‘Victoria Westminster’ can most be felt. The more vital elements of street life appear to decline from this point as one advances

down Victoria Street towards Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. The new development at New Scotland Yard may help address this in terms of introducing more vitality to the street at ground level, though much will remain to be done.

*Aspiration to better integrate these areas together*

It is our strategic intent through public realm and placemaking to try to better integrate and knit these areas together, creating a more meaningful and comprehensive experience for the people using them.

*The analysis captures a snapshot of the present day of the two areas*

This chapter presents an overview of the study area, both in terms of physical and urban design analysis, as well as a snapshot of its interesting socio-economic profile. Whilst this analysis reveals the contrasts between both areas, it also forms the basis for thinking about bringing them together through public realm and placemaking, in order that the overall area can be better integrated and optimise its full social, economic and environmental potential. Better integration with its wider urban context is, of course, also a strategic priority.

From this point on, ‘Victoria’ is usually used as a term to mean the whole study area.



Fig.05 - The Study Area

## 2.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

*Rich history has created a unique urbanscape*

Victoria has a rich history, where the urban form and fabric has developed over centuries to create a unique urban environment that we see and experience today.

The following pages highlight a number of significant points in time, from pre-historic times through to 2019, reflecting and describing the changes and development that have happened to form this part of London that we know as Victoria and Westminster.

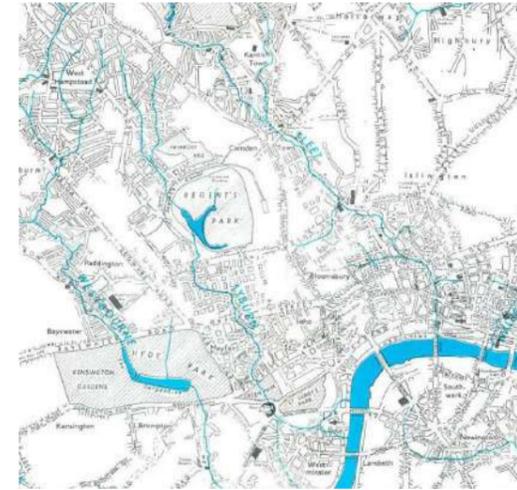


Fig.06 Artistic representation of London's lost rivers. 1

**1603**  
St James' Park was established in 1603 and is different from other Royal Parks because of its birdlife. It was previously a swampy marshland, but once it was drained and landscaped, King James I kept a collection of animals in the park. This included deer, crocodiles and exotic birds. There were aviaries of exotic birds along what is now called Birdcage Walk, and an area known as 'The Decoy', which was used to lure and catch birds. 4

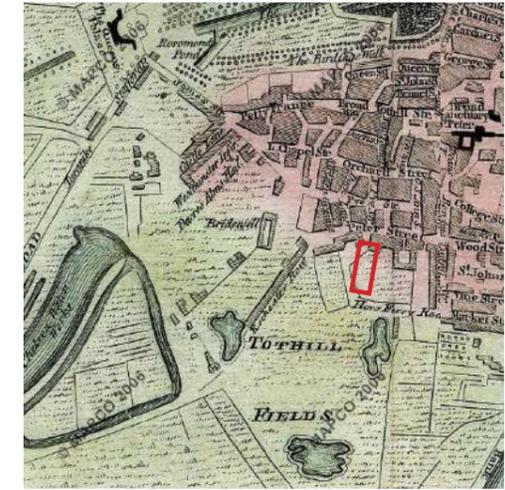
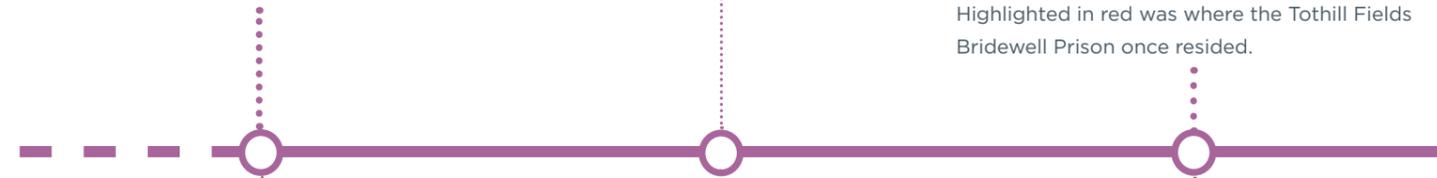


Fig.07 Map of Victoria/Westminster as of 1767. Highlighted in red was where the Tothill Fields Bridewell Prison once resided. 6



**Prehistoric times**  
Victoria/Westminster was once a marshy area often flooded by the river Tyburn which branched from the river Thames. 2  
  
Market traders colonized the area, and as a result, there was a high demand for change in the urban fabric. 3

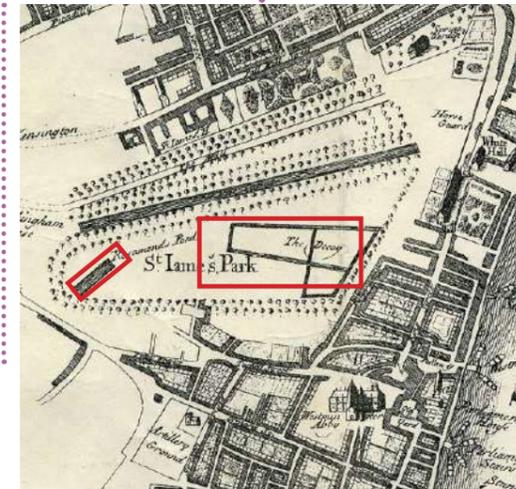


Fig.08 Map of Westminster/Whitehall as of 1720. Highlighted in red (from left to right): Rosamund's Pond, now the site of Buckingham Palace, and The Decoy, now Duck Island. 5

**1618**  
The area by this time was concentrated in crime and poverty. Tothill Fields Bridewell Prison opened and became one of the most important prisons in London. The name was later changed to 'Westminster House of Correction' whereby the inmates were able-bodied but lived in poverty. It was further enlarged in 1655 but then demolished once the larger prison known as 'Millbank Penitentiary' was built to replace it. 7

**1680s**  
The area of Westminster grew rapidly, with settlements around the Abbey and along the river being very dense. 8

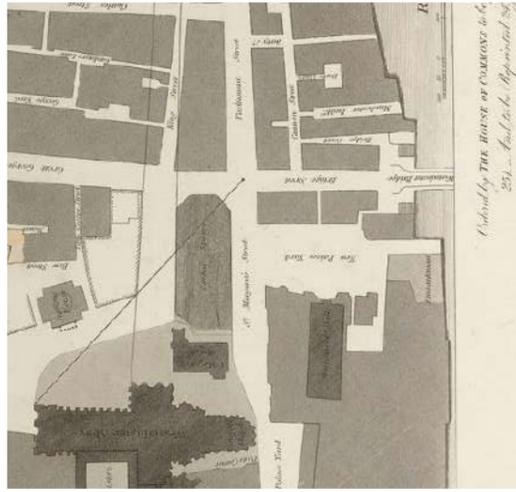


Fig.09 One of the earliest representations of the Westminster Bridge, 1810. 10

**1824**  
Grosvenor Canal opened in the Pimlico area. 12

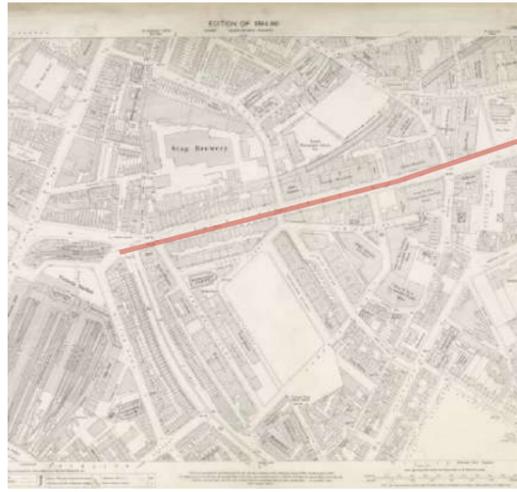


Fig.10 Map of Victoria as of 1895. Highlighted in red is the west end of Victoria Street. 14

**1860**  
Trams in London existed since 1860 and were a part of London for 80 years. There were rarely any in the city as most areas were accommodated by the tube. However within the Victoria/ Westminster area, there was one tram line across Westminster Bridge down to Victoria Street, and one on Vauxhall Bridge Road. 16



Fig.11 Illustration of the slum area in Westminster, 1800s. 18



Fig.12 Map of Victoria as of 1690, highlighted is the area around the Abbey and buildings along the river. 9

**1750**  
As the population grew, the demand for better river connections became increasingly important. The construction of the Westminster Bridge became the catalyst for development in the area.  
  
This new bridge led to more development in the area, where various streets were laid out at the same time. The new Bridge Street leading from Westminster Bridge was continued as Great George Street to St James' Park. Parliament Street was being created and later superseded the previous King Street. 11

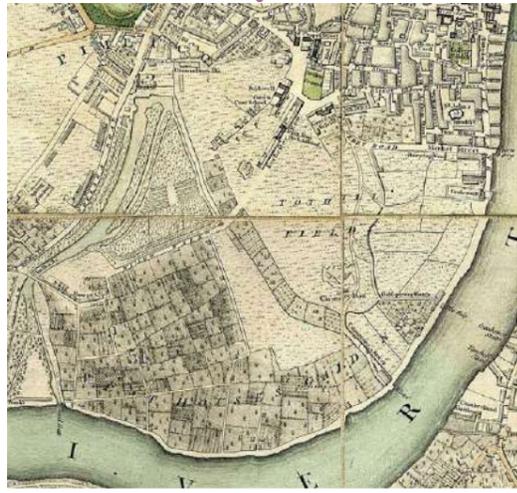


Fig.13 Map of Victoria/Pimlico showing the canal, 1775 when the land was leased to Chelsea Waterworks. 13

**1851**  
Victoria Street was developed to replace the slum housing of the area. 15



Fig.14 Image of tram on Vauxhall Bridge Road (taken between 1948 - 1951). 17

**1862**  
Slum clearance around the area inclusive of Old Pye Street, Great Peter Street, St Anne's Street and Abbey Orchard Street, known as 'The Devil's Acre' had begun (east side of Victoria Street). 19

Source:  
Refer to Appendix 1 for bibliography

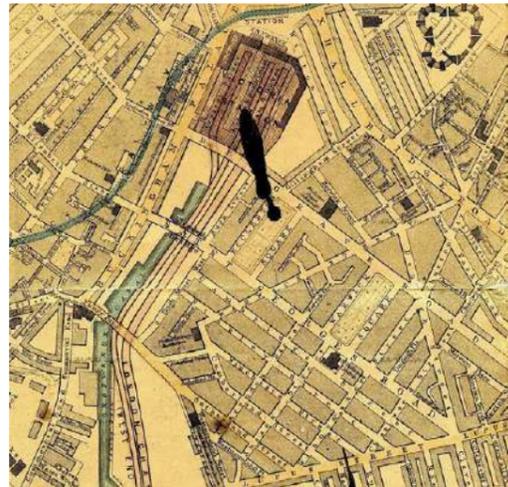


Fig.15 Map of Victoria Station as of 1868, (to the left is the Grosvenor Canal). 21

**1868**  
An Act of Parliament, passed in 1806, allowed the clearing of slums to open up the views of the Palace of Westminster. After the reconstruction of the Palace (due to a major fire in 1834), the area was laid out as Parliament Square in 1868. 22

**1868**  
Victoria underground station opens. 23

**1870**  
New Parliament buildings are completed at the Palace of Westminster. 24



Fig.16 Map of Victoria as of 1897, highlighted in red: the 'Army & Navy' store on Victoria Street. 26

**1920s**  
The London Underground Headquarters was built and was the tallest building at the time in London. 28

**1903**  
Westminster Cathedral was established. 29

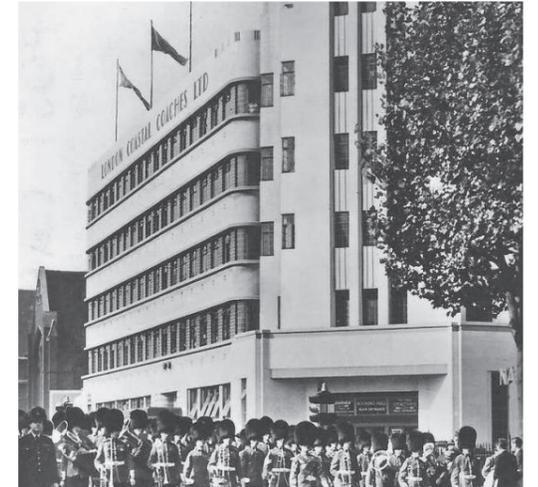


Fig.17 Image of Victoria Coach Station, early 1950s. 31

**1863**  
Victoria Station opens, where the rail lines follow alongside the basin. The area gained a new purpose connecting west London, south London, southern England and the continent. The Grosvenor Canal eventually fell into dereliction and was subsequently filled in order to accommodate a new railway. 20



Fig.18 Victoria Underground Station in the 1920s. 25

**1872**  
'Army & Navy' opens as the first major retailer on Victoria Street (now a 'House of Fraser' department store). It wasn't until 50 years later that the street became a thriving area for retailers. 27



Fig.19 Image of 55 Broadway, Tfl Headquarters in the present. 30

**1932**  
The area of Victoria becomes essential for transport as Victoria Coach Station opens. 32

**1940s**  
 Because of WWII bombing, the Westminster side of Victoria Street was severely damaged. 33



Fig.20  
 Image of Westminster Abbey during the bomb raids of WWII. 35

**1975**  
 Construction of the Cathedral Piazza. 37



Fig.21  
 BDP image of Cardinal Place

**2018**  
 Victoria Station Upgrade is completed in 2019, including a new North ticket hall, step free access throughout the station and a new entrance via Cardinal Place. 42

**2017**  
 In 2017, construction for the first phase of Nova projects are completed. 41

➔ TODAY



Fig.22  
 Image of 102 Victoria Street during the bomb raids of WWII. 34

**1950s**  
 Post war developers wanted to build new, not repair. The aim was to leave no pre-1940s buildings in Victoria standing. Victoria was to become second only to Whitehall as a primary location for governmental departments. 36



Fig.23  
 Image of Westminster Cathedral Piazza, 1975. 38

**2005**  
 Construction for Cardinal Place is completed. 39

**2016**  
 In 2016, The New Scotland Yard development receives planning permission. 40



Fig.24  
 BDP image of Nova 41

Source:  
 Refer to Appendix 1 for bibliography

## 2.3 VICTORIA AND WESTMINSTER TODAY

### *Variety of personalities*

Victoria and Victoria Westminster are two key locations in London, with a diverse and vibrant context framed by Belgravia, Pimlico, St James Park, Whitehall, Millbank and the River Thames. This provides the study area with a variety of personalities. It is part of Belgravia, with calm and elegant cream frontages beginning immediately to the west. It is part of Westminster, confident, important and home to the seat of national government. It is Pimlico, with ornate frontages and quiet residential streets just steps away to the south or east. It nestles under tranquil St James's Park and encompasses key landmarks. Yet at its centre, is the hustle and bustle of London's second busiest major transport terminal. It surprises, relaxes, challenges, enchants: it's a little (or at times a lot) of everything.

### *Hosts a collection of key landmarks and cultural assets*

The area covered by the Victoria Business Improvement District (VBID) and the Victoria and Westminster Business Improvement District (VWBID) hosts a collection of landmarks, points of interest, and historical and cultural assets, some which are of national significance, such as Victoria and St James's Park Stations, Westminster Cathedral, Parliament Square, The Houses of Parliament, Wellington Barracks and Westminster Abbey. These sit within small and large-scale historic and contemporary developments that include a rich and diverse mix of transport nodes, offices, retail, culture, leisure and entertainment uses including renowned companies, shops, theatres, hotels, cinemas and restaurants; alongside an existing thriving residential community.

### *Key gateway yet confusing environment*

Victoria offers a key national and international gateway into London, with important transport nodes making the area a highly prominent location. Despite this however, the current condition and environment of the place is confusing. Victoria currently feels like an island that is unwelcoming, isolated and unsupportive to its surrounding context. The organic urban form and lack of wayfinding make it difficult to orientate yourself against the wider London landmarks and neighbouring areas, while the poor public realm creates a undefined sense of place contributing to an hostile experience for those who work, live and visit the area.

### *Currently undergoing significant change*

Victoria is however currently undergoing significant change and investment, resulting in dramatic changes to this context. Recent schemes include Land Securities' recent Nova development and developments along Victoria Street, the Victoria Station Underground Upgrade, Northacre's development at New Scotland Yard, potential development at Victoria's mainline station, Crossrail 2, the potential relocation or rationalisation of Victoria Coach Station, the decant and refurbishment of the Palace of Westminster and the rejuvenation of Christchurch Gardens. The transforming context creates great opportunities to review the existing place, highlight its assets, and establish a strengthened identity for Victoria as a local and global destination.



Fig.25 - Locational Context



Fig.26



Fig.27



Fig.28



Fig.29  
Victoria is very connected with a multitude of transport links



Fig.30  
An evolving and growing collection of offices



Fig.31  
Existing and new residential homes are in demand



Fig.32



Fig.33



Fig.34



Fig.35  
Victoria has a wide range of retail offers



Fig.36  
Pubs, bars and leisure promote a vibrant day and night life



Fig.37  
A multitude of cultural offers attracts visitors

## 2.4 POLICY CONTEXT

### *Established Planning Policy Framework*

The main planning policy context is provided by:

- National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
- The London Plan (2016) and draft new London Plan (2019)
- Westminster Unitary Development Plan (2007), City Plan (2016) and draft City Plan 2019-2040 (2019)
- Mayor's Transport Strategy

The planning policy context in Westminster and London is currently undergoing significant change. Both the draft new London Plan and draft Westminster City Plan 2019-2040 are scheduled for adoption in early 2020, and in some cases have already been treated as the relevant policy target.

The new London Plan sets out the Mayor's ambition for 'Good Growth', seeking to ensure that the quantum of development required over the plan period is delivered in a way that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. This is reflected in the introduction of a number of key policy changes by the plan - including an Urban Greening Factor to quantify requirements for green cover in new developments, a net zero carbon requirement for all development, a firmer approach to prevention of crime and terrorism, and an ambition for a London-wide Heritage Strategy to support the delivery of heritage-led growth.

The Westminster City Plan 2019-2040 echoes these key themes, introducing an ambition for a zero-carbon borough by 2040, ten years ahead of the Mayor's target; making a commitment to production of a revised Westminster World Heritage Site Management Plan; and aiming to produce new supplementary planning guidance on heritage and design.

### *Victoria is located within the Central Activities Zone*

The current and draft London Plans locate Victoria within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ), designated for its unique international, national and London-wide roles based on a rich mix of uses including office, cultural, arts, entertainment, night-time economy and tourism functions. The draft new London Plan identifies a high potential for commercial growth within the CAZ retail cluster along Victoria Street, which also has regional or sub-regional significance to the night-time economy. New development must seek

### *Victoria designated as an Opportunity Area*

to balance the area's competing functions with Victoria's residential neighbourhoods, enhancing the attractiveness and inclusiveness of the CAZ to residents, visitors and businesses, including through public realm improvements and the reduction of traffic dominance.

Victoria has also been designated as an Opportunity Area by the GLA, identifying the area as one that will see the most significant level of change, with a capacity to deliver at least 4,000 new jobs and 1,000 new homes over the draft London Plan period. This is reflected in the volume of recent and upcoming major development schemes as detailed in section 2.18.

### *Westminster City Plan 2019-2040 identifies spatial development priorities in the area*

The Westminster City Plan 2019-2040 identifies a number of spatial development priorities for the Victoria Opportunity Area, including improved integration between public transport modes, inclusive and high-quality public realm that enhances sense of place and encourages dwelling, enhanced routes and connections between visitor attractions, and the safeguarding and enhancement of heritage assets, in particular the World Heritage Site. The Plan also identifies a number of key development sites as shown in Figure 38.

### *Opportunity for tall buildings*

The Opportunity Area is also identified as an acceptable area for tall buildings, the development of which is generally discouraged within Westminster. The prevailing context height in Victoria is six residential storeys (20m), and tall buildings of two to three times this height may be appropriate, provided that they do not cause harm to the area's heritage assets, and demonstrate how they will aid legibility and complement existing landmark, the setting of Victoria Station, and Victoria Street.

### *Planning policy supports a safe, attractive and accessible public realm*

The planning policy framework provides strong support for a safe, attractive, accessible and well-designed public realm, using high-quality and durable materials, and integrating landscaping as part of the streetscape design. Development should contribute to improving connectivity, legibility and permeability; ensuring that street clutter is kept to a minimum; and that signs and advertisements are sensitively designed in terms of size, location, local context, street scene and the wider townscape. These priorities are applicable across London but particularly pertinent to Victoria on account of the significant opportunity to improve upon and enhance the area's existing context, as discussed in the following sections.



Fig.38 - Policy Context

## 2.5 CONSERVATION AREAS AND LISTED BUILDINGS

### *13 Conservation Areas in the study area*

There are 56 Conservation Areas in Westminster, with 13 sitting partially or entirely within the study area (as illustrated in Figure 42). The Conservation Area designation recognises the architectural and historic interest of these areas and seeks to protect their special character and appearance that is still present today. While each Conservation Area has a unique character, these broadly encompass the following qualities:

- Westminster Abbey and Parliament Square – an international tourist destination and seat of democracy, dominated by world-famous landmarks and buildings,
- Smith Square and Millbank – a combination of monumental buildings fronting the River Thames, and more modest residential terraces.
- Royal Parks, Birdcage Walk and Grosvenor Gardens – dominated by public open spaces of St James's Park, Green Park and Grosvenor Gardens, surrounding Buckingham Palace and Gardens.
- Broadway and Christchurch Gardens, Peabody Estates, Vincent Square and Medway Street – a lively, mixed character created by generally small scale townscape surrounding gardens and squares.
- Belgravia and Pimlico – larger areas with a formal layout of squares and crescents, creating a high degree of townscape unity.
- Westminster Cathedral – dominated by views of the Cathedral from Victoria Street.

### *Victoria has a varied character and appearance*

The Conservation Areas within Victoria are generally smaller in size in comparison to the larger surrounding areas of Pimlico, Mayfair, Belgravia and the Royal Parks. This indicates the varied character and appearance of the BID area, which contains a diversity of architectural styles, creating a rich palette of high quality materials and

*The study area contains a number of Conservation Areas, the Westminster World Heritage Site, and a rich collection of designated and undesignated heritage buildings and structures. However, the environment fails to celebrate these to their full potential through public realm and efficient lighting, creating an opportunity to enhance these assets alongside bolder improvements to less sensitive areas of the BID boundaries.*

### *World Heritage Site within the study area*

The study area also overlaps with the Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey including St Margaret's Church World Heritage Site ('Westminster WHS'), designated by UNESCO for its 'Outstanding Universal Value' as part of the world's cultural and natural heritage.

### *Rich cultural history which is disguised*

While the built environment of Victoria and Westminster therefore reflects the area's rich cultural history, in many cases this has been slowly eroded by its busy, polluted and chaotic environment. Westminster Cathedral, the Grosvenor Hotel and Victoria Station are all examples of grand architecture which have been disguised by the dense urban environment of buses, traffic and street clutter; which also hides many other less prominent listed assets.

### *Opportunity for the public realm to reveal and enhance heritage*

These current detractors represent a key development opportunity for the public realm to better reveal and enhance the significance of Victoria's built heritage. At the same time, a substantial proportion of the BID is made up of areas beyond Conservation Areas and the WHS which contain a lower proportion of designated assets. Public realm improvements in these areas will enjoy a greater level of freedom, representing an opportunity for bold and innovative design, while not forgetting the surrounding heritage setting.



Fig.39  
Blewcoat School



Fig.40  
Westminster Cathedral

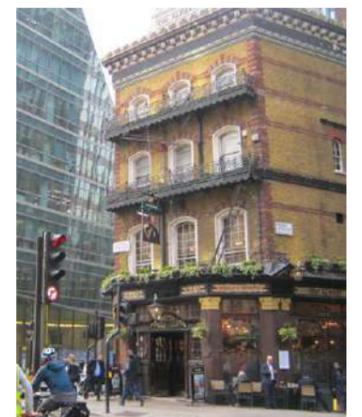
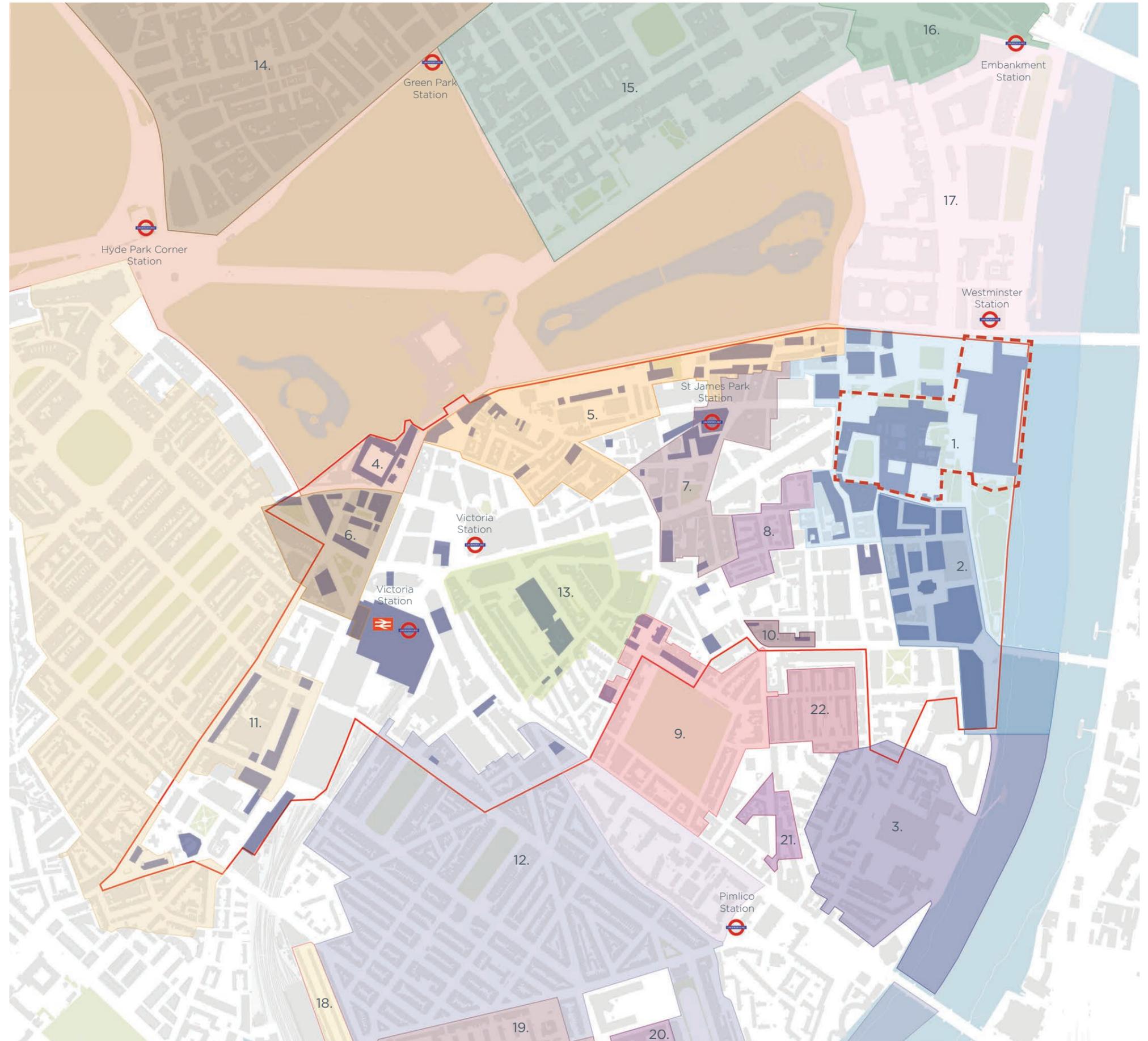


Fig.41  
The Albert Public House

- KEY:**
- Study Area
  - Listed Buildings
  - - - World Heritage Site
- Conservation Areas**
1. Westminster Abbey + Parliament Square
  2. Smith Square
  3. Millbank
  4. Royal Parks
  5. Birdcage Walk
  6. Grosvenor Gardens
  7. Broadway + Christchurch Gardens
  8. Peabody Estates
  9. Vincent Square
  10. Medway Street
  11. Belgravia
  12. Pimlico
  13. Westminster Cathedral
  14. Mayfair
  15. St James's
  16. Trafalgar Square
  17. Whitehall
  18. Peabody Avenue
  19. Churchill Gardens
  20. Dolphin Square
  21. Regency Street
  22. Page Street



Source:  
<https://lbhf.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=7cab3cdf6e344a0fb24df59ed6b9bdc5>  
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search?clearresults=True>

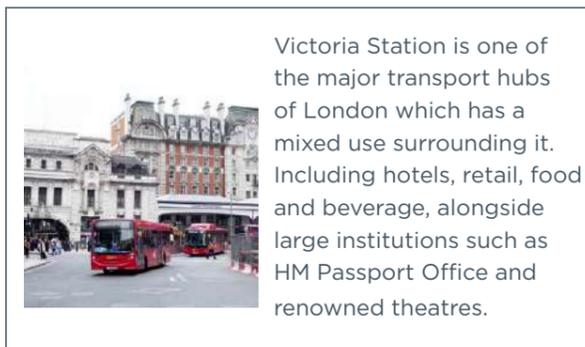
Fig.42 - Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

## 2.6 CHARACTER AREAS AND LAND USE

*A range of characters across the area*

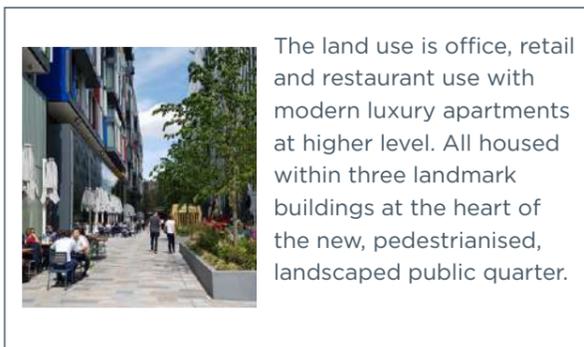
Victoria and Westminster are unique areas which have been informed by layers of history, architectural styles and uses over a number of years. Figure 57 sets out the diverse collection of character areas throughout the study area. These are broadly aligned with Victoria Neighbourhood Forum plan which has recently been developed, with some small variations such as Nova, Belgravia, Cardinal Place, Parliament, Millbank and Christchurch/Strutton Ground.

The 14 character areas have been defined by their urban structure, public realm setting, landmarks and heritage assets and prevailing land use as illustrated below:



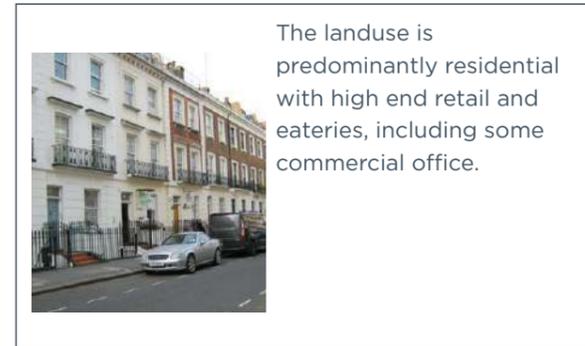
Victoria Station is one of the major transport hubs of London which has a mixed use surrounding it. Including hotels, retail, food and beverage, alongside large institutions such as HM Passport Office and renowned theatres.

Fig.45 - 3. Station Hub



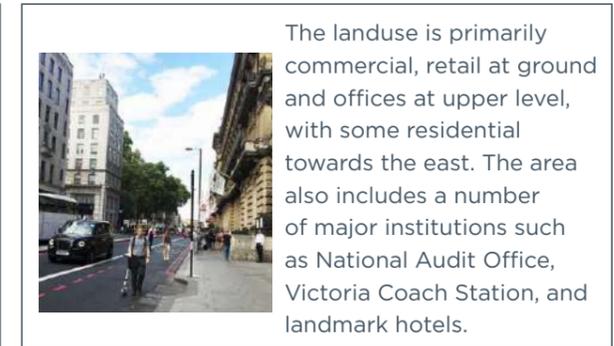
The land use is office, retail and restaurant use with modern luxury apartments at higher level. All housed within three landmark buildings at the heart of the new, pedestrianised, landscaped public quarter.

Fig.46 - 4. Nova



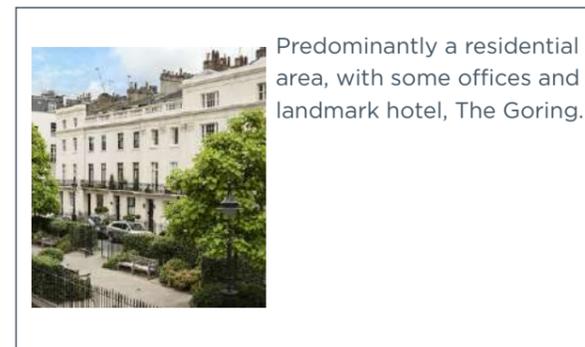
The landuse is predominantly residential with high end retail and eateries, including some commercial office.

Fig.43 - 1. Belgravia



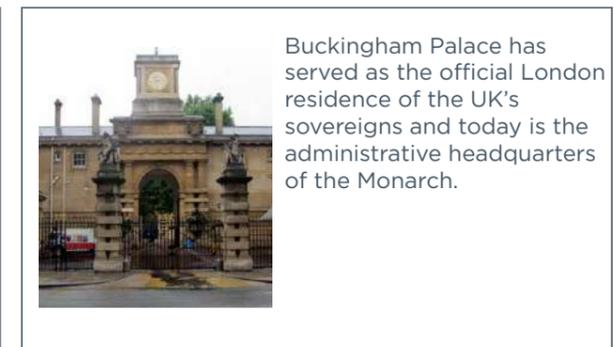
The landuse is primarily commercial, retail at ground and offices at upper level, with some residential towards the east. The area also includes a number of major institutions such as National Audit Office, Victoria Coach Station, and landmark hotels.

Fig.44 - 2. Buckingham Palace Road



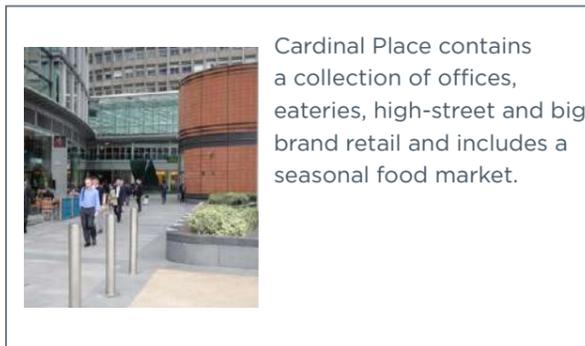
Predominantly a residential area, with some offices and landmark hotel, The Goring.

Fig.47 - 5. Victoria Square



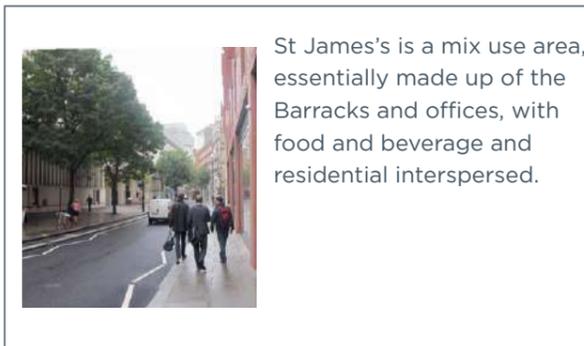
Buckingham Palace has served as the official London residence of the UK's sovereigns and today is the administrative headquarters of the Monarch.

Fig.48 - 6. Buckingham Palace & Grounds



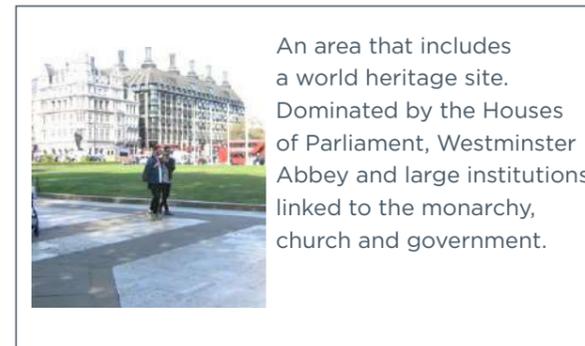
Cardinal Place contains a collection of offices, eateries, high-street and big brand retail and includes a seasonal food market.

Fig.49 - 7. Cardinal Place



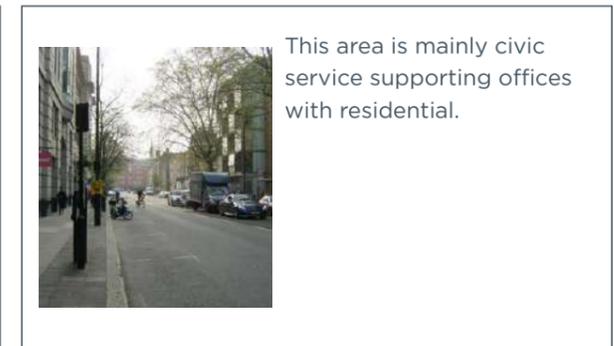
St James's is a mix use area, essentially made up of the Barracks and offices, with food and beverage and residential interspersed.

Fig.50 - 8. St James



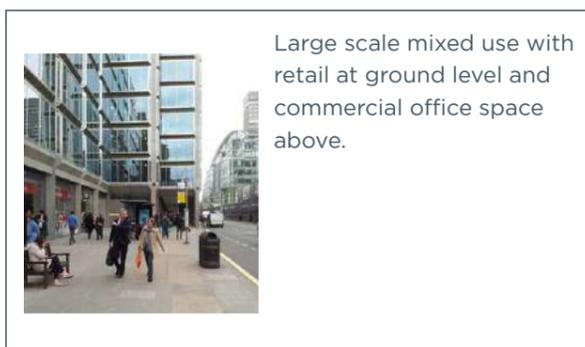
An area that includes a world heritage site. Dominated by the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey and large institutions linked to the monarchy, church and government.

Fig.51 - 9. Parliament



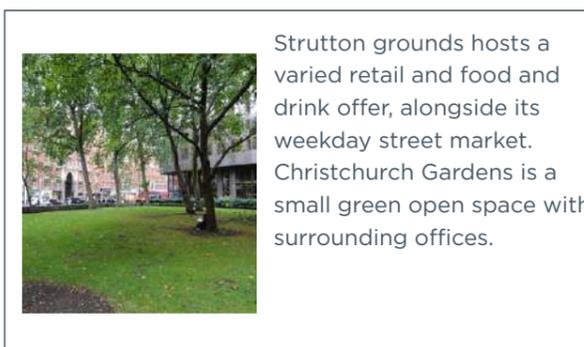
This area is mainly civic service supporting offices with residential.

Fig.52 - 10. Millbank



Large scale mixed use with retail at ground level and commercial office space above.

Fig.53 - 11. Victoria Street



Strutton grounds hosts a varied retail and food and drink offer, alongside its weekday street market. Christchurch Gardens is a small green open space with surrounding offices.

Fig.54 - 12. Christchurch Gardens/Strutton Ground



Having Westminster Cathedral at the centre, the area is filled with a high density of residential blocks, with small local shops, cafes and public houses.

Fig.55 - 13. Cathedral



The landuse if predominately retail, food and beverage.

Fig.56 - 14. Wilton Road

*There are a number of areas, such as Belgravia, St James, Parliament, Millbank and Cathedral which have a strong heritage feel. Whilst other areas such as Nova, Cardinal Place and Victoria Street that have a more contemporary feel. When designing the public realm, including quality materials, street furniture, security and lighting, cohesive palettes are to be developed to complement and enhance the character of each area.*

- KEY:
-  Study Area
  -  1. Belgravia
  -  2. Buckingham Palace Road
  -  3. Station Hub
  -  4. Nova
  -  5. Victoria Square
  -  6. Buckingham Palace
  -  7. Cardinal Place
  -  8. St James
  -  9. Parliament
  -  10. Millbank
  -  11. Victoria Street
  -  12. Christchurch Gardens/Strutton Ground
  -  13. Cathedral
  -  14. Wilton Road

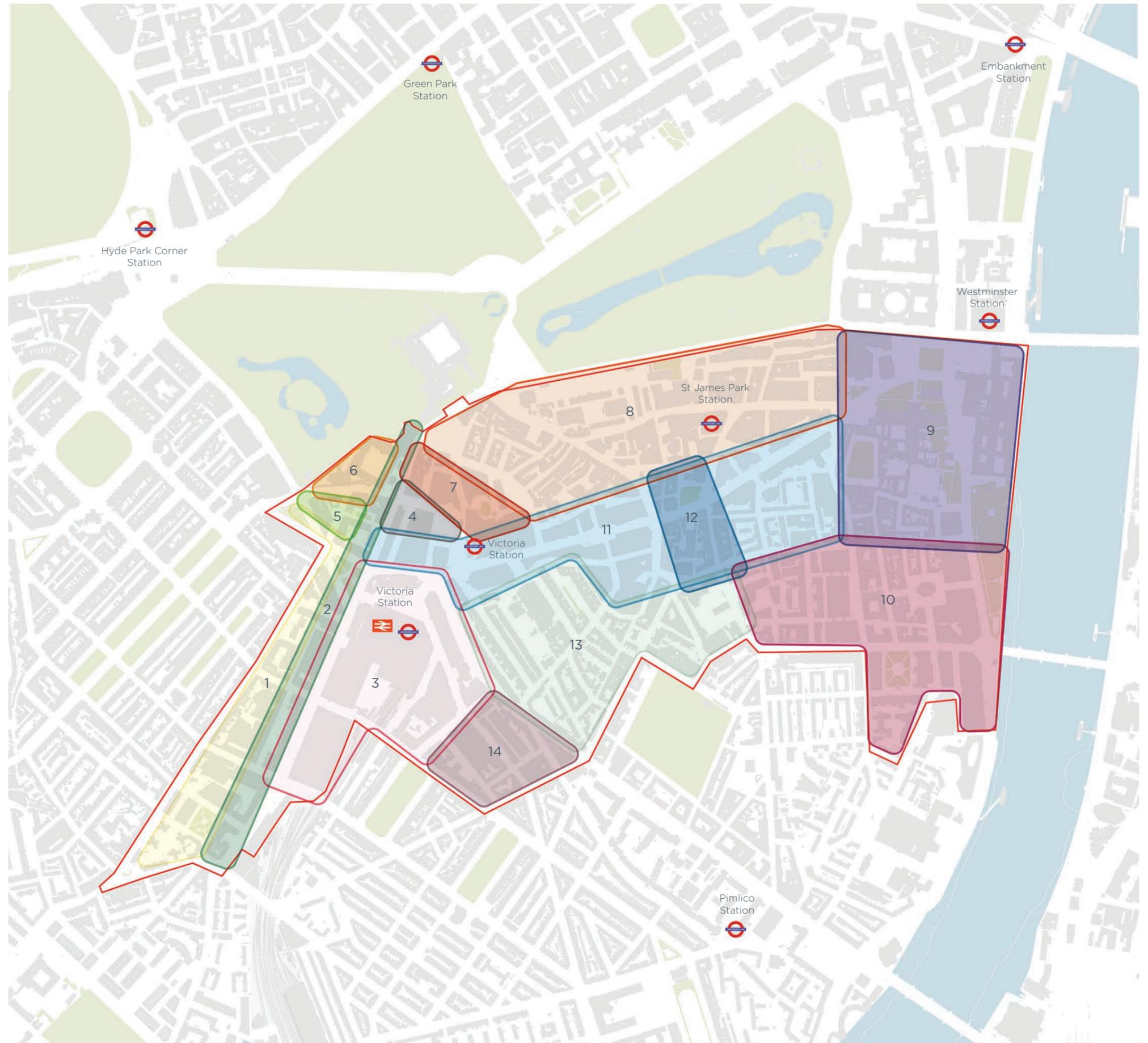


Fig.57 - Character Areas

## 2.7 SHOPPING + STREET LIFE

*Shopping aids urban street life*

Shopping is considered one of the most important components of urban street life. Victoria and Westminster enjoys a rich, yet diverse retailing and shopping culture throughout the area.

*Destinations need to be linked*

With recent developments such as Nova and Cardinal Place, Victoria and Westminster is emerging as a key destination for visitors and shop goers. However the extent to which visitors explore the area further is less certain. The links between different areas could be enhanced to encourage greater footfall around the wider area.

*Victoria and Westminster has a rich mixture of National, City and Local shopping environments that could be better connected*

The adjacent diagram (Figure 62) identifies a hierarchy of shopping activity ranging across a National, City and Local level across Victoria and Westminster. The resulting mix of shopping streets and destinations is relatively broad and suggests that the existing network could be enhanced to encourage people to explore a fuller range of shopping opportunities within the wider area. The shopping destinations can be summarised as follows:

- there are a number of key Shopping/Retail/Food and Beverage ‘Destinations’ that are reflected as popular clusters and attractions within the area, such as Nova and Cardinal place. Many of these destinations are located within close proximity of Victoria Station, and additionally south of St James’s Park Station;
- Victoria Street is identified as a ‘National’ Retail/Street Life Environment, a main shopping street with large retail stores. This includes international retailers as well as a recognised department store, House of Fraser. Thus attracting a significant number of people from within and from outside the immediate area;
- ‘City’ Retail/Street Life Environment are the streets characterised by a diversity of smaller shops, including local boutiques and stores. Attracting the passer-byes with a charming scale and unique presence; and
- ‘Local’ Retail/Street Life Environment, are the streets with convenience shops and local stores primarily attracting residents and local workers within close proximity.



Fig.58 National Retail/Street Life Environment: Victoria Street



Fig.59 City Retail/Street Life Environment: Strutton Ground



Fig.60 Local Retail/Street Life Environment: Dartmouth Street



Fig.61 Shopping/Retail/Food and Beverage Destinations: Nova

- KEY:**
- Study Area
  - ← National Retail/Street Life Environment
  - ← City Retail/Street Life Environment
  - - - Local Retail/Street Life Environment
  - Shopping/Retail/Food and Beverage Destinations
- 1 Eccleston Yard:  
Hub for independent businesses, innovative entrepreneurs and creative talent. Food, fashion, co-working and wellbeing.
  - 2 Victoria Place:  
Collection of popular high-street shops, restaurants and cafes.
  - 3 Nova:  
Destination of eateries and recreational outlets. Including restaurants and leisure venues.
  - 4 Cardinal Place:  
Collection of eateries, high-street and big brand clothes, shoes and accessories shops and seasonal food market.
  - 5 Angela Hooper Place / Seaforth Place:  
Destination of restaurants and bars.
  - 6 Strutton Ground Market:  
A variety of hot food stalls and coffee, clothing, accessories, flowers and plants, jewellery and footwear and surrounding retail units.
  - 7 A network of restaurants, cafes and amenities have recently opened around Palmer Street and Butler Place.
  - 8 Wilton Road and Warwick Way are established retail streets supporting the surrounding community of Pimlico.

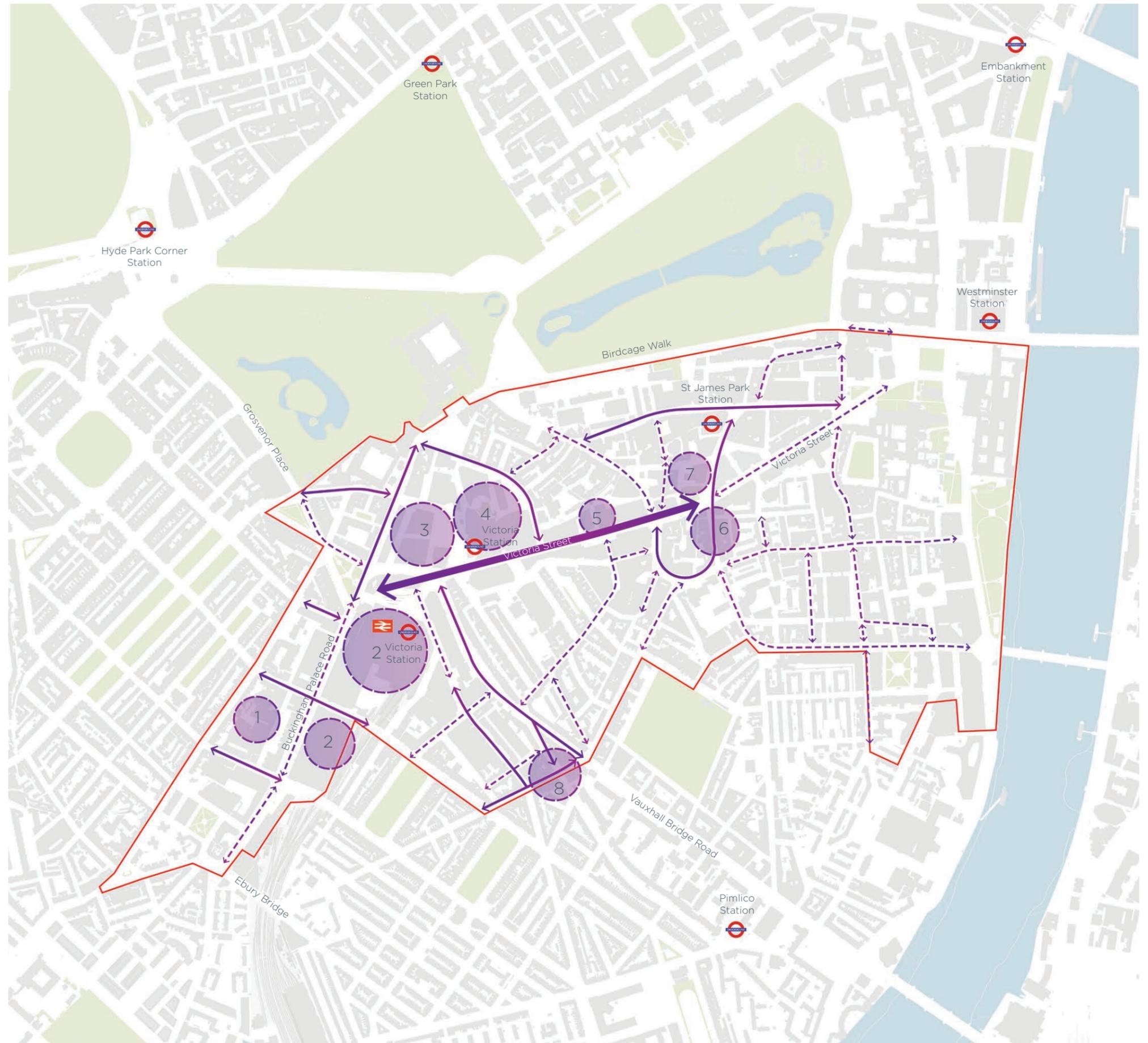


Fig.62 - Shopping and Street Life

## 2.8 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

*Open spaces are underutilised and lack quality*

Whilst Victoria and Westminster sit adjacent to some of London's finest parks of St James's and Green Park, the open spaces within the Victoria and Westminster study boundary are currently underutilised and lack an offer of good quality public green spaces.

*Predominantly hard paved with few green spaces*

The public realm is predominantly hard paved with few green spaces. In which a number of the green public areas are gated (Victoria Square, Grosvenor Gardens) or privately controlled (Cardinal Place Roof Gardens, Nova) which creates uncertainty towards accessibility and use and as a result they are not celebrated or contribute to their full potential. Which further creates opportunities for anti-social behaviour in some of the accessible spaces, which exacerbates their unwelcoming appearance to many.

*A number of small incidental green spaces*

A number of small incidental green spaces exist within the study area, some associated with surrounding residential developments and others with commercial units; such as the rain gardens installed on Carlisle Place outside John Lewis Headquarters, green walls on Rubens Hotel, roofs gardens on the developments such as Zig Zag, and planters dispersed throughout the area.

*Limited street trees*

Tree coverage is scattered throughout the study area, with large voids around the station and Victoria Street. More mature tree planting can be found within Grosvenor Gardens, Christchurch Gardens, Parliament and Westminster Abbey.

*Lack of planting on key routes*

There is a currently a lack of planting in general along the main circulation routes in Victoria. Not only does this have an impact on the overall heat island effect and air pollution levels, but also creates a visually harsh and lifeless environment.

*Victoria and Westminster are adjacent to some of London's most prominent green spaces but are themselves lacking in good quality accessible green infrastructure. Additional tree and shrub planting where possible will enhance the quality of the public realm and improve health and well being, air quality, the heat island effect and biodiversity within the area.*



Fig.63 - Cardinal Place Planting initiatives



Fig.64 - Established Grosvenor Gardens

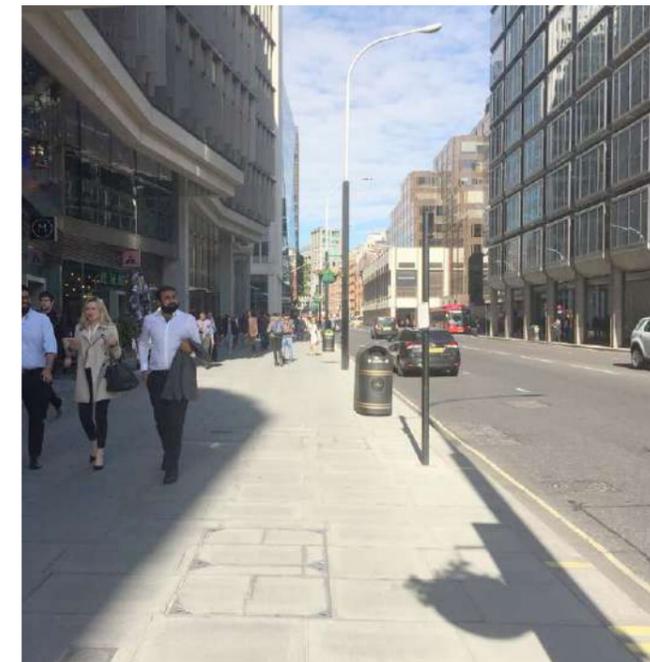


Fig.65 - Victoria Street Reflecting the Lack of Green on Streets



Fig.66 - Christchurch Gardens

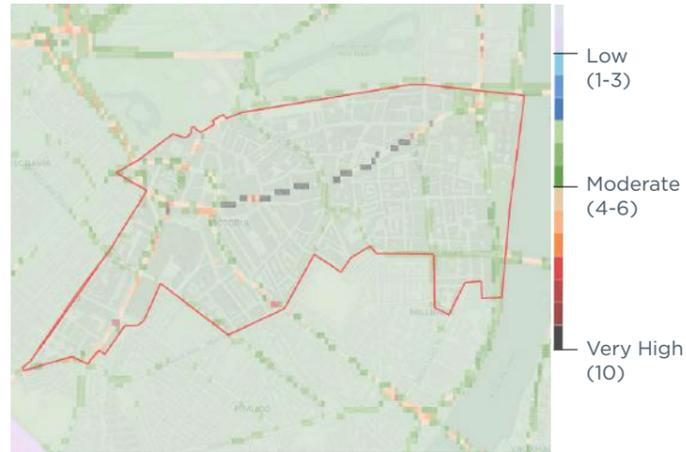


Fig.67 - Air Pollution , December 2019  
Source: <https://www.londonair.org.uk/>

The following pollutants are included in this map:

- Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sup>2</sup>)
- Ozone (O<sup>3</sup>)
- Particles (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>)



Fig.68 - Urban Heat island Effect ©OpenStreetMap contributors, 2012 - 2017  
Source: <https://www.urban-climate.be/>

- KEY:
- Study Area
  - Private Green Space
  - Public Accessible Green Space
  - Trees
  - ✱ Registered Gardens

Source: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search?clearresults=true>



Fig.69 - Green Infrastructure

## 2.9 BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Lost rivers of Victoria and Westminster*

Victoria and Westminster has an interesting history of lost rivers and watercourses that once ran through the area. This formed marshy land in pre-historic times, through which ran the River Tyburn and later the Grosvenor's Basin which connected into the River Thames. The river and basin are both covered by roads and developments today but the watercourses can still be traced across the study area (refer to Figure 74), reflecting a rich history that lies underground.

### *River Tyburn*

The River Tyburn historically runs from Hampstead down to Regent's Park and continues through Marylebone. It runs through Buckingham Palace before splitting into two branches, one flowing through Pimlico, and the other along Buckingham Gate before splitting again into two branches, surrounding the site of Westminster Abbey. One of these branches run through Great College Street while the other makes a turn towards King Charles Street and Derby Gate before they both meet the Thames. 43

### *Grosvenor Basin at Victoria Station*

The creek that lay off the River Thames was enlarged to become a canal and later the Grosvenor Basin. The owner of the land, Sir Richard Grosvenor, leased the land to the Chelsea Waterworks Company in 1724 and a tide mill was built to pump water to the reservoirs and provide drinking water to west London. In 1823, the lease expired and in 1824 the Earl of Grosvenor turned the creek into a canal with a tidal lock and an upper basin. The basin was described as 'immense', and stretched across around 0.75 miles inland. 44

It is said to have been used to supply coal for the area when an act was passed in 1852 to stop the extraction of water from the River Thames. The size of the existing basin/canal that we see today is a result of it being consistently halved in length, due to the construction of Victoria Station and the residential area, Grosvenor Waterside. 45

*A series of lost rivers and watercourses once ran through the area. Whilst this historic blue infrastructure now lies underground, it can still be traced across the study area and provide insights into the urban structures we see today.*

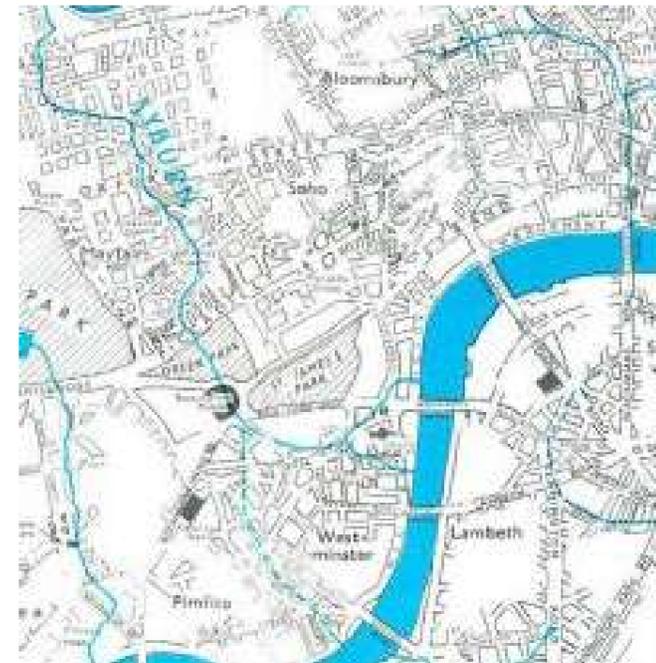


Fig.70 - Illustration of the Lost Rivers in London 46

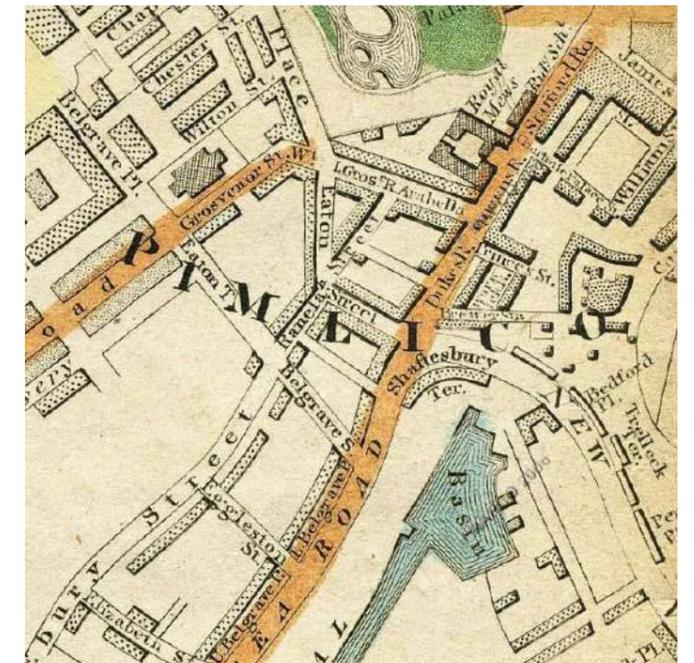


Fig.71 - Map of the Grosvenor Basin as it was in 1830 47



Fig.72 - View of St James' Park Lake 48



Fig.73 - View of River Thames, Westminster 49

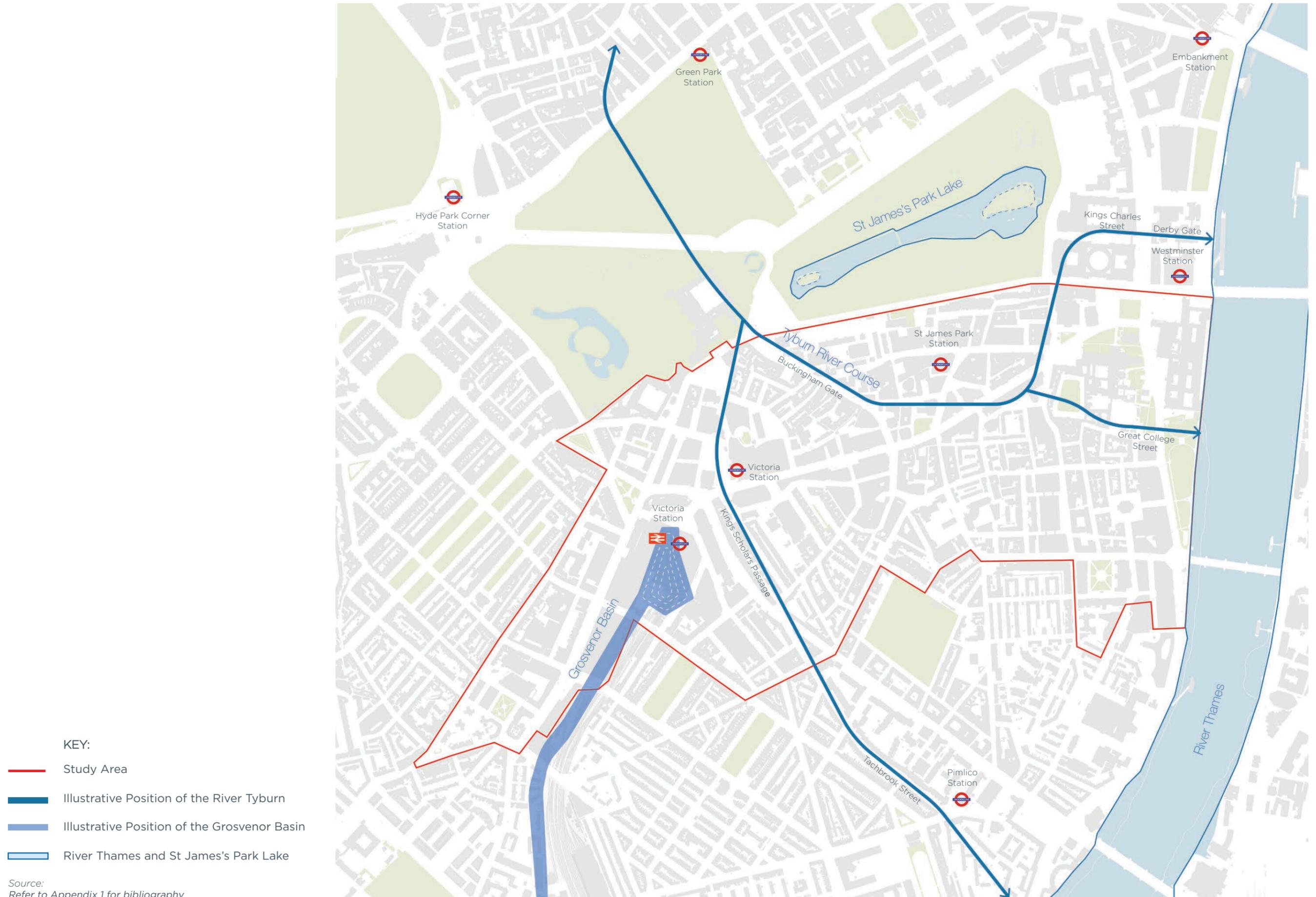


Fig.74 - Illustrative Location of the River Tyburn and Grosvenor Basin

## 2.10 WALKING TO/FROM KEY VISITOR DESTINATIONS

### *Globally recognised destinations within walking distance*

Victoria has a number of globally recognised landmarks all within close proximity of each other. Many of these landmarks are within a short 5-10 minute walking distance from the key stations such as Victoria, St James Park and Westminster (as illustrated on Figure 79).

Slightly further to the north are other key destinations of London such as St James' Park, Green Park, Hyde Park, the West End and Mayfair. Belgravia, Knightsbridge and Chelsea sit to the West. Pimlico and Battersea sits to the south, while Whitehall, the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey (a World Heritage Site) are to the east. These attractions and landmarks generate a number of visitors daily which means the public realm is under pressure to provide a quality experience.

### *Finer grain of attractions and destinations*

The 'one street back' approach from the main spine of Victoria Street such as Petty France, Tothill, Palace Street further captures a large range of cultural destinations and attractions; from theatres, to public houses, to restaurants, to government and business headquarters and historical heritage buildings. Many of these are of national importance, but are often overlooked or hidden.

### *New evening culture*

The 24 hour tube alongside new retail and commercial developments of Cardinal Place and Nova are beginning to define the west of Victoria Street, and are creating an evening culture and destination within the area, with a new cinema, darts club, renowned theatres and a varied drinking and eating offer.

*Victoria and Westminster contain a number of globally recognised landmarks as well as a number of overlooked elements of national importance. New retail and commercial developments are beginning to define new destinations in the area. But improvements to the public realm should improve key building and attractions interfaces.*



Fig.75 - Westminster Cathedral



Fig.76 - Buckingham Palace



Fig.77 - Houses of Parliament



Fig.78 - Westminster Abbey

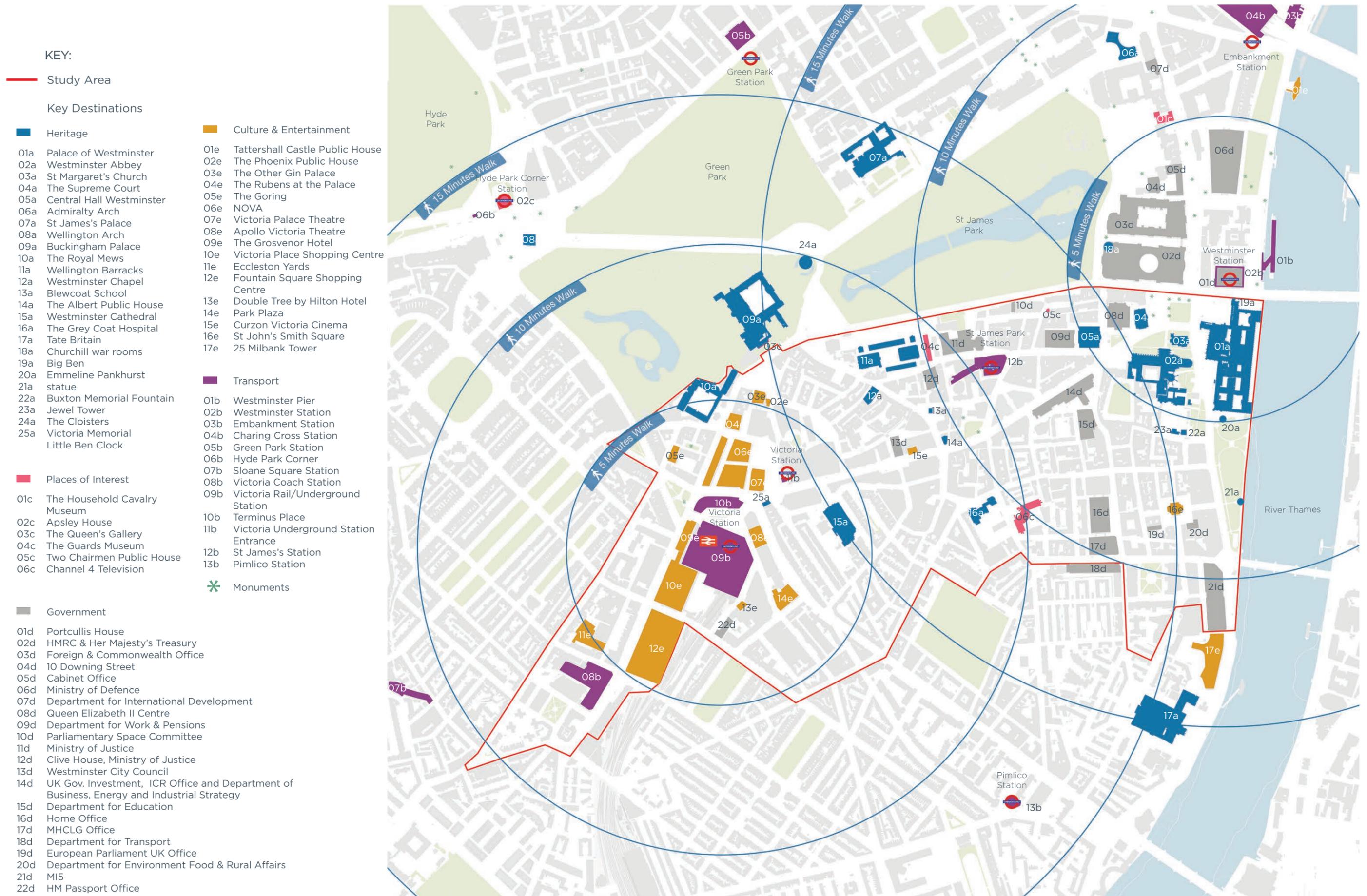


Fig.79 - Key Destinations

## 2.11 PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

### *Place of transportation and constant movement*

Combining heritage, cultural and tourist attractions with proximity to the river, Victoria has all the elements necessary to be a significant city destination. However, the area has become a place of transportation and constant movement instead of a place to dwell.

### *Difficult to navigate*

Severance, disjointed spaces, poor legibility, cluttered streets, heavy traffic, lack of wayfinding signage, and physical and defensive barriers make Victoria difficult to navigate. This is evident in the prominence of vehicles and pollution in the area; footways which are either too wide or not wide enough for the volume of people who walk through the area every day; and temporary and permanent barriers which result in highly congested footways. Many desire lines have also been broken up into a series of islands which slows circulation, particularly around Victoria Station.

### *Disorientation and intimidation*

Visitors currently feel disorientated and intimidated due to a lack of instinctual wayfinding enabling them to wander and explore the area. Instead, many head towards primary attractions, such as Buckingham Palace and St James's Park from Victoria Station, and Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament from Westminster Station, before dispersing to other surrounding neighbourhoods.

### *Variety of materials, lighting and street furniture*

The public realm exhibits a wide palette of materials, with artificial stone paving slabs and asphalt featuring on many of the streets, whilst buff granites have been incorporated into recent developments to create a warmer palette in key public spaces. The Cathedral Piazza is paved with limestone, which is common across a number of the

historic buildings and Conservation Areas within the study area. This varied language is also present in the mixed collection of street furniture. Whilst some of the newer street furniture is of a good standard and considered in its placement, much appears randomly placed in the public realm, creating an incongruent visual experience.

### *Lack of tree planting*

The lack of tree planting and green elements exposes the lack of quality within the pavements by highlighting areas of poor and mismatched finishes. A wind tunnel effect is also felt in the denser areas of Victoria without the presence of trees to help mitigate this microclimate.

*The pedestrian experience is poor and traffic dominates, which does not encourage and create a 'place' in which people feel wanted and wish to dwell.*

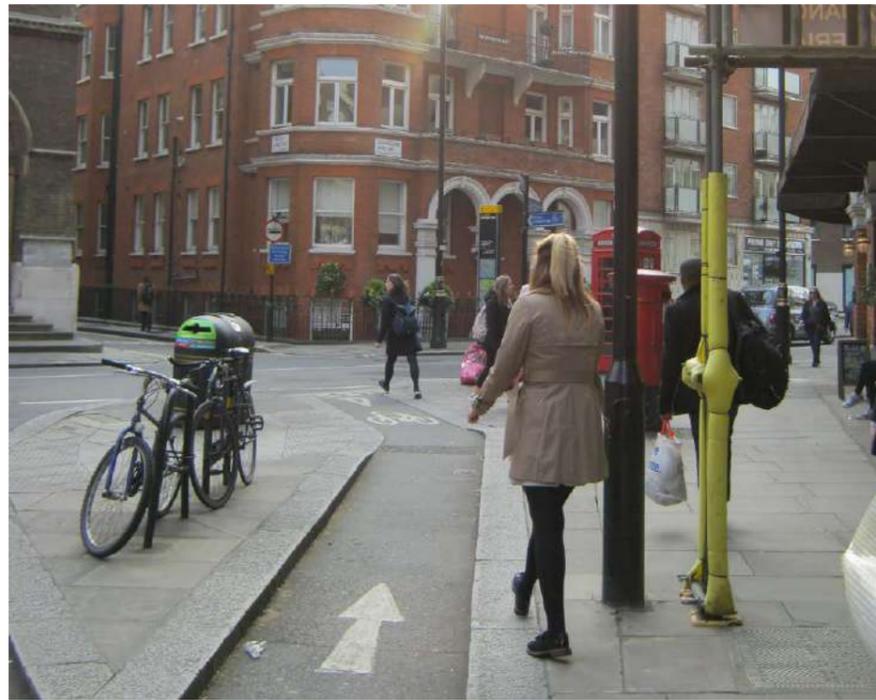


Fig.80 - Footways lack clear legible routes



Fig.81 - Lack of wayfinding directly outside of Victoria Station and Wilton Road



Fig.82 - Narrow pathways



Fig.83 - Inconsistent use of materials in public realm



Fig.84 - Random placement of furniture



Fig.85 - Random placement of furniture

## 2.12 SPATIAL CONTEXT

### *Disjointed spaces*

Following World War II, in response to bomb damage, a number of Victoria's streets were rebuilt to a wider width in order to accommodate both pedestrian and vehicular movement. Today the overall experience of Victoria for the worker, visitor or resident seems disjointed and confusing. This is further exaggerated by the dense urban fabric, the collective mix of built form with significant variations in height, busy roads and infrequent public spaces. The result weakens the sense of place of the area.

### *Imbalance in experience*

The main roads and key junctions are crowded, traffic dominated and have an imbalance of pedestrian footpaths, being either too narrow or too wide, which in turn creates an uncomfortable and unpleasant experience for users. At the same time, away from the main roads and junctions, many back streets are quiet, charming and create a much more comfortable environment. They are however not obvious to visitors and are therefore not the well-utilised routes that they could be.

### *Large building blocks restrict permeability*

The urban grain of large building blocks has further creates a restricted visual experience, lack of physical permeability and severance. The lack of permeability forces pedestrians to move in a restricted manner around large building blocks or building perimeters as opposed to being able to freely move towards desired destinations, resulting in frustration and less convenient or enjoyable journeys. Figure 90 highlights

*The spatial experience of Victoria is disjointed and confusing. Movement along many key routes is restricted by large building blocks and traffic dominance, while more pleasant back streets are underutilised.*

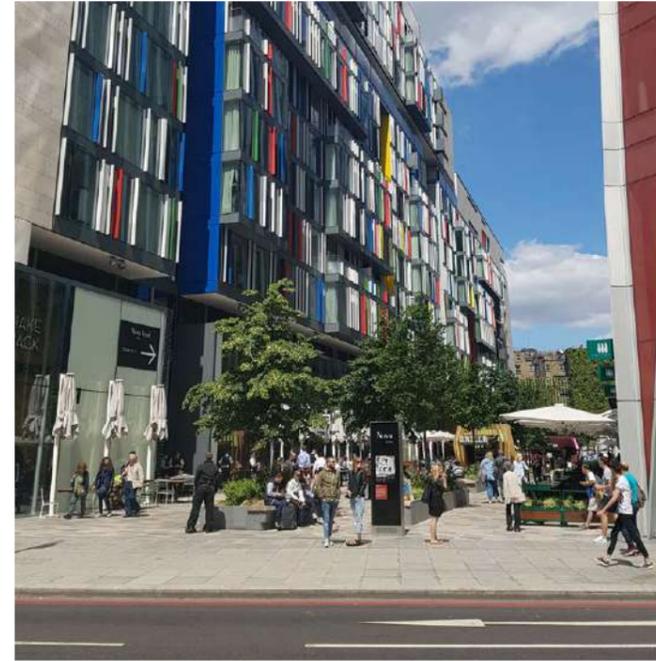


Fig.86 - Nova



Fig.87 - Victoria Street



Fig.88 - Junction at Victoria Street and Vauxhall Bridge Road



Fig.89 - Parliament Square

The permeability across the Victoria and Westminster area is varied. In many places long or large blocks limit the ability of people to move freely along desire lines or convenient routes.

Where permeability is good, there is a tenancy to see a vibrant street environment and activity - Nova, Kingsgate House/Zig Zag developments and the streets around Christchurch Gardens are good examples.

- KEY:
- Study Area
  - Large Urban Block: Restricted Permeability
  - Medium Urban Block: Limited Permeability
  - Small Urban Block: Improved Permeability

*The plan has been developed using the typical block size of Nova as representative of good permeability,*

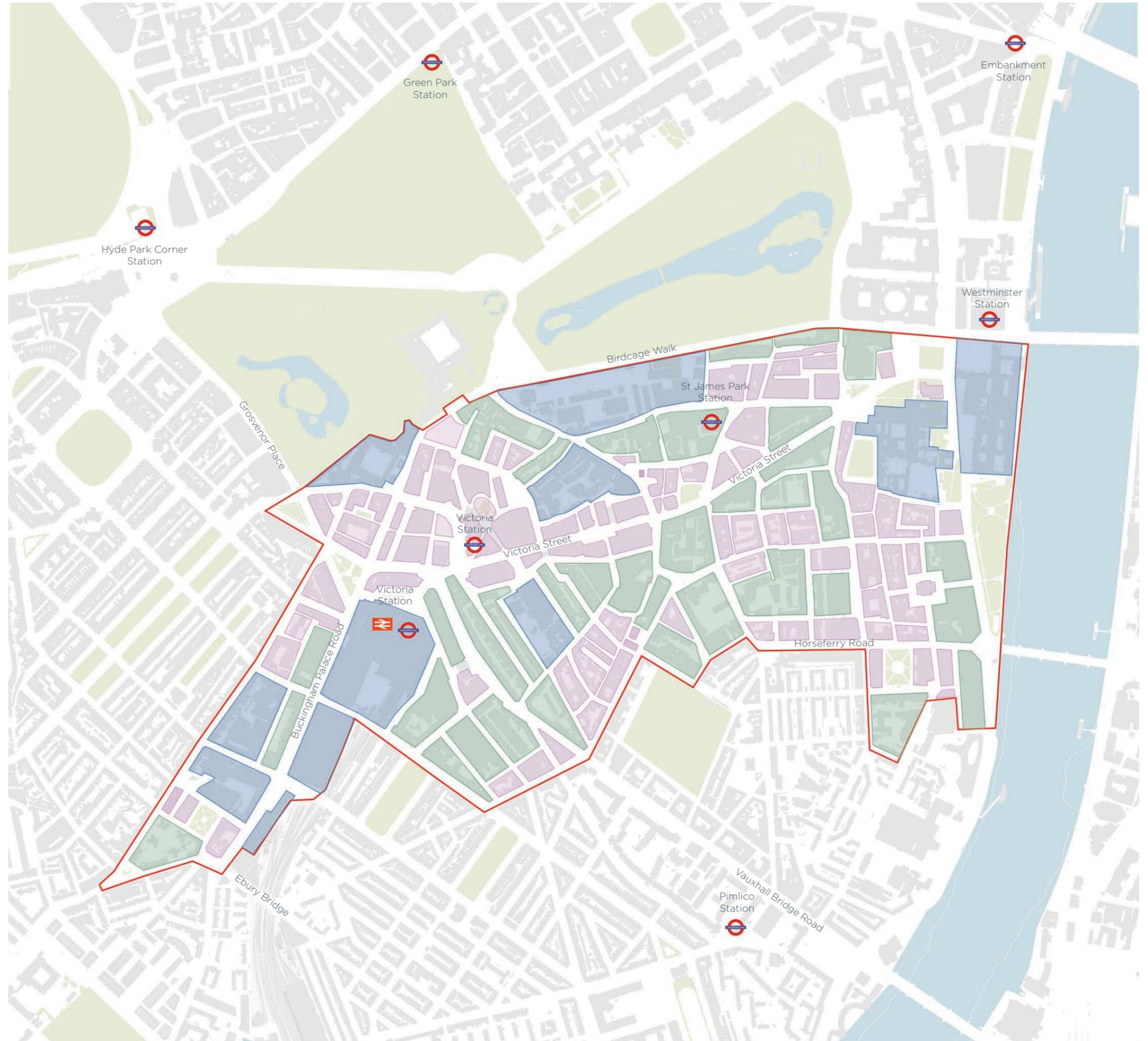


Fig.90 - Permeability

## 2.13 ROAD NETWORK - TRAFFIC DOMINANCE

*Road traffic domination*

The study area suffers from traffic domination throughout the day and particularly during peak hours. The most affected area is the one-way gyratory system, the Inner Ring Road, lying to the north and south of Victoria Station, which handles high volumes of strategic ‘through’ traffic to/from key routes including the A40 to the north, the A3 to the south-east and the A205 South Circular to the south-west. This gyratory arrangement provides specially for those high road traffic volumes with multiple-lane and wide one-way roads.

*The public realm suffers due to the road network*

Despite the often-wide carriageways, traffic levels are such that attendant noise, air quality and road severance impacts are high, with a poor-quality environment for walking and cycling. The public realm suffers accordingly, and is compromised significantly in its offering and potential by conditions on local roads. This intensity is represented by the Figure 100 which, in assessing vehicle dominance, blends a high level review of traffic flows, road widths, and site observations made throughout the day/week, to illustrate the most impacted areas.

*Addressing the Inner Ring Road*

The road traffic domination issue is both long-established and well-recognised, with re-routing the Inner Ring Road identified as a potential measure by the Mayor’s Road Task Force in 2013 amongst others. At the time of writing, it is under active investigation by VWBID in consultation with Transport for London and Westminster City Council. Such a proposal, along with a possible conversion to two-way operation, could do much to relieve some of the area’s key roads, though perhaps intensifying activity on others.

*Road traffic dominance impacts the area’s environment and public realm significantly.*



Fig.91 - Lower Grosvenor Place



Fig.92 - Buckingham Palace Road



Fig.93 - Buckingham Palace Road



Fig.94 - Petty France, St James’s Park Station



## 2.13 ROAD NETWORK - TRAFFIC DOMINANCE

*Creation of intense movement environments*

The varying volumes of traffic flow, street activity, building frontages, road widths, a journey purpose creates an often intense movement environment as represented in Figure 100.



Fig.96 - Victoria Street



Fig.97 - Wilton Road



Fig.98 - Buckingham Gate

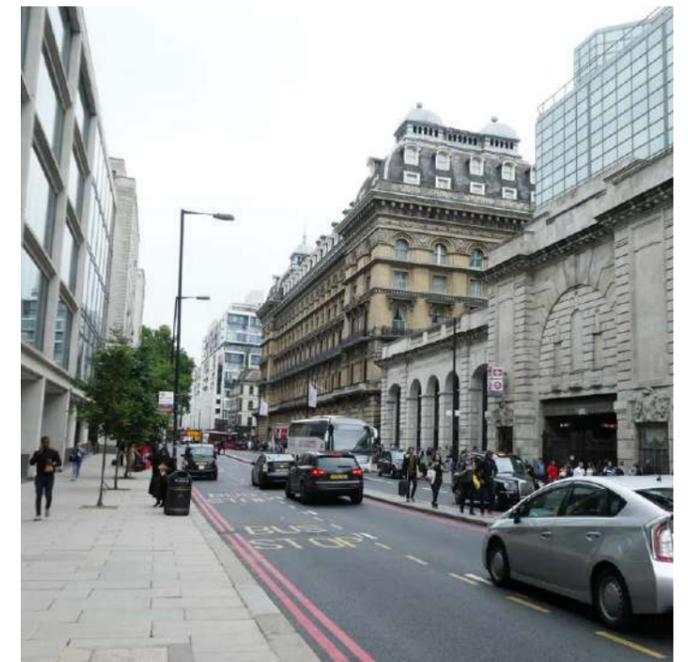


Fig.99 - Buckingham Palace Road

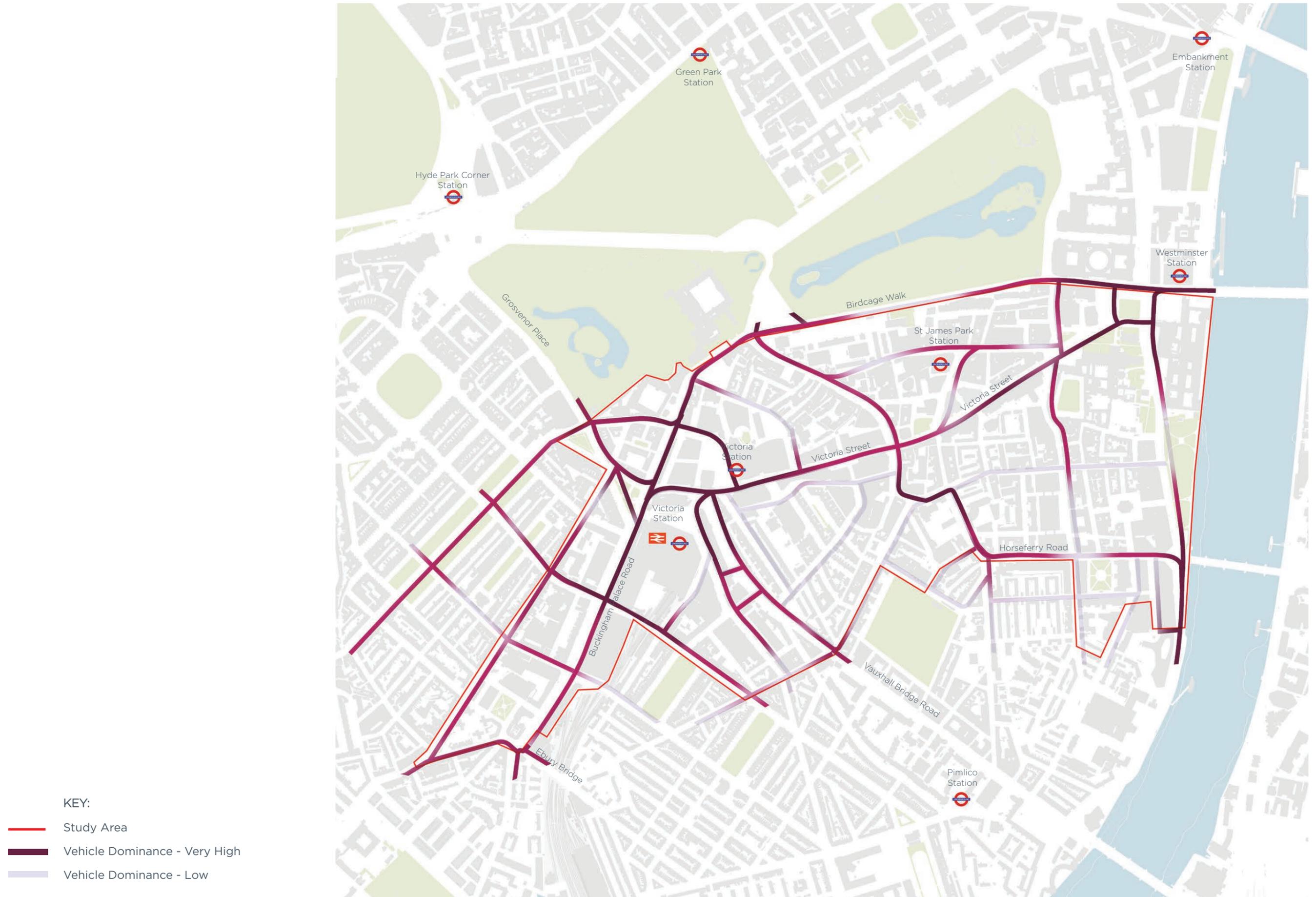


Fig.100 - Blended Assessment of Road Traffic Dominance

## 2.14 ROAD NETWORK - STATION ENVIRONS

*Current pedestrian and vehicle conflict and tension around the station*

The area of maximum station access pedestrian activity coincides with the purposeful road traffic flows using the Inner Ring Road contributing considerable conflict and tension in this area.

*Key observations*

- the Inner Ring Road (IRR) carries substantial volumes of through traffic;
- high degree of road traffic dominance;
- traffic passes through areas of station access related pedestrian activity;
- the one-way Inner Ring Road acts a traffic carrying conduit of between 2-4 lanes of purposeful traffic;
- the northbound Inner Ring Road diversion via Eccleston Bridge during the Victoria Station Upgrade relieved the main pedestrian desire line at Terminus Place/Victoria Street; and
- the Inner Ring Road one-way gyratory system impairs bus route legibility, with 'split' services difficult for passengers to interpret and use.

*4 Inner Ring Road options being explored*

Options for re-routing the Inner Ring Road are currently being investigated and include a fundamental change from one-way to two-way operation. Options 1 and 2 (Figure 102 and 103) re-route that strategic traffic to the south of the Victoria Station, whilst option 3 and 4 (Figure 104 and 105) propose variations on Routing to the north of the station building.



Fig.101 - Road Network - Lanes and Conflict Zones



**KEY OBSERVATIONS**  
For Option 1+2:

- Options effectively trialled during VSU temporary upgrade diversions, with generally satisfactory bus operations reported.
- Extensive and very beneficial relief of station area from through traffic and pedestrian/cyclist conflict.
- Related intensification of traffic on Eccleston Bridge routing, including Buckingham Palace Road.

Fig.102 - Inner Ring Road - Two Way Operation:  
Option 1 Via Eccleston Bridge and Grosvenor Gardens - South

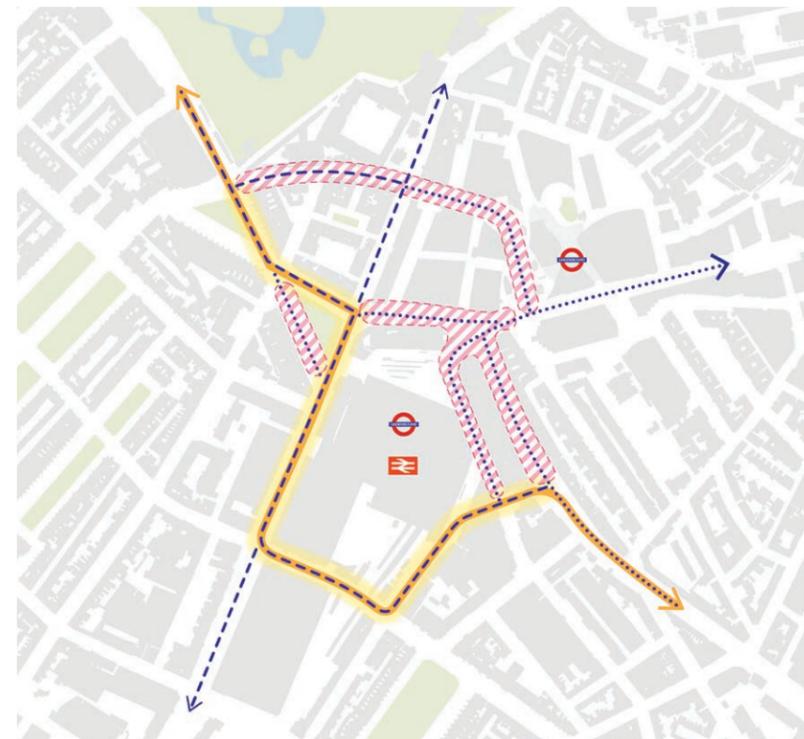


Fig.103 - Inner Ring Road - Two Way Operation:  
Option 2 Via Eccleston Bridge and Grosvenor Gardens - North

**KEY:**

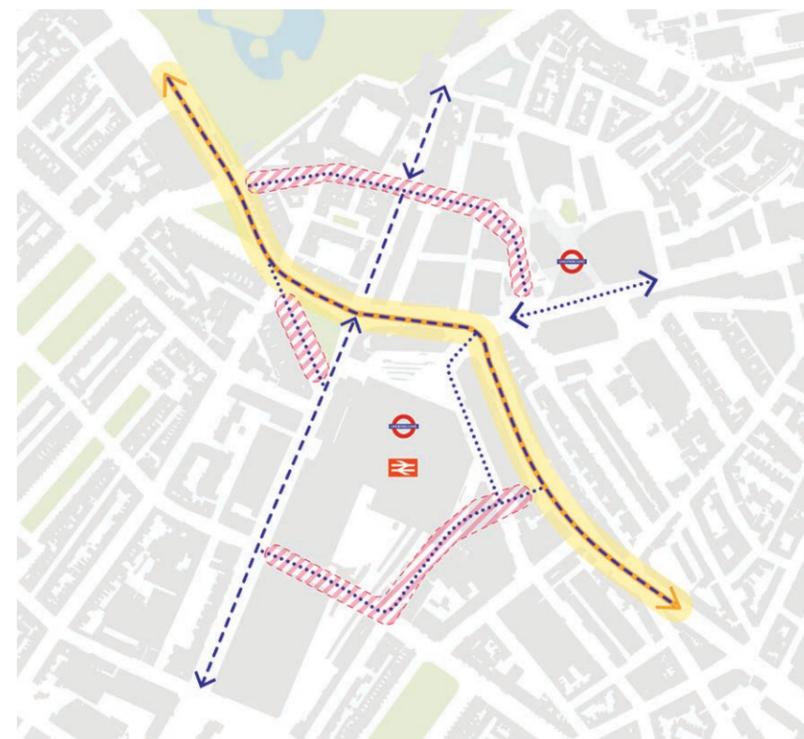
- Inner Ring Road (IRR) 2-way Operation
- Intensified Traffic Activity Due to Additional Inner Ring Road (IRR) Flows
- Option to Permit Bus Access to Assist Operational Efficiency & Passenger Convenience - Other Vehicles May Be Excluded
- Bus Movement Corridor Routing Options (2-way)
- Roads Relieved of Inner Ring Road Through Traffic. Access Only Traffic, Buses, Taxis and Service Vehicles



**KEY OBSERVATIONS**  
For Option 3:

- Relieves station area - though remaining traffic flows and severance at Victoria Street and Vauxhall Bridge Road junction as existing
- Intensification of traffic on Lower Grosvenor Place - Bressenden Place

Fig.104 - Inner Ring Road - Two Way Operation:  
Option 3 Via Lower Grosvenor Place - Bressenden Place



**KEY OBSERVATIONS**  
For Option 4:

- Intensification of traffic on Victoria Street (west) - Grosvenor Gardens
- Through traffic parallel to Victoria Station building main entrance and key public realm space

Fig.105 - Inner Ring Road - Two Way Operation:  
Option 4 Via Victoria Street West - Grosvenor Gardens - North

## 2.15 ROAD CONDITIONS AND HEALTHY STREETS

### *East-west imbalance in road traffic conditions*

The effects of the road dominance can be seen with reference to the high-level Red, Amber, Green road network diagram, Figure 106. It shows the key thoroughfares and the clearly negative impacts on a variety of matters, including road safety, servicing access, bus accessibility, and public realm across several key locations. The imbalance in conditions east to west is evident, with all criteria apart from bus accessibility attracting very poor ratings to the west. Elsewhere, away from the strategic traffic flow impacts, the picture is considerably better, most notably on Victoria Street where the generally ample carriageway and wide footways handle the vehicle flows and other activities acceptably well.

### *Healthy streets impacts*

Assessing the impacts by applying Transport for London’s Healthy Streets approach adds considerations including health, activity, interest and placemaking, Figure 108. Again, we see the negative impacts of vehicular activity focused to the west and, to a lesser extent, along Victoria Street eastwards.

### *Building on positive attributes*

In contrast, those streets to the north and south of the Victoria Street spine perform comparatively well in terms of placemaking, offering relatively calm, pleasant and interesting routes, relieved of the through traffic burden. As well as addressing the more severe traffic related issues elsewhere, there is then the potential to build on some of the already positive attributes of other areas in terms of supporting placemaking objectives.

### *Action to release area potential*

Looking to the future, there is much to do in tackling the traffic dominated environment related to the Inner Ring Road, with the bold strokes required already under active consideration. Elsewhere, the network of local and generally pleasant roads to the north and south of Victoria Street offer the potential for a welcoming and well-connected movement environment.

*A bold approach is needed to tackle present road traffic impacts, on people within the area*



Fig.106 - High Level RAG Assessment of the Road Network Plan

	Victoria Street	Buckingham Palace Road	Birdcage Walk	Vauxhall Bridge Road	Wilton Road	Bridge Place
Pedestrian Environment	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red
Cyclist Environment	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red
Bus Accessibility and Reliability	Green	Green	n/a	Green	Green	n/a
Traffic Flow and Road Safety	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red
Servicing and Loading	Red	Red	n/a	Red	Red	Red
Public Realm and Landscape	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red
OVERALL	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red
	Buckingham Gate	Petty France	Tothill Street	Parliament Square	Abington Street	Horseferry Road
Pedestrian Environment	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Cyclist Environment	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Bus Accessibility and Reliability	n/a	n/a	n/a	Green	Green	Green
Traffic Flow and Road Safety	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Servicing and Loading	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Public Realm and Landscape	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
OVERALL	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red

Fig.107 - High Level RAG Assessment of the Road Network Table

Figure 109 represents a high-level RAG (red-amber-green) assessment for each of TfL's Healthy Streets indicators. The Healthy Streets approach makes people's health a key consideration in the design and management of public spaces. A healthy and inclusive street encourages the wider community to use and enjoy it with places to sit and dwell, as well as encouragement to walk, cycle and use public transport.



Fig.108

Healthy Streets Indicators

- KEY:
- Study Area
  - Healthy Streets Indicators
  - Good
  - Average
  - Poor

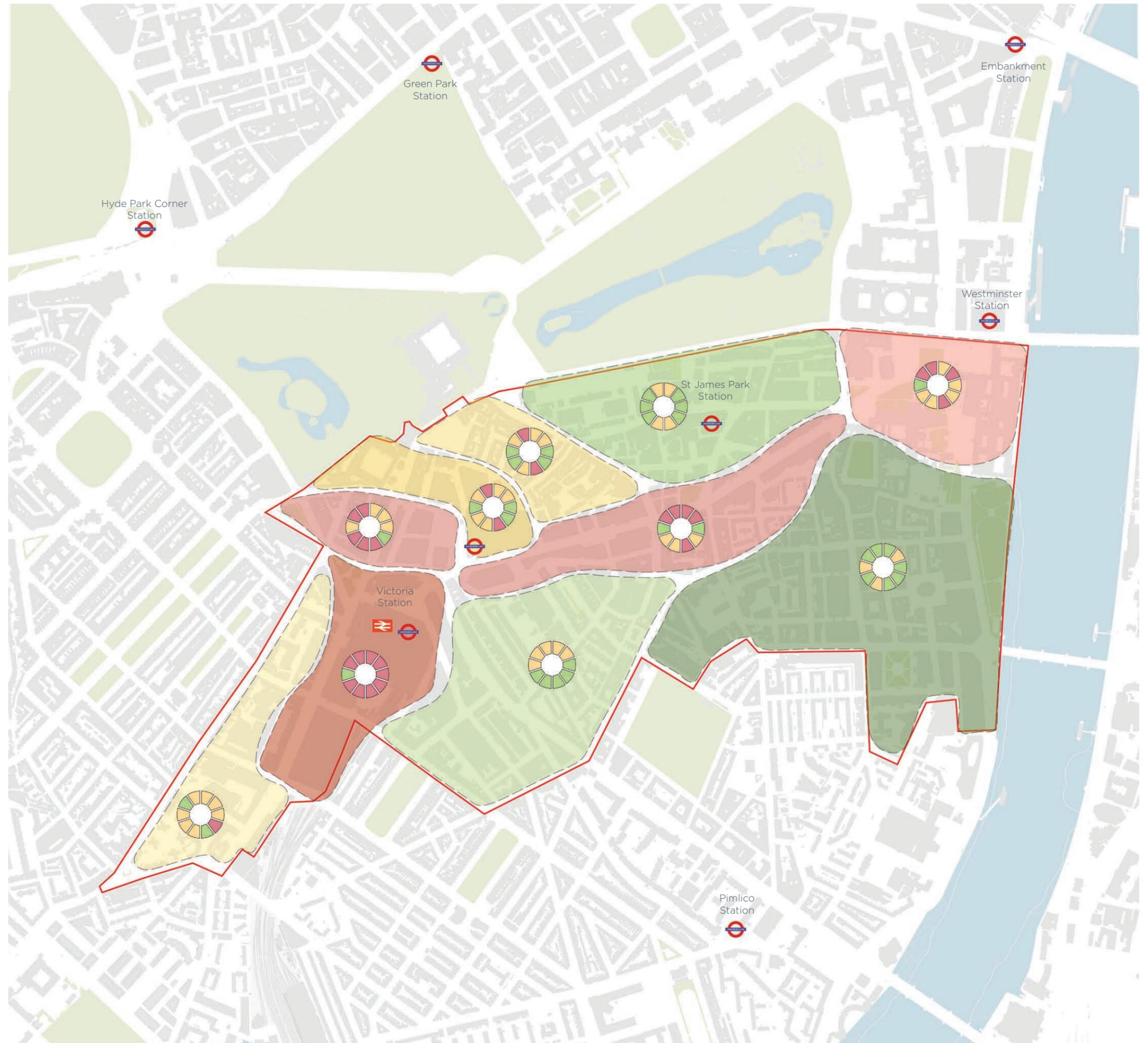


Fig.109 - Healthy Streets Assessment

## 2.16 CYCLING ENVIRONMENT CONDITIONS

*Unwelcoming cycling environment*

Cycling conditions in the area are poor, whether considered in terms of the prevailing traffic conditions, incomplete cycle route connections, bus lanes and other traffic management, including the extensive one-way gyratory to the west. This presents cyclists with extensive off-line diversions across the area passing along 3-4 lane carriageways and mixing with purposeful traffic dominating one-way roads such as Lower Grosvenor Place - Bressenden Place and Buckingham Palace Road.

*Inconvenient, hazardous, uncomfortable and intimidating*

These conditions create an often inconvenient, hazardous, uncomfortable and intimidating environment even for the most experienced cyclists. Hence, the majority of cyclists in the area tend to be those committed to the mode, such as commuters. This is evidenced by the higher concentrations of cyclists on the northern and eastern fringes of the area (Birdcage Walk and Abingdon Street), on routes with designated cycle lanes or routes, or those leading to onward dedicated strategic routes (see Figure 114). Clearly, a great deal of improvement in conditions is needed in order to provide those less confident and determined cyclists.

*Improving cyclist safety*

Cyclist safety is clearly a particular concern in such conditions. As expected, and as shown by Figure 110, reported collisions involving cyclists appear on the main routes such as the Inner Ring Road and Buckingham Palace Road, though they are also apparent more widely in the less intense environments to the north and south of the Victoria Street corridor, suggestive of a need to attend to safety issues in these locations too.



Fig.110 - Collisions Heat Map (2005-2017)

*Poor cycling provision and congested roads create an intimidating environment for regular cyclist commuters and visitors.*

- KEY:
- Study Area
  - Collision occurrence locations



Fig.111  
Eccleston Street



Fig.112  
Neathouse Place



Fig.113  
Grosvenor Gardens

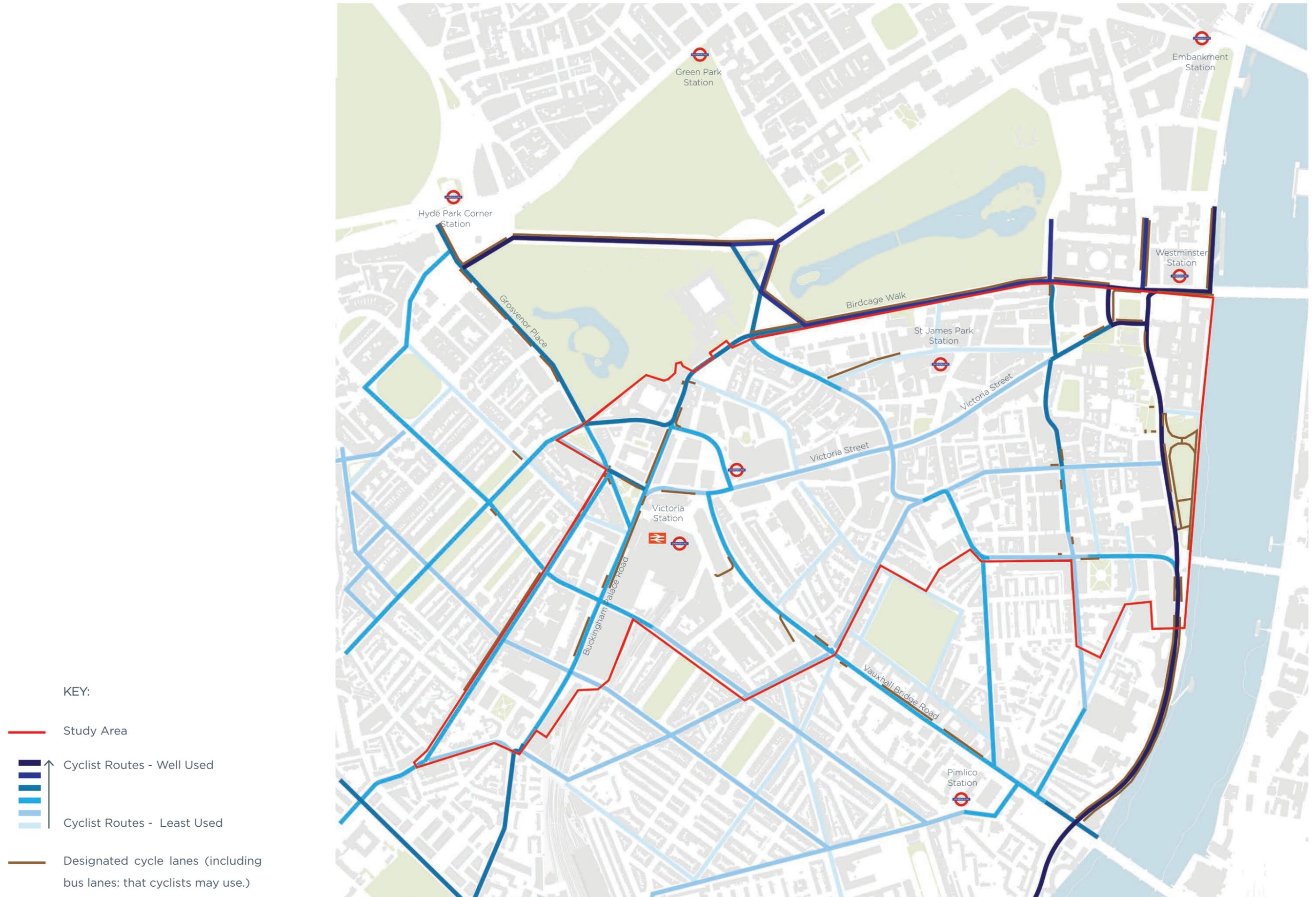


Fig.114 - Usage of the Areas Roads by Cyclist (Strava heatmap, December 2019)

## 2.17 CYCLING CONNECTIONS

*A complex cycle environment*

Figure 116 shows the traffic management complications faced by cyclists elsewhere too, when navigating bus lanes, street closures, pedestrianisation and local area one-way systems. This is likely to contribute to the relatively low usage of those areas by cyclists, though addressing those issues offers clear potential for greater use of those calmer and quieter routes. There is also a notable absence of facilities for cyclists such as designated cycle routes, cycle lanes, and cycle parking areas.

*Victoria Street as a cycle corridor*

As with walking connections, there is clear potential to provide for safe, convenient, high-quality and high capacity cycle connections along the currently under-used east-west Victoria Street corridor route. It's alignment offers the prospect of an attractive and direct east-west route through the area. For much of this corridor there is ample carriageway available for reallocation towards cycling whilst retaining sufficient space for valid vehicular traffic movement. In the longer term, a more comprehensive reallocation could see a more ambiguous street for shared use, friendly to pedestrians and cyclist in the first instance.

*Re-making the connections*

There is also the opportunity to make many of the currently missing connections throughout the wider area to present a coherent cycle network, benefitting pedestrians too.

*Cycling as a default travel mode*

There are two main cycling issues to be addressed in the area, that of increasing cycling within the largely underused and calmer streets to the east north and south of Victoria Street, and the pressing issues of cyclist safety and encouraging use of this sustainable mode to the west. Both are achievable objectives requiring concerted action, but with substantial benefits accruing from that action. The scale of the area in terms of its walk and cyclability, makes prioritisation of these modes particularly beneficial; for those walking or cycling from the stations to the workplace, for those living or working in the areas to visit local shops, or for those visiting Victoria and Westminster and benefitting from easily accessible and healthy travel modes.

*The area's scale and arrangement are ideally suited to cycling as a default travel mode.*

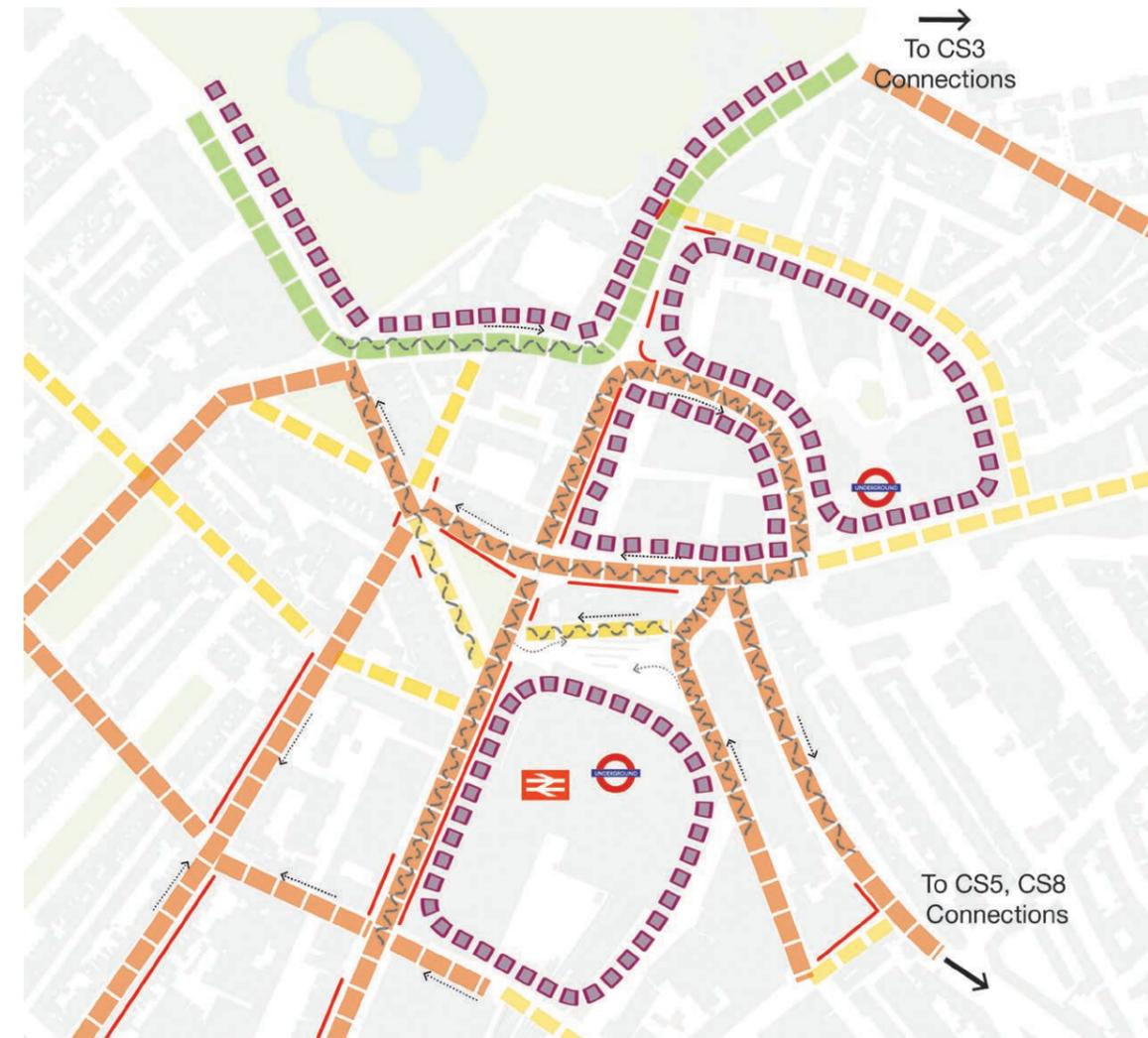


Fig.115 - Station Environs Cycling

KEY:

	Hostile Cycling Environment		Most used by Cyclists
	Existing Cycle Lane		Used by Cyclists
	Physical Barriers to Cycle movement		Least-used by Cyclists
	One-way Streets Unhelpful to Cycle Movement		Designated cycle lanes (including bus lanes: that cyclists may use.)
			Cycle Super Highway

Victoria Station environs presents a particularly unhelpful and often intimidating environment to cyclists.

Key Observations:

- largely hostile environment for cycling – traffic volumes, road intensity and one way traffic management;
- scarce dedicated provision for cycling despite often generous width carriageways;
- substantial barriers to permeability; and
- general absence of cycle routes and onwards cycle route connections.

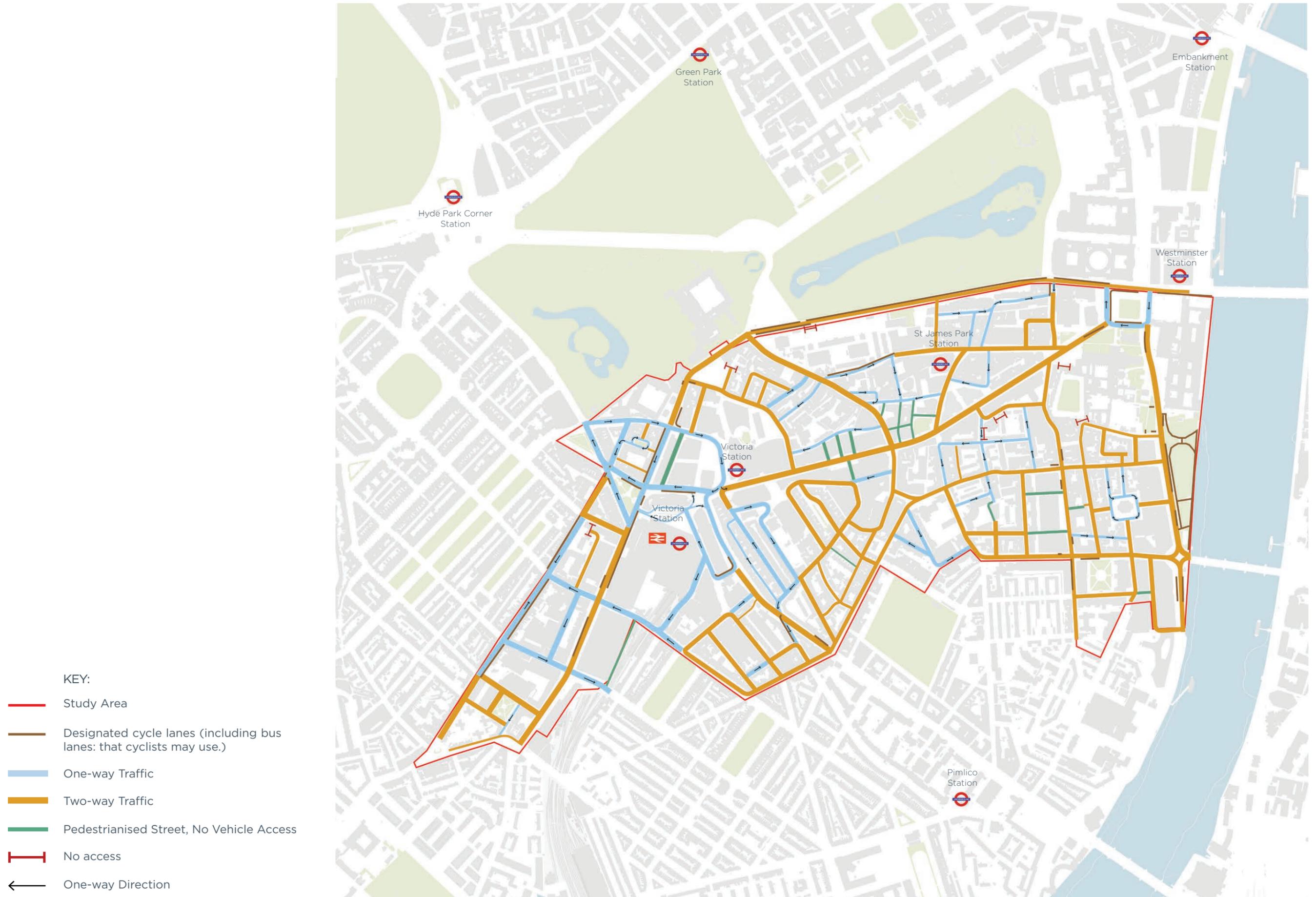


Fig.116 - Existing Road and Route Network for Cyclists

## 2.18 VICTORIA: A MAJOR TRANSPORT HUB

### *Victoria and transport*

Victoria is synonymous with transport, with Victoria Station, Victoria Bus Station and Victoria Coach Station carrying millions of commuters, national and international visitors into and out of London every year. Victoria Station is currently the second busiest National Rail station in the country with some 77 million (m) entries/exits between 2017-18 and over 6m interchanges. Added to this are some 80m London Underground entries and exits, making it London’s third busiest tube station. Victoria Coach Station lies to the south-west of Victoria Station and is used by some 14m passengers (2017-18).

### *Intense interchange activity*

Terminus Place lies to the front of Victoria Station’s main entrance, and is the site of Victoria Bus Station, serving nine London bus routes. With stops and standing for terminating services, it provides for Central London’s highest proportion of onward travel by bus at 13% (TfL data, 2011). Notably, some 33% of onward travel is made on foot from here too, which is clearly evidenced by the high numbers of pedestrians passing through Terminus Place.

### *The arrival experience*

As such, Victoria Station and Terminus Place are key arrival points and for many will represent their first experience of central London whether arriving by underground or main line rail from the south, including Gatwick Airport. Despite the Victoria Station building’s location and scale, it presents a poor sense of arrival, little in the way of external passenger milling space, and poor legibility for onward travel.

### *Outmoded provision*

Whilst the proximity of the bus, coach and rail services provides the Victoria area with a high degree of travel mode integration and connectivity, it is compromised significantly by poor infrastructure quality and facilities and user confusion, falling some way short of contemporary expectations for visitors and passengers alike.

### *Stations as hotspots*

The wider Victoria BID area is served by three underground stations, Victoria, St James’s Park, and Westminster, three very significant transport assets lying east-west through the area and offering connections to the District, Circle, Jubilee and Victoria lines. However, movement around these stations tends to create congestion hotspots, poorly supported by the quality and capacity of the public realm, wayfinding for onward travel and an inconsistent urban form. Figure 118 opposite indicates the station locations along with the primary movement directions of people arriving at each station.



Fig.117 - Existing Main Pedestrian Desire Lines to/From Victoria Station

KEY:

-  Main Pedestrian Desire Lines to/From Victoria Station
-  Existing Key Pedestrian Routes
-  Station Building Pedestrian Access
-  Pedestrian and Vehicle Conflict Zones

A key arrival point in central London, Victoria station presents some unwelcome challenges to rail users.

Key Observations:

- pedestrian orientation very difficult on leaving the station for those unfamiliar with the area;
- pedestrian crossing routes and facilities highly variable, with those nearest the concourse used in ad-hoc fashion – movements interspersed with buses;
- pedestrian movements vary in purpose, from interchange between modes, accessing rail and tube, or passing through the area;
- Terminus Place presents a very ambiguous walking environment with minimal wayfinding support;
- the substantial Victoria Street desire line crosses the Inner Ring Road and Victoria Street traffic flows; and
- Buckingham Palace Road junction with Terminus Place is difficult to use for pedestrians, with inadequate footways and BPR traffic domination.



Fig.118 - Rail Station Locations and Related Access Movement

## 2.19 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

### *Pedestrian conflict at Terminus Place*

The bus network takes advantage of the Victoria Inner Ring Road (IRR) gyratory arrangement with terminating services using it to turn buses around for the return journey. Those services are found in Terminus Place which accommodates a significant number of standing buses throughout the day. Although convenient operationally, this does though significantly reduce the area available for other related station activity, including pick-up/drop-off, and passenger milling space. Pedestrians walking to / from the station also pass through this area, made hazardous by frequent bus manoeuvres and high pedestrian station access flows.

### *Confusing bus services*

The one-way movement restrictions imposed by the IRR gyratory mean that services using it are split, with passengers needing to locate stops on a different road for their outward/return journey, an inconvenient, discouraging and often confusing arrangement for passengers.

### *High traffic flows and congestion*

Added to this, buses are also subject to the impacts of the high traffic flows and related congestion in the area affecting service journey times, reliability and the journey distance travelled on the road network.

### *Providing for bus operations*

As already noted, the local road network, effectively encircling Victoria Station from Eccleston Bridge to the south, and Victoria Street (west) and lower Grosvenor Place - Bressenden Place to the north, provides a convenient arrangement for turning buses for the return journey, and any future change to the Inner Ring Road arrangement (see Road Network) should support that aim.

### *Terminus Place as public realm*

Several parties have explored the prospect of removing buses from Terminus Place in favour of large-scale public realm schemes. Although requiring considerable detailed

*Terminus Place provides needed bus standing but at considerable cost to other possible uses and sense of place.*

technical planning, this appears to be a viable prospect, as evidenced by the generally successful operational outcome from closing Terminus Place during the Victoria Station Upgrade (VSU) works (completed in 2018). The temporary VSU arrangements saw bus service stops and stands relocated on-street, taking advantage of the many wide carriageways in the vicinity such as Buckingham Palace Road. Removing the Terminus Place services permanently is naturally a more demanding prospect, especially given the central objective to maximise transport mode integration and use, but there is much to gain from releasing this valuable space for pedestrians and cyclist use whilst providing onward high quality connections to nearby on-street bus stops.



Fig.119  
Pedestrian and Bus Conflict, Terminus Place



Fig.120  
Passenger Outflow, Victoria Station



Fig.121  
Bus Stand, Lower Grosvenor Place



Fig.122  
Bus Stand, Vauxhall Bridge Road

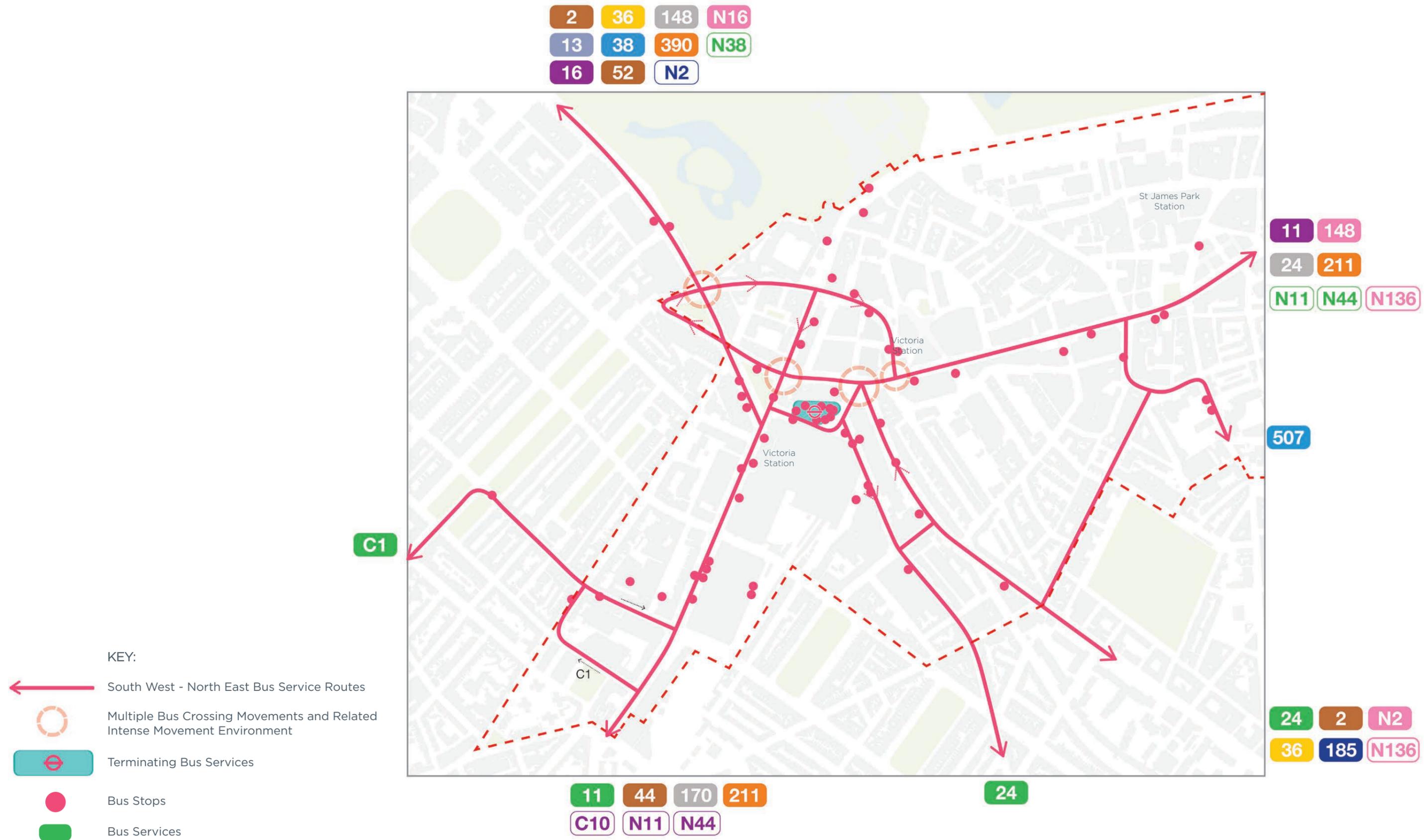


Fig.123 - Bus Service Routes

## 2.20 SPACE TO MOVE, SPACE TO WALK: STUDY AREA

*Study area: 137.4 ha*

The adjacent plan illustrates that the study area boundary accommodates an area of 137.4 ha which out of this there is an area of 72.1 ha which is open space, but only 44.5 ha is publicly accessible. However more than half of this area (22.6 ha) is made up of carriageway.

The following observations are evident in the adjacent diagrams:

- there is an overall sense of vehicle priority;
- asphalt carriageways dominate the public realm contributing to a perceived vehicular dominance throughout the study area;
- there is a small porportion of public green spaces with only 4.6 ha within a study area of 72.1 ha; and
- total footway and green spaces combined is less than the proportion of carriageway in the area.

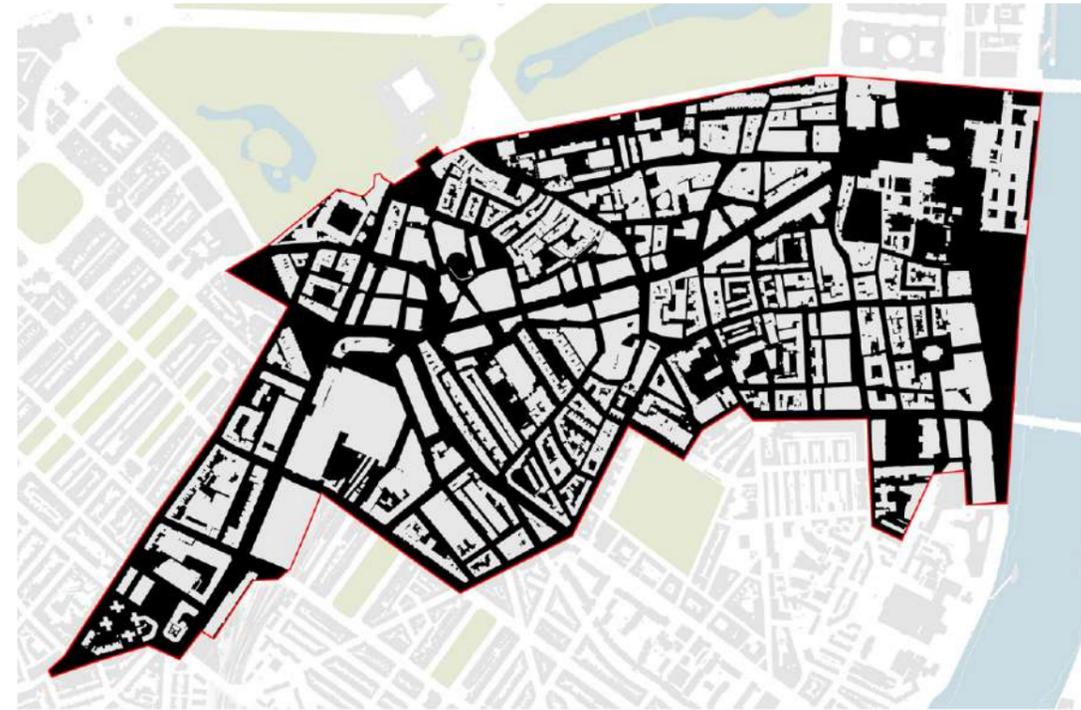


Fig.124 - Open Space (Private & Public) = 72.1ha

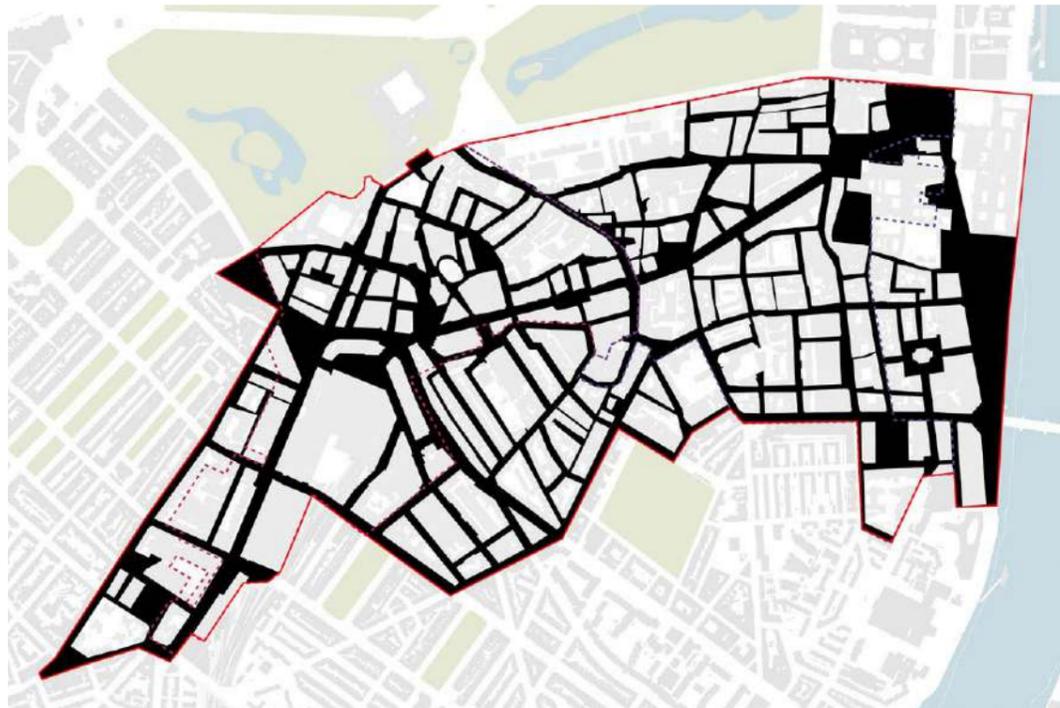


Fig.125 - Open Space (Public) = 44.5ha

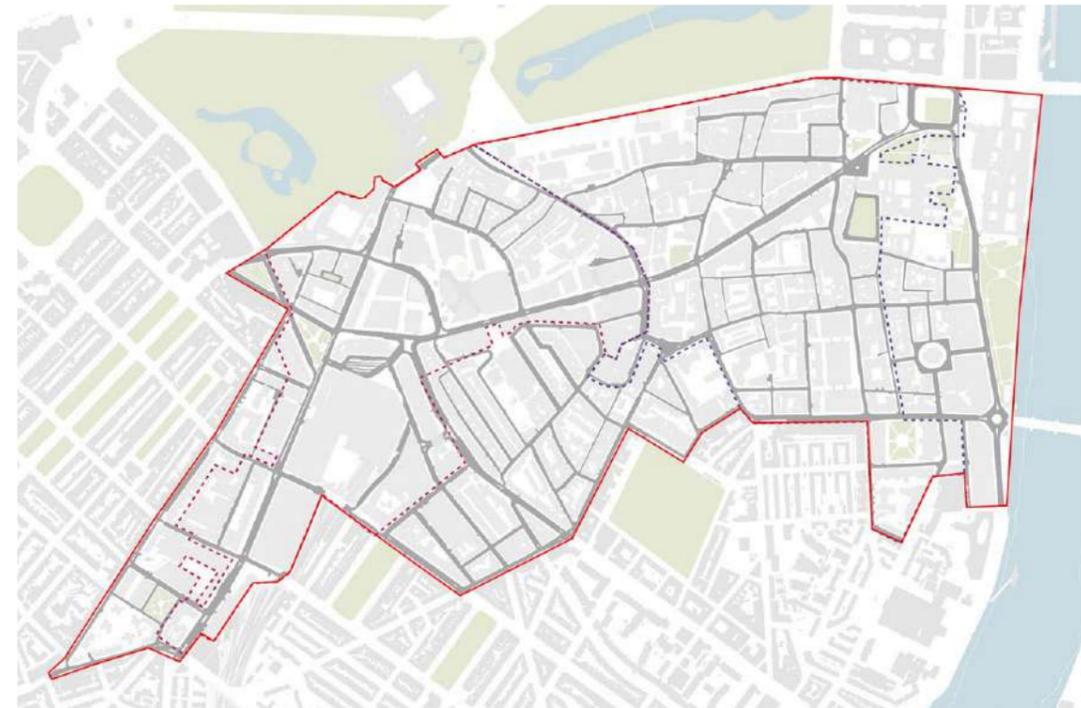


Fig.126 - Carriageway = 22.6ha



Fig.127 - Footway = 17.3 ha + Green Space = 4.6 ha

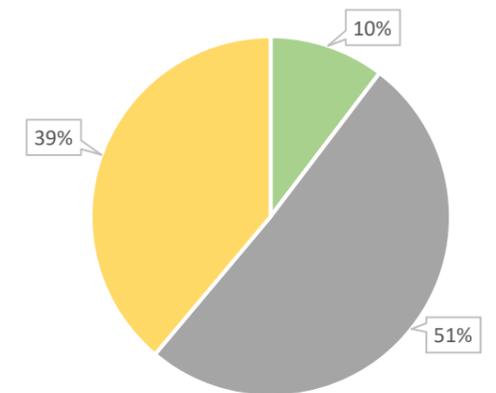


Fig.128  
Pie Chart of Percentages of Green Space, Carriageway and Footway

KEY:

- Study Area
- - - Victoria BID Area
- - - Victoria Westminster BID Area
- Existing Green Space
- Existing Carriageway/Vehicle Priority
- Existing Footway/Pedestrian Priority

## 2.20 SPACE TO MOVE, SPACE TO WALK - VBID + VWBID AREAS

*VBID and VWBID  
area: 42.0 ha*

A similar study and analysis has been conducted in the VBID and WBID boundary areas. This illustrated that out of 42 ha area of open space, only 25.9 ha is publicly accessible and more than half of this area (13.4 ha) is made up of carriageway.

The following observations are evident in the adjacent diagrams:

- there is an overall sense of vehicle priority, with large junctions dominated by tarmac;
- asphalt carriageways dominate the streetscape contributing to a perceived vehicular dominance;
- greater lack of green space. (only 6% of open area); and
- footway and green spaces combined are less than the proportion of carriage way in the area.

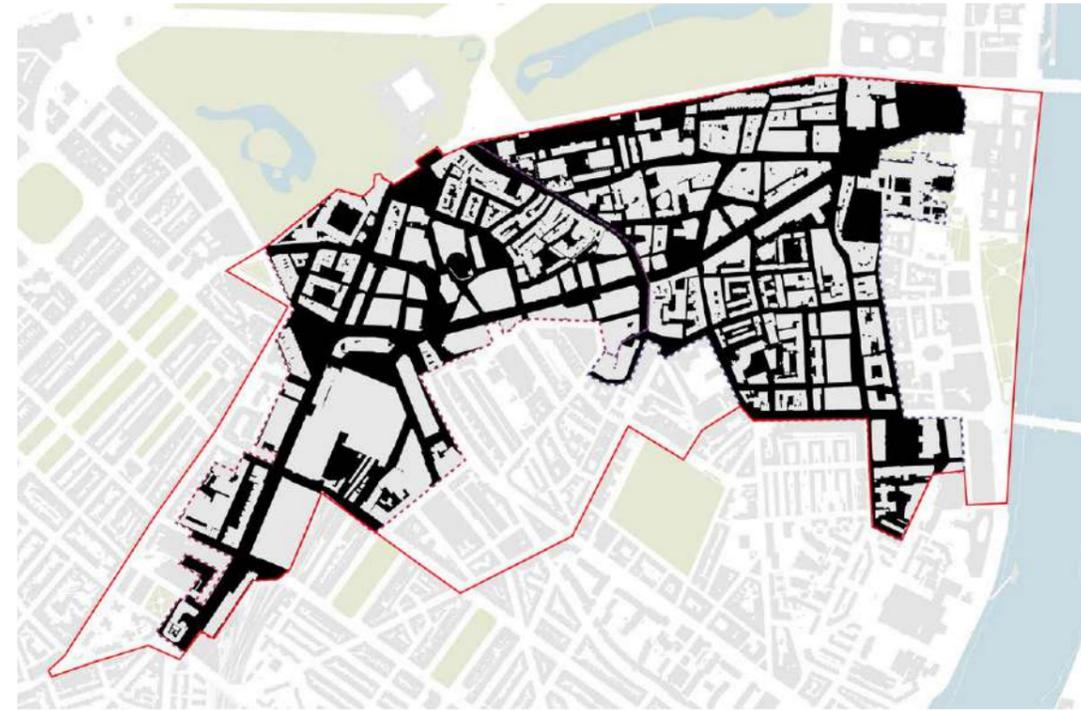


Fig.129 - Open Space (Private & Public) = 42.0ha

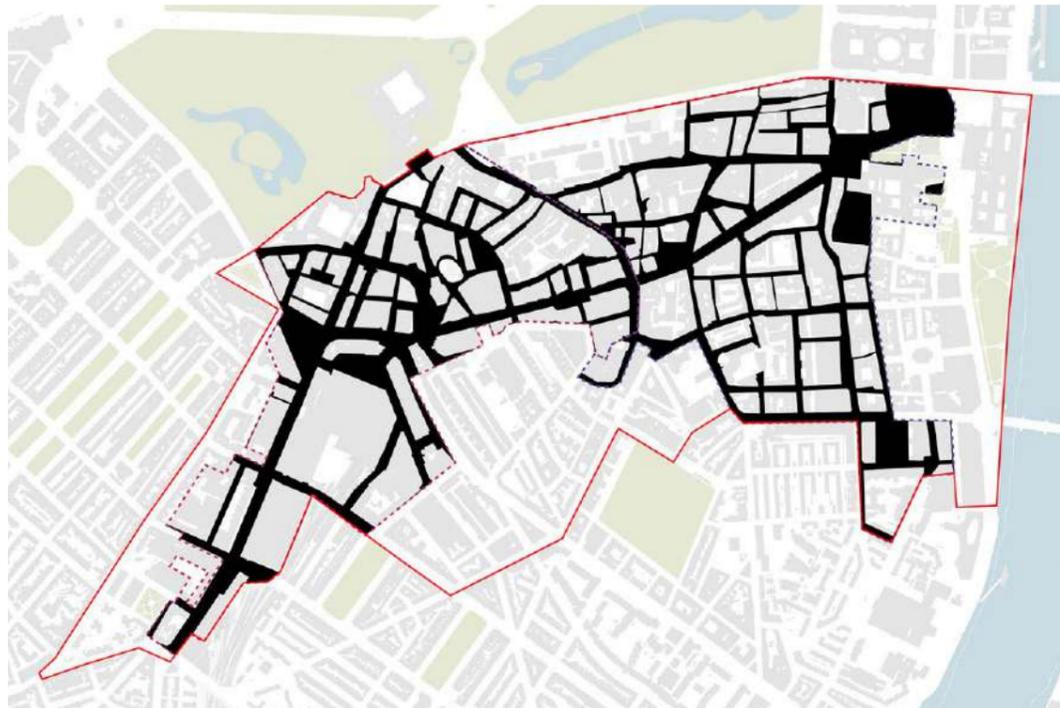


Fig.130 - Open Space (Public) = 25.9ha

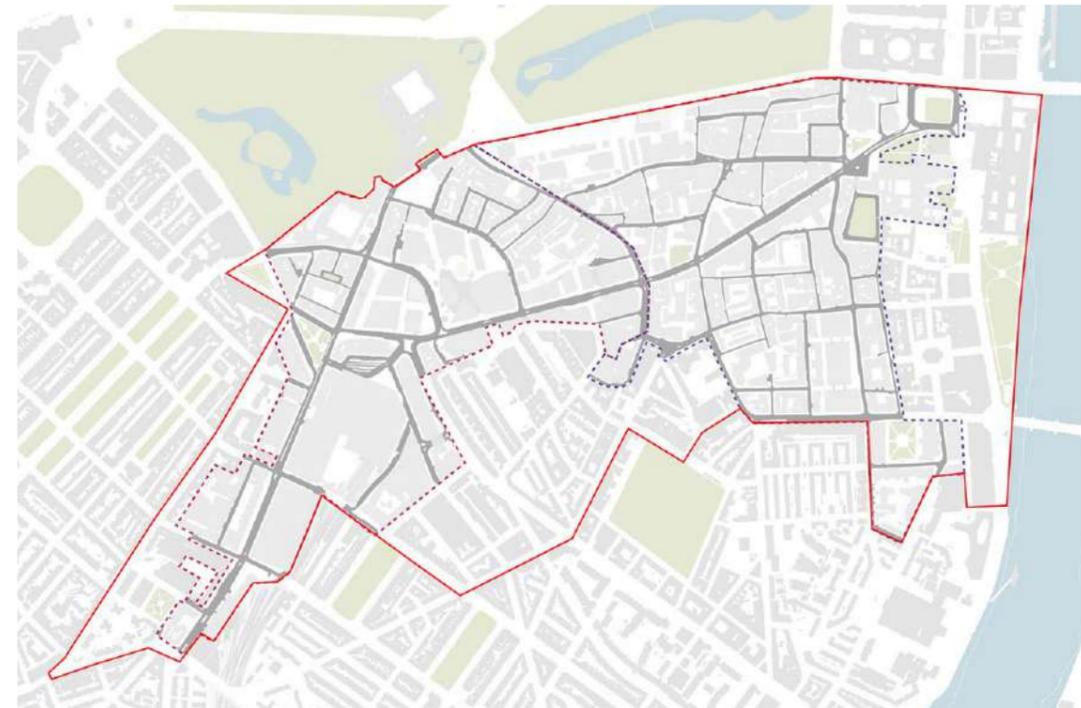


Fig.131 - Carriageway = 13.4ha



Fig.132 - Footway = 10.8 ha + Green Space = 1.7ha

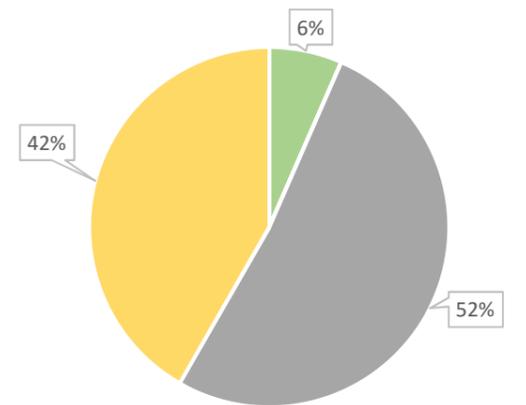


Fig.133  
Pie Chart of Percentages of Green Space, Carriageway and Footway

KEY:

- Study Area
- - - Victoria BID Area
- - - Victoria Westminster BID Area
- Existing Green Space
- Existing Carriageway/Vehicle Priority
- Existing Footway/Pedestrian Priority

## 2.21 APPROACH TO LIGHTING

*Lighting has a key role to play in placemaking*

*Victoria has many positive features which could be highlighted*

The night time environment is a fundamental contributor to the experience of a place. Lighting that creates safe and vibrant experiences for people therefore play an essential role in creating a successful public realm spaces.

The area has many positive features in which could be highlighted through the use of an effective lighting approach. This includes the retail and entertainment uses throughout the area, residential properties, the major transport hubs, alongside key heritage elements. By ensuring that there is a significant lighting linked to evening and night-time activity it could really bring to life and showcase Victoria as a place, whilst making it feel safe and attractive.

Recommendations for lighting are as follows:

- it is important to create a hierarchy in lighting in regards to spaces, streets and architecture;
- use lighting creatively to enhance wayfinding and features of a place;
- proposed lighting should consider environmental impact and the contribution to light pollution;
- ensure best practice is followed to mitigate light spillages;
- enhance the perception of safety and security; and
- sensitively light listed facades.



Fig.134  
Lighting of heritage buildings



Fig.135  
Lighting of key architectural buildings and uses

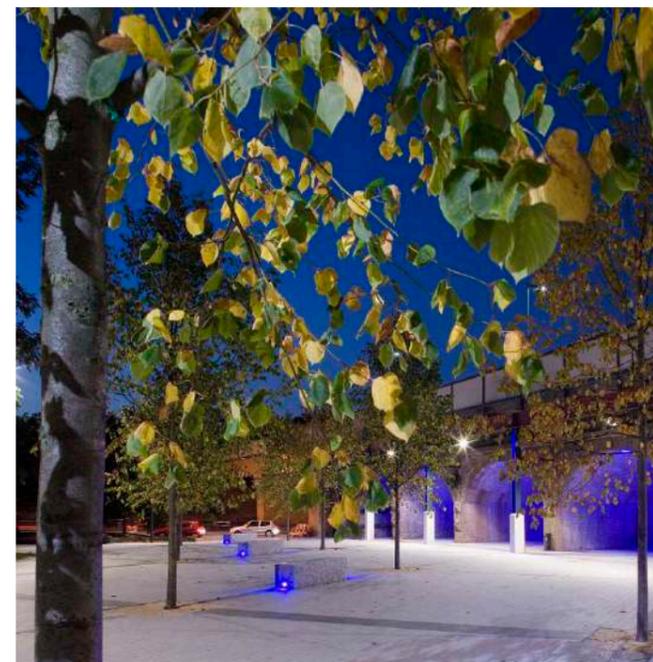


Fig.136  
Local Retail/Street Life Environment: Dartmouth Street

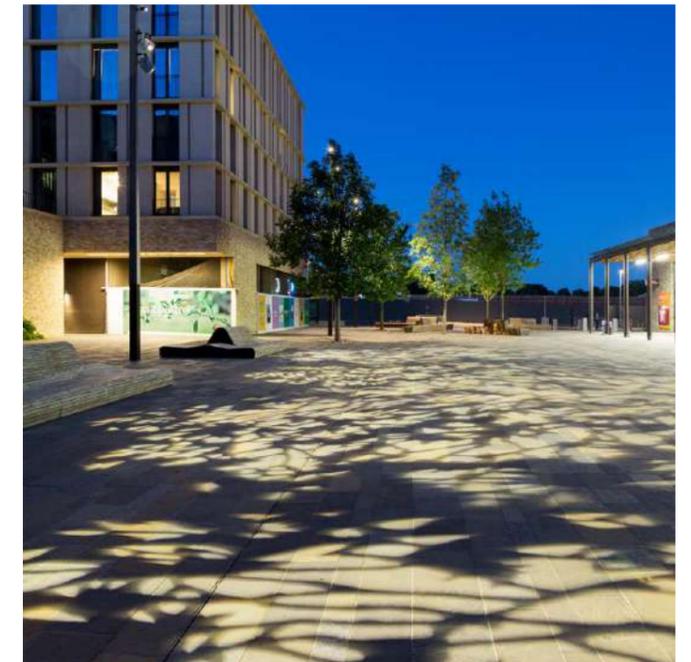


Fig.137  
Feature lighting to celebrate key spaces

## 2.22 INTEGRATED SECURITY

*Security needs to be carefully and sensitively considered*

Security and vehicular deterrent measures are an important element in which needs to be considered within emerging public realm proposals to deter the threats on sensitive and popular locations. In order to reduce the visual impact of these measures, security strategies needs to be carefully considered the design elements of schemes where it is required. The intention for security should be that any measures are seamlessly incorporated into the wider aesthetic of the place, to avoid the extensive linearity or the creation of an uncomfortable and overly aggressive aesthetic.

Recommendations for integrated security are as follows:

- integrated security within street furniture;
- review natural or unnatural level changes which could contribute to the quality of the public realm whilst functioning as security measures. For example raised edges, terraces or steps which can be further united and softened through planting; and
- careful coordination of all elements to create a successful security line that is not a barrier but a welcoming space for people.



Fig.138  
Carlos Place



Fig.139  
Mount Street Gardens



Fig.140  
Covent Garden innovative security measures

## 2.23 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

*Victoria is changing*

Victoria is currently changing through an increasing number of new developments, change of use and demolition projects. With new developments coming forward, such as 8-10 George Street and Nova Place, which are a positive mix of commercial, retail and residential, Victoria will be seeing a large but diverse change in its city life and place making.

*New commercial and residential projects*

The area of Westminster is transitioning from dominant office use, to a range of commercial and residential projects, converting the area from working life, to a new vibrant leisure and home destination.

*Many new developments have associated public realm and landscape improvements*

With Victoria in constant need of adaption through changing demand and population shifts, new developments will continue to arise to provide for future residents, new businesses and employment. The current and future projects within Victoria consist of combined residential and retail proposals with associated public realm and landscape improvements, in which a number of these have been illustrated on the following pages.



Fig.141 - New Scotland Yard, 8-19 Broadway



Fig.142 - Nova Place South, Bressenden Place



Fig.143 - NIOC House, 4-8 Victoria Street



Fig.144 - 1 Neathouse Place, Wilton Road

- KEY:
-  Study Area
  - 1. 8-10 Great George Street
  - 2. Nova Place South, Bressenden Place
  - 3. 1 Neathouse Place
  - 4. Westminster Fire Station, 4 Greycoat Place
  - 5. Victoria Station House, 191 Victoria Street
  - 6. NIOC House, 4-8 Victoria Street
  - 7. Grenadler House 99-105 Horseferry Road
  - 8. Site at 18-19 Buckingham Gate
  - 9. 2 Monick Street
  - 10. New Scotland Yard, 8-19 Broadway
  - 11. 123-125 Buckingham Palace Road
  - 12. Victoria Station
  - 13. Parliamentary Northern Estate
  - 14. Palace of Westminster
  - 15. QEII

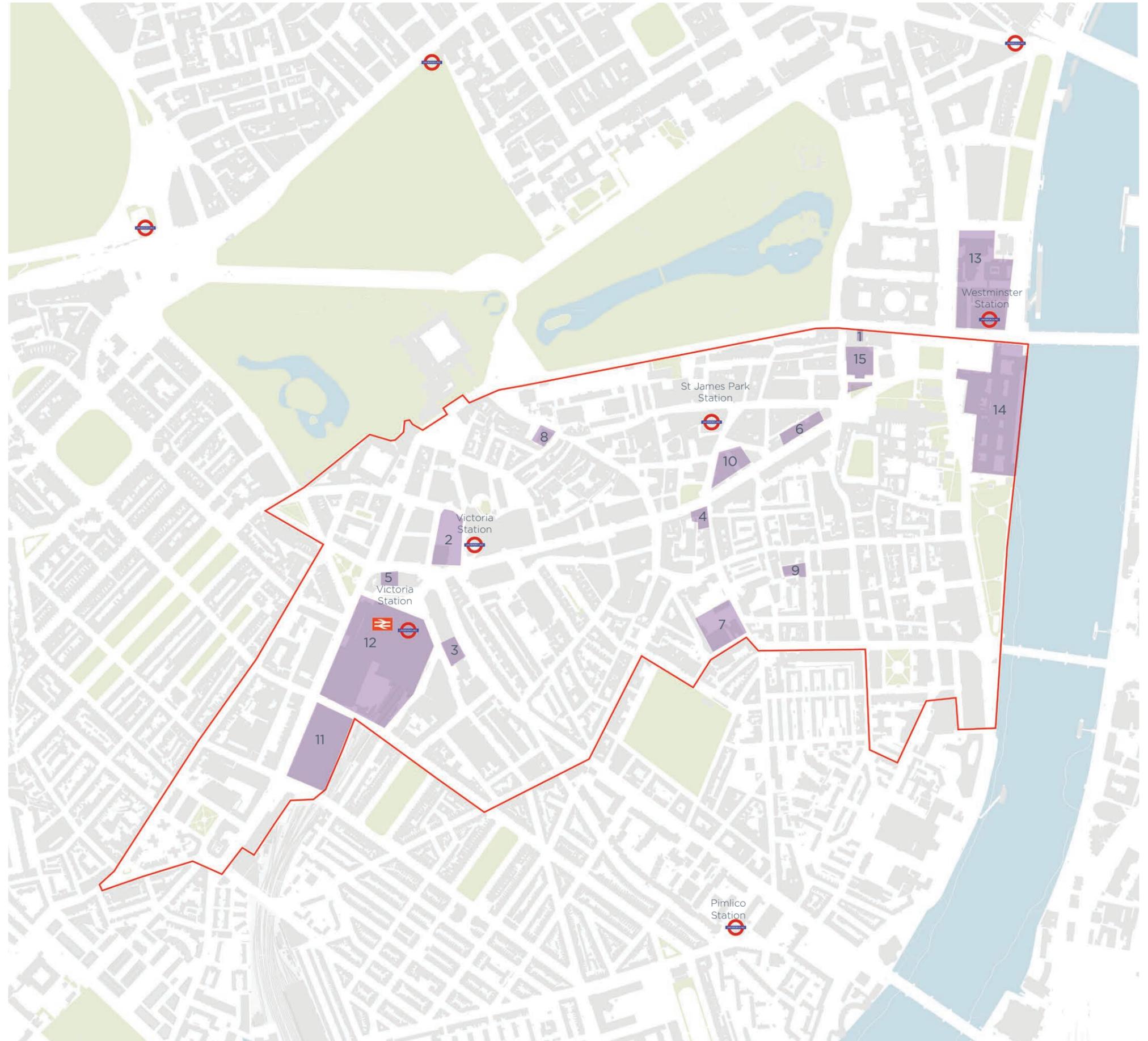


Fig.145 - Key Developments

## 2.23 KEY DEVELOPMENTS APPLICATIONS

### 1. 8-10 Great George Street (19/02730/FULL)

Use class change and internal and external alterations.  
Existing Use: Office (B1a)  
Status: Permitted (10th April 2019) – subject to conditions  
Summary: Application submitted for the use of part ground and upper floors as a 134 room hotel (Class C1), lower ground as a leisure suite (Class D2), ground floor as a restaurant/bar (Class A3/A4), and associated external alterations including roof top plant demolition, introduction of balconies and remodelling of elevations.

### 2. Nova Place South, Bressenden Place (18/10917/FULL)

Major Development/Construction  
Status: Pending (21st December 2018) – subject to conditions  
Summary: Construction of a ground floor plus part four, six and seven storey building with a new basement. The development will consist of a range of Use Classes, including offices (Class B1), flexible retail space (Class A1/A2/B1), flexible office/library (Class B1/D1) and flexible retail/library/office (Class A1/A2/B1/D1). The development will be accompanied by works on hard landscaping, highways, utilities and ancillary works.

### 3. Neathouse Place (19/04731/FULL)

Major Development/Construction  
Status: Pending (18th January 2019)  
Summary: Application for partial demolition and reconstruction to form a new extended building at 1 Neathouse for the use of a Hotel (Class C1) alongside an associated restaurant and bar on the ground floor (Class A3/A4). The development will see external works to elevations, creation of a rooftop plant and associated works including highways and public realm.

### 4. Westminster Fire Station, 4 Greycoat Place (16/05216/FULL)

Use Class Change/Construction  
Status: Permitted (25th May 2017) – subject to conditions  
Summary: Application for planning permission to use the Westminster Fire Station (ground floor) as Class A3 and upper four floors as Class C3 use of 6 flats, with associated internal and external alterations. The proposal would see demolition of existing rear building and the erection of a replacement five-storey residential building providing 11 flats, with the construction of a one-storey basement under the entire footprint to accommodate both A3 and residential use.

### 5. Victoria Station House, 191 Victoria Street (18/05932/FULL)

Change of Use/Alterations  
Status: Permitted (12th February 2019)  
Summary: Application for permission for the use of the 191 Victoria Street rooftop for outdoor dining, in connection with the existing contemporary food hall (Use Class A3, with ancillary A4 and A5 uses) at ground and first floor level. The development will consist of further external alteration and works.

### 6. NIOC House, 4-8 Victoria Street (19/03450/FULL)

Change of Use/Alterations  
Status: Permitted (11th September 2019)  
Summary: Application for planning permission for refurbishment and extension of existing building to provide further B1 (office) floor space, use the ground floor for retail (Class A1) and a café/restaurant (Class A3) purposes, and a gym (Class D2) at basement level. Further redevelopment consisting of a central courtyard infilling and the creation of a roof terrace and combined green roofs; together with replacement windows and new entrances and shop fronts. Plans will involve a new layout at ground level for new accessible parking and refuse storey, alongside cycle parking and associated facilities.

### 7. Grenadler House 99-105 Horseferry Road (15/11404/FULL)

Demolition/Redevelopment/Construction  
Status: Permitted (29th April 2016)  
Summary: A demolition and redevelopment project to provide a residential complex of 36 units of self-contained assisted living accommodation with associated facilities, such as: communal kitchen; storage areas; wellness spa; guest accommodation; and staff offices. The development is comprised of two linked six storey buildings, with associated internal courtyard, roof terraces and 36 space below ground car park.

### 8. Site at 18-19 Buckingham Gate (16/07801/FULL)

Demolition/Construction  
Status: Permitted (14th February 2017)  
Summary: Application for demolition of 18 and 19 Buckingham Gate to make way for the construction of a new seven-storey residential development, consisting of 13 residential flats (Class C3) and associated terraces, off-street car parking and facilities for residents.

9. *2 Monick Street*  
(18/00387/FULL)

Change of Use  
Status: Permitted (22nd May 2018)  
Summary: Use the ground floor of commercial unit 2 for Class A1 (shops), A2 (financial services), A3 (food and drink), B1 (office), D1 (non-residential institution), or D2 (gym). Additionally, use of Unit 1 for either Class A1, A2, A3, B1, D1, Sui Generis marketing suite for a temporary contract of 3 years, or gym (D2).

10. *New Scotland Yard, 8-19 Broadway*  
(15/07497/FULL)

Construction/Demolition  
Status: Permitted (27th April 2016)  
Summary: Erection of a mixed-use development comprising of office (B1) and retail (A1 and A3) across 2 four storey podiums, both with three residential buildings above, ranging from 14 to 20 storeys high. The development includes a new walkway and associated landscaping between the structures, and a retail pavilion at ground level. An additional three level basement provides for residential facilities, plant, cycle storage and car parking.

11. *123 – 125 Buckingham Palace Road*  
(17/07726/FULL)

Demolition/Extension  
Status: Permitted (23rd May 2019) – subject to a range pre-commencement conditions  
Application for an extension to office and retail building alongside associated works, in order to provide additional office floorspace (Class B1) at roof level and part ground floor for retail use (Classes A1, A3 or A4). Part demolition and alterations are to be made to the existing stone façade fronting Buckingham Palace Road, with part removal of the glazed building canopy. Further alterations will be made to the public realm, associated bus facilities, highway and landscaping, alongside the creation of high level terraces and other works. Development to provide an additional 209 cycle spaces and combined increase of 14,727 sqm of office and retail floorspace.

*Victoria Station*

Victoria Station (no app submitted): Plans for a multi-billion pound development, produced by Arup, to remove the roof of Victoria station, to make way for the construction of a new tower above the transport Hub of Victoria. This development will be produced for the use of new office space (Class B1). The construction will cover the entire footprint of the 19 platforms, removing the existing listed roof and creating a concrete & steel box around the platforms.

*Parliamentary Northern Estate*

Parliamentary Northern Estate: The existing Parliamentary Northern Estate (Sui Generis), will be developed as part of the Restoration and Renewal Programme (R&R) of the Palace of Westminster. The scheme will involve a range of demolition, construction and alteration works to produce a new accommodation for the House of Commons and associated services/facilities. The Northern Estate will act as the temporary home for the House of Commons, allowing parliamentary works to continue throughout the restoration of the Palace. The development will also involve refurbishments and alterations to the estate's landscape and the public urban realm.

*Palace of Westminster*

Palace of Westminster (no app submitted): The Palace of Westminster (PoW) will see a restoration and refurbishments in the coming years. Construction and alteration works will begin after the two successful decants of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, to their temporary homes. Due to the age and damage to the palace over the years, the work being carried out will need to last another century and remain fit for the two houses to return and continue parliamentary practice. The estimated completion date of the R&R project is 2032.

*QEII*

QEII (no app submitted): The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre (QEII) will act as the temporary home for the House

## 2.24 SOCIAL ECONOMICS: Working

This section presents a snapshot of the socio-economic context and profile for Victoria. It is primarily based upon some research communicated by VBID and undertaken by Volterra\*. It was not possible to obtain or generate data wholly specific to the study area and as such, the data presented in the report (and in Volterra's work) is in relation to the extent of the BID areas rather than the study area as a whole. However, this is considered to be sufficiently representative for the purposes of this study.



Fig.146

Victoria currently supports some 92,500 jobs. This is 13% of all jobs in Westminster

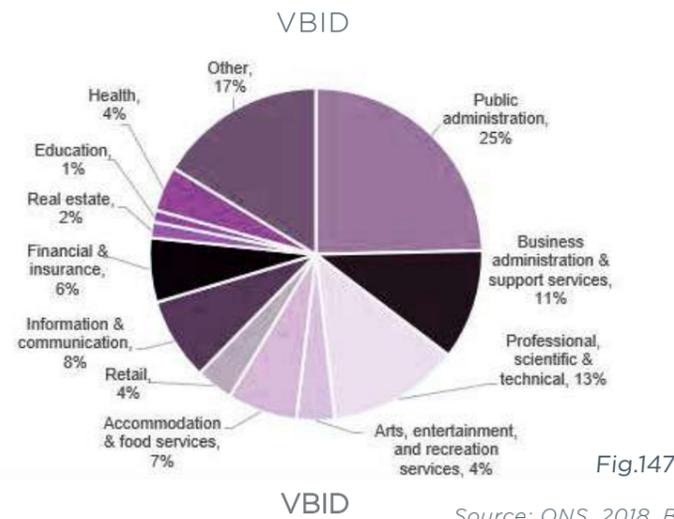


Fig.147

Source: ONS, 2018, Business Register and Employment Survey 2017

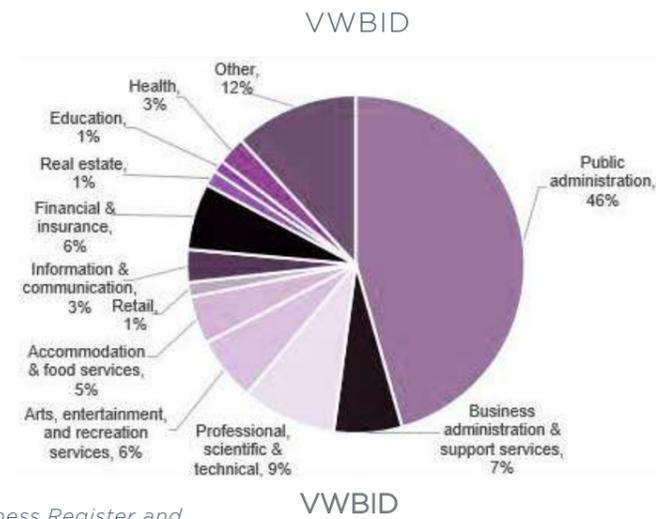


Fig.148

Victoria combined BIDs generate some £6.7Bn in GVA. Westminster total GVA is £59Bn

### Workplace Population by Gender, 2011

	Males		Females		Total Number
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	
VBID	18,100	46%	21,300	54%	39,400
VWBID	24,500	43%	32,200	57%	56,800
<b>BIDs Combined</b>	<b>42,600</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>53,500</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>96,100</b>
Westminster	316,700	55%	263,000	45%	579,700
London	2,452,000	54%	2,048,000	46%	4,501,000

Source: South Westminster BIDs: Economic Assessment. Volterra. Nov 2019 (Draft report for VBID)

Fig.149

The majority of the workplace population are female



Fig.150

\* South Westminster BIDs: Economic Assessment. July 2019. Draft Report and Supplementary. Note: Victoria Vibrancy Report 2017. Volterra Partners

Whilst only a socio-economic snapshot is presented in this report, the Volterra study indicates that:

- the study area plays a key role in the economies of Westminster and Greater London, and provides a substantial contribution of all economic output in London. The area has some 1450 businesses with a GVA of some £6.7bn;
- the area contributes significant tax payments to Westminster, the Greater London Authority and wider central London through business rate payments;
- the great majority of businesses area office-based. Public services provision is a key component. Retail, leisure and accommodation related businesses are also an important sector. Indeed tourism and visitors are a key element in the area’s economy;
- in terms of gender, the majority of the workforce is female, which is counter to the trend generally across London;
- employment within the area is estimated at some 92,600 employees, some 12% of all employment in Westminster. Employment growth in the VBID area was 3.4% over the period 2003-2017, whilst in VWBID is was 1.1%.
- however, over the period 2010-2017, they experienced a decline in growth rate, being 2% and 0.6% respectively, which was actually counter to the trend across Westminster and London during this period; and
- although office rental rates are high and vacancy rates low, there is a planned decrease in office space within the development pipeline for both BID areas according to the Volterra study. This may keep office rental rates relatively high and perhaps deter new businesses from entering the area. It is important therefore that the area remains competitive as a location for business through supporting initiatives, such as public realm enhancement.

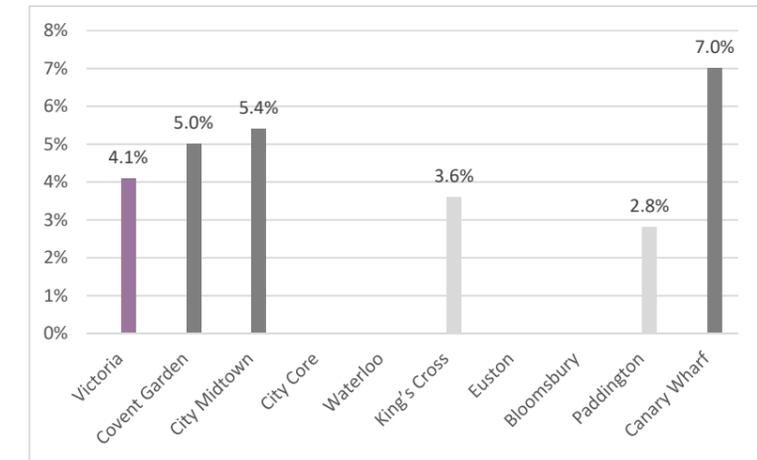
### Office Rental Conditions in Central London

Office Market Area Name	Corresponding BID Comparator Area	Vacancy Rate (Colliers)	Prime Rents per sq ft (Colliers)	Prime Rents per sq ft (JLL)
Victoria	Victoria BID, Victoria Westminster Partnership	4.1%	£75.00	£77.50
Covent Garden	Northbank BID, Heart of London BID	5.0%	£85.00	£80.00
City Midtown	Northbank BID	5.4%	£68.50	
City Core	Northbank BID, Cheapside BID			£70.00
Waterloo	Southbank BID, WeAreWaterloo			£62.50
King’s Cross	Kings Cross	3.6%	£77.50	£85.00
Euston	Kings Cross			
Bloomsbury	Kings Cross			
Paddington	Paddington Now	2.8%	£75.00	£75.00
Canary Wharf		7.0%	£45.00	£48.50

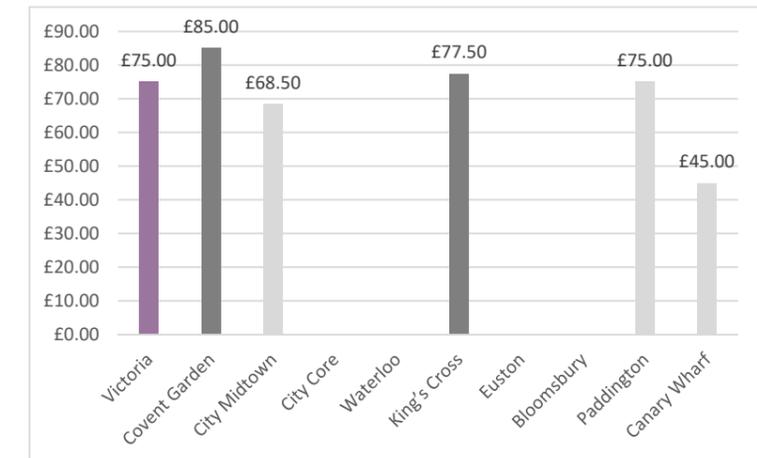
Source: JLL, 2019, UK Central London Office Market Report Q1 2019; Colliers International, 2019, Central London Office Snapshot Q4 2018. Presented in South Westminster BIDs: Economic Assessment. Volterra. Nov 2019 (Draft report for VBID)

Fig.151

### Vacancy Rate (Colliers)



### Prime Rents (Colliers)



### Prime Rents (JLL)



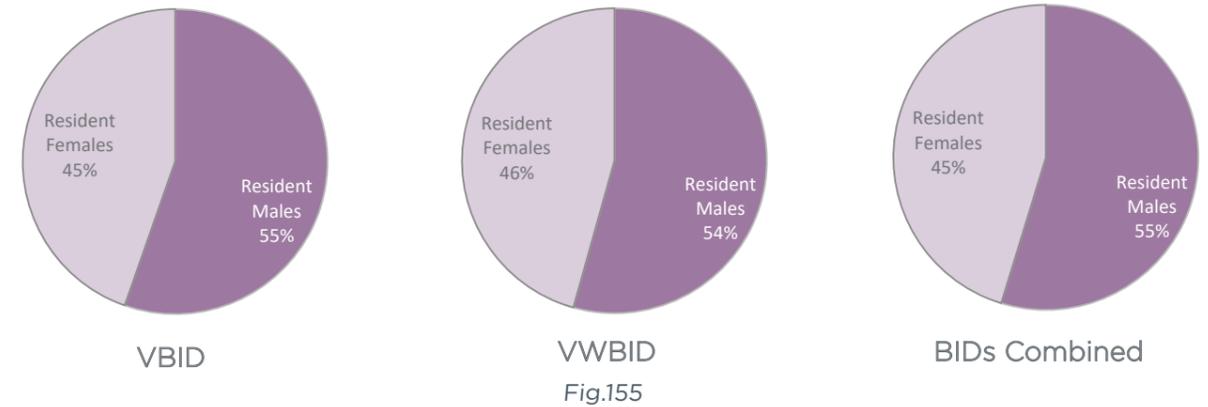
Fig.152

## 2.24 SOCIAL ECONOMICS: Living

Residents Population and Gender (2018 estimates)

	Resident Males		Resident Females		Total Residents 2018	Growth in total residents 2011-2018
	Number	%	Number	%		
<b>VBID</b>	1,470	55%	1,185	45%	2,655	11%
<b>VWBID</b>	1,910	54%	1,605	46%	3,515	22%
<b>BIDs Combined</b>	<b>3,380</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>2,795</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>6,175</b>	<b>17%</b>

Source: South Westminster BIDs: Economic Assessment. Volterra. Nov 2019 (Draft report for VBID)  
Fig.153

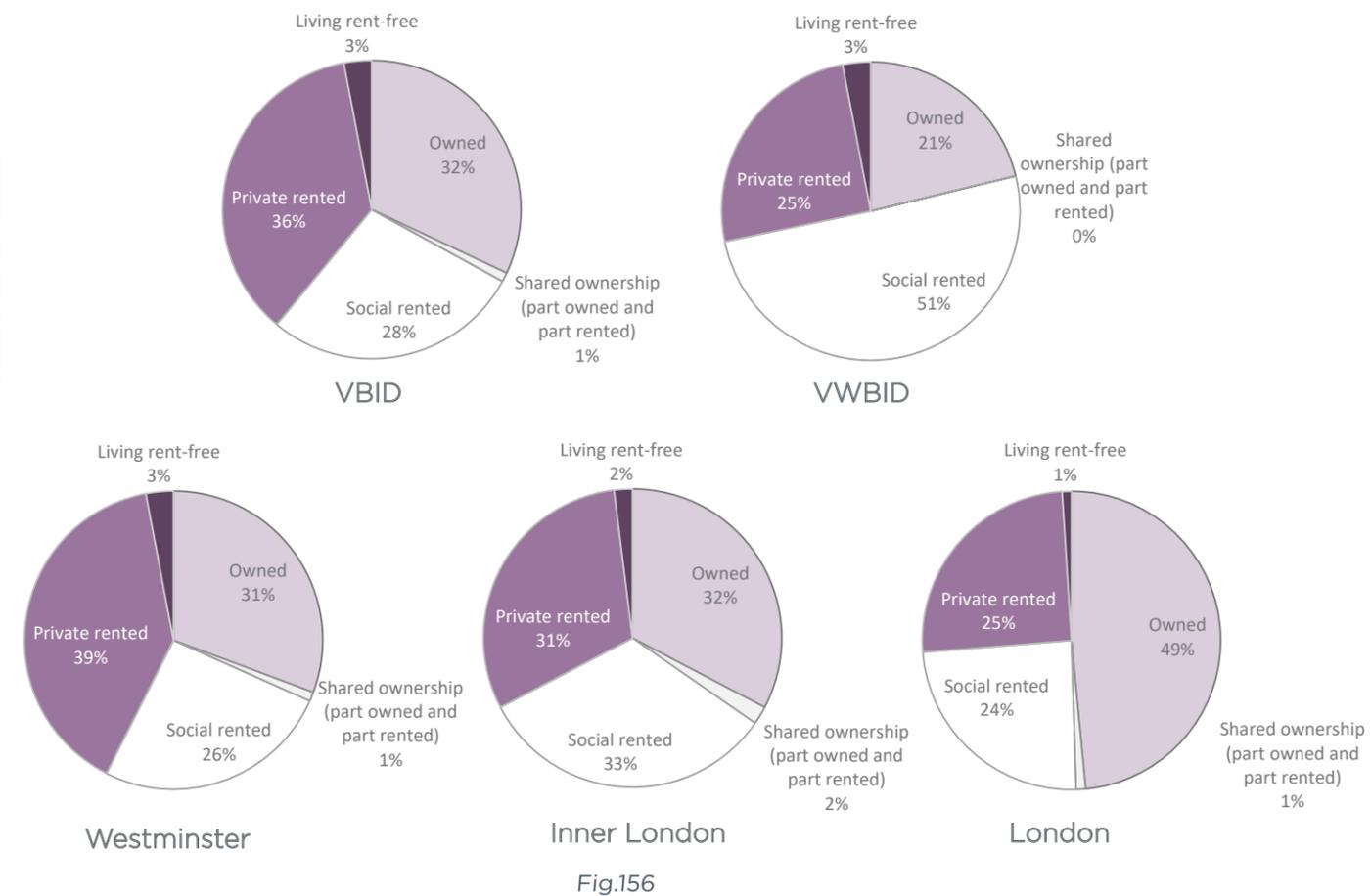


Tenure of Households within the BID Areas, 2011

Study Area	Total number of Homes	Owned	Shared ownership (part owned and part rented)	Social rented	Private rented	Living rent-free
<b>VBID</b>	<b>1200</b>	32%	1%	28%	36%	3%
<b>VWBID</b>	<b>1400</b>	21%	0%	50%	25%	3%
<b>Westminster</b>		31%	1%	26%	40%	3%
<b>Inner London</b>		33%	2%	33%	31%	2%
<b>London</b>		48%	1%	24%	25%	1%

Source: South Westminster BIDs: Economic Assessment. Volterra. Nov 2019 (Draft report for VBID, based on ONS, 2011, UK. Census: Table KS402EW - Tenure)

Fig.154



Whilst only a socio-economic snapshot is presented in this report, the Volterra study indicates that Living:

- as of 2018, the area's residential population (approximately based on the BID areas) is estimated to be 6170. This also reflects an estimated growth of some 17% in total residents between 2011 and 2018. The majority of residents are also male, at 55%.
- in terms of age profile, 31% of the residential population is over 50 years of age, 13% is under 15, 11% aged 16-24, and 45% aged 25-49. There is a significant middle aged and elderly residential population in the area;
- all in all, there are some 2600 dwellings in the area accommodating the residential population. VBID has some 1,200 homes and VWBID has some 1400.
- proportions vary according to tenure between both areas. In VBID, some 28% area social rented and 36% are private rented. 32% are owned. For VWBID, 50% are social rented, 25% private rented and 21% owned. The rented sector is a key component of the tenure profile of the overall area;
- in terms of wellbeing, for VBID some 11% of the residential population are limited in their day to day activities by health, whilst it is 14% in VBID. Health generally seems good;
- it should be borne in mind that these figures date from 2011 however, and that there is a large middle-aged to elderly population in the area. The UK generally is seeing an increase in the proportion of its elderly population. This has implications for planning for health and wellbeing, and the relationship with public realm; and
- the area also has a high visitor population.

Residential Population by Age : 2018

	Aged 0 to 15	Aged 16 to 24	Aged 25 to 49	Aged 50 to 64	Aged 65+
<b>VBID</b>	285	255	1,110	405	340
<b>VWBID</b>	390	315	1,285	545	340
<b>BIDs Combined</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>2,395</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>680</b>

Source: South Westminster BIDs: Economic Assessment. Volterra. Nov 2019 (Draft report for VBID)  
Fig.157



Fig.158

## 2.24 SOCIAL ECONOMICS: Living

Resident Population with Long-Term Health Problem or Disability, 2011

	Day-To-Day Activities Limited a Lot (%)	Day-To-Day Activities Limited a Little (%)	Day-To-Day Activities Not Limited (%)
<b>VBID</b>	5%	6%	89%
<b>VWBID</b>	7%	7%	85%
<b>BIDs combined</b>	7%	7%	86%
<b>Westminster</b>	7%	7%	86%
<b>London</b>	8%	9%	82%

Source: The National Census, 2011, Census Tables KS301EW - Health and Provision of Unpaid Care. Presented in South Westminster BIDs: Economic Assessment. Volterra. Nov 2019 (Draft report for VBID)

Fig.159

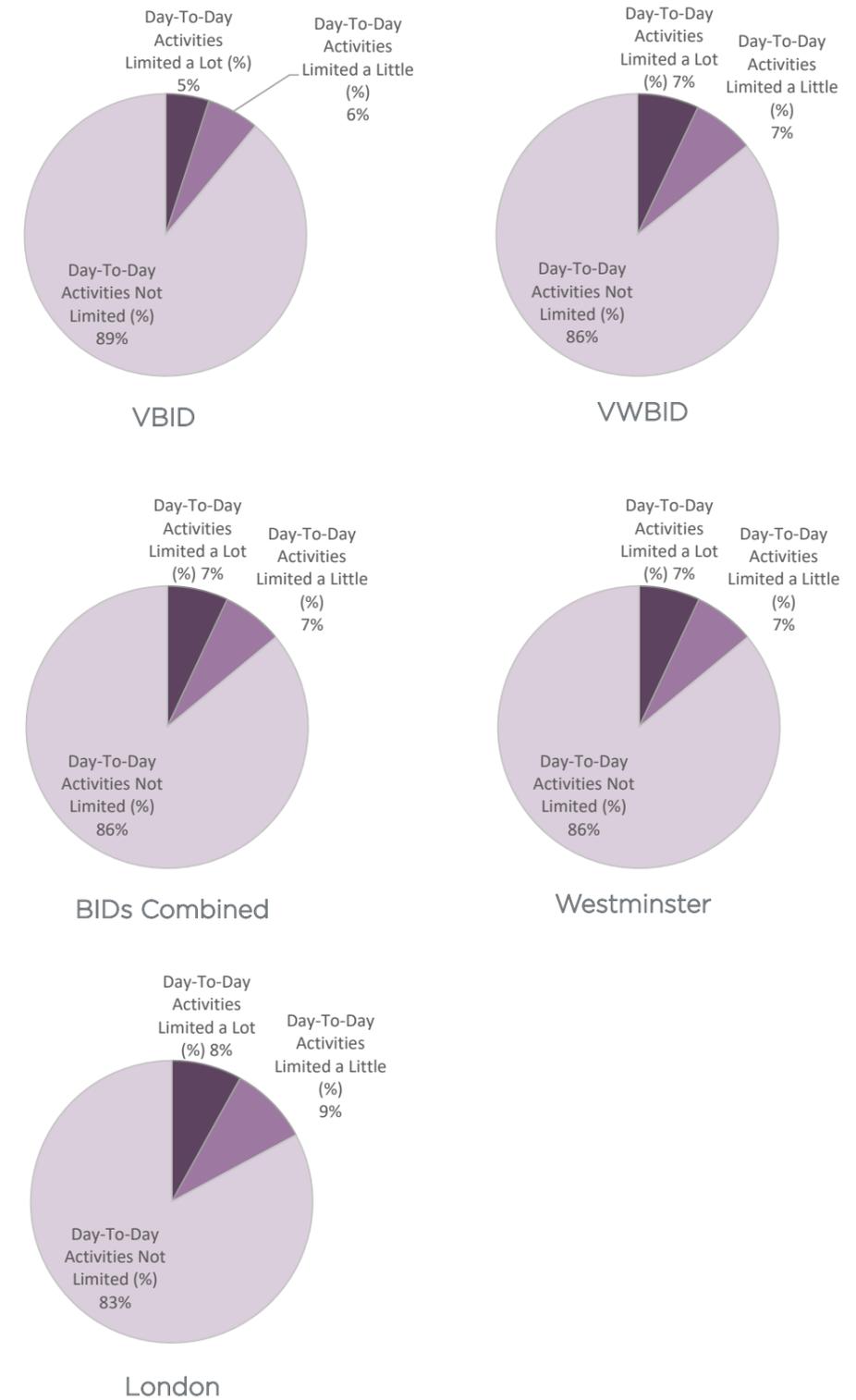


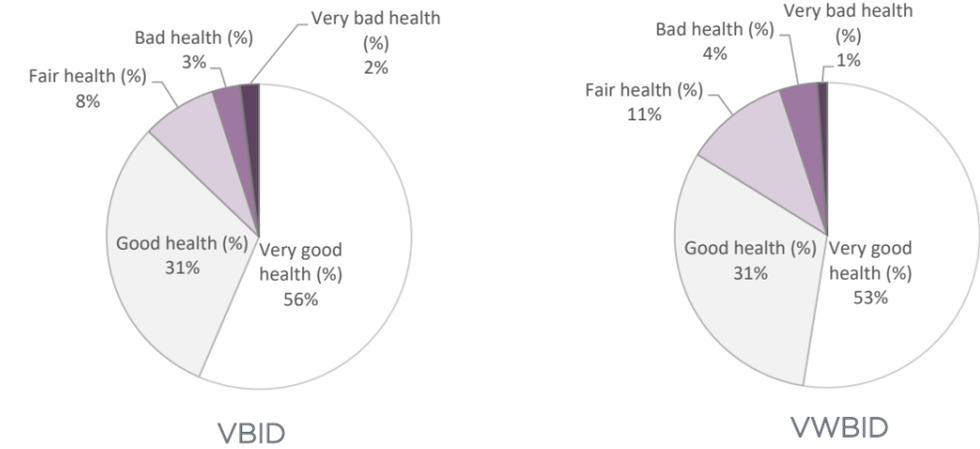
Fig.160

Resident Population Self-Reported General Health, 2011

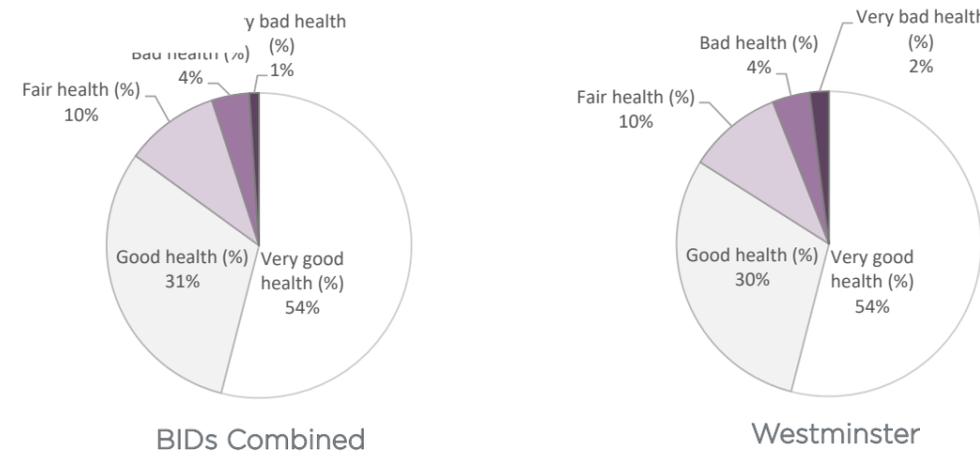
	Very good health (%)	Good health (%)	Fair health (%)	Bad health (%)	Very bad health (%)
<b>VBID</b>	57%	31%	8%	3%	2%
<b>VWBID</b>	52%	31%	11%	4%	1%
<b>BIDs combined</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Westminster</b>	54%	30%	10%	4%	2%
<b>London</b>	47%	34%	13%	4%	1%

Source: The National Census, 2011, Census Tables KS301EW - Health and Provision of Unpaid Care. Presented in South Westminster BIDs: Economic Assessment. Volterra. Nov 2019 (Draft report for VBID)

Fig.161



BIDs



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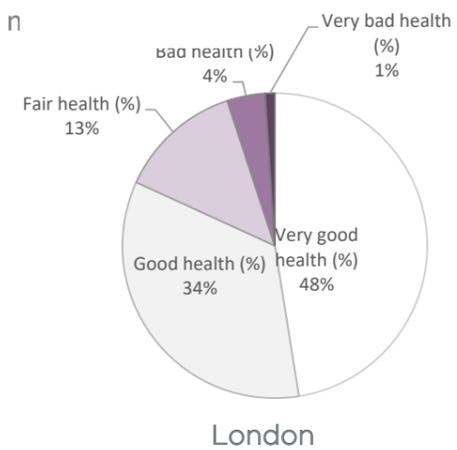


Fig.162

## 2.24 SOCIAL ECONOMICS: Visiting

### Number of Hotels

Numbers of Hotels			
Area	2-3.5 Star	4 Star	5 Star
VBID	0	6	4
VWBID	2	1	1
BIDS Combined	2	7	5

Fig.163

### Estimated Visitor Accommodation and Overnight Visitor Numbers

	Total Serviced Accommodation Rooms	Total Non-Serviced Accommodation Listings	Estimated Annual Overnight Visitors
VBID	1,400	90	423,000
VWBID	760	110	227,000

Source: South Westminster BIDs: Economic Assessment. Volterra. 2019 (Draft Report for VBID)

Fig.164



Fig.165

### Key Visitor Attraction (Key Facts)

Source: South Westminster BIDs: Economic Assessment. Volterra. Nov 2019 (Draft Report for VBID)



Fig.166

#### Buckingham Palace

15 million visitors annually. Recorded entrances to the attraction totalled 573,000 in 2018/19. However, the number of visitors visiting the Palace surrounds, such as Green Park and St James Park, as a direct result of the presence of Buckingham Palace has been estimated to be 15 million.



Fig.167

#### Houses of Parliament

In 2017/18 the seat of the two houses of the Parliament of the UK attracted a total of 1.08 million entering visitors, of which 97,000 were visiting from educational establishments. In 2017/18 the Houses of Parliament collected total revenue of £17.5 million from visitors.



Fig.168

#### Westminster Abbey

Westminster Abbey is one of the most iconic religious buildings within the UK. In 2018 the Abbey attracted a total of 1.55 million entering visitors, of which the majority were fee-paying visitors (1.20 million).



Fig.169

#### Trafalgar Square

Trafalgar Square contains The National Gallery and St Martin-in-the-Fields, two of the most visited attractions within London. Visitors numbers to the square overall are not recorded, however in 2018 The National Gallery attracted a total of 5.74 million visitors, making it the 3rd most popular tourist attraction in London alone.

## 2.19 SOCIAL ECONOMICS: Summary

This profile has relevance for thinking about public realm, particularly when taken in conjunction with the findings from the key structural trends presented in the following chapter. Public realm planning and design will need to take account not just of the structural trends, but the changing socio-economic context too, as well as aspirations for growth, in order to maximise the benefit of its role in placemaking and helping Victoria realise its full potential as a place in which to work, live or visit.





### 3.1 EMERGING TRENDS IN KEY SECTORS

*Changing cities*

Our cities are growing and changing faster and more dramatically than at any point in human history. Rapid advances in and increasing reliance upon technology, global demographic shifts and rapid urbanisation, climate change, and emerging political and economic developments, are all dramatically transforming the urban world in which we live, work, shop and move.

*Borders between sectors are dissolving*

Changes in lifestyle are becoming apparent, breaking the traditional structures of the Living, Retail, Working, Transport and Movement sectors. The borders between some are dissolving and in turn are bringing a more experiential and flexible setting to our environments that sectors need to respond to more pro-actively.

*Emerging trends are transforming built environments*

Emerging trends are transforming the built environment of our cities, and urban innovation and new solutions are already being tabled to address them. In turn the design of buildings and public spaces needs to be more adaptable to the changing demands. Design needs to be creative and innovative, putting people back at the centre, with the human experience being the driving force behind resilient and livable cities - and ultimately sustainably successful ones.

The following pages explore in more detail the 5 emerging trends in the Working, Retail, Living an Movement sectors and how the public realm can begin to respond.

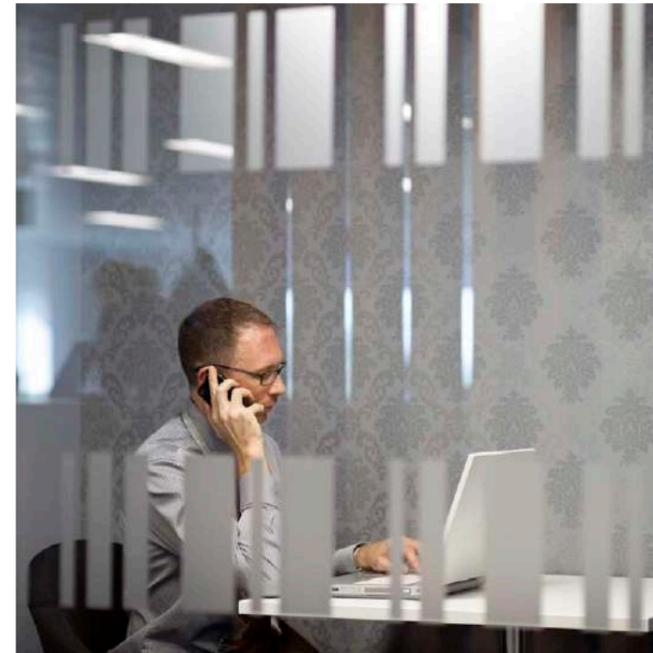


Fig.170 - Diverse Working Environments



Fig.171 - Experimental Retail



Fig.172 - Dynamic Living Environments



Fig.173 - Emerging Transport Modes

### 3.2 PEOPLE AND WORKING KEY FINDINGS

*Blurring and Balance*

There is an emerging and increasing trend towards the blurring of the lines between work life and social life (away from the traditional norm where these activities were separate). As such, work environments are looking to incorporate or combine socialising opportunities within their business environments (internal and external) as well as opportunities for leisure, to help with balancing work and social life. This also highlights the importance of an evening economy for 'work' and businesses.

*Health and Wellbeing*

The environment that people work in is increasingly viewed within a wider work life balance context. Access to nature and opportunities for an active lifestyle are seen as beneficial to workplace satisfaction and productivity. Providing the right stimulus, the wider work environment will assist in attracting and retaining the best talent.

*Technology and Remote Working*

Utilising technology provides opportunities to become more flexible in how the work place is structured and how people interact. The public realm should continue to integrate technology infrastructure where possible to provide opportunities for wider workplace options. People are choosing to work remotely from their place of work, including more public places such as cafes and public realm spaces. This creates workplaces in public places and the need to accommodate this type of use is increasing.

*Changing Demographics*

People are increasingly placing value on the experience of working and not just financial reward. This puts an emphasis on workplaces and their surrounding environments to be engaging in themselves and located in places that provide a rich and stimulating experience.

*Animation and Evening Economy*

There is a trend towards facilitating activation and animation of public realm and space, and provision of participatory activities within the public realm - to help bring locations 'alive.'

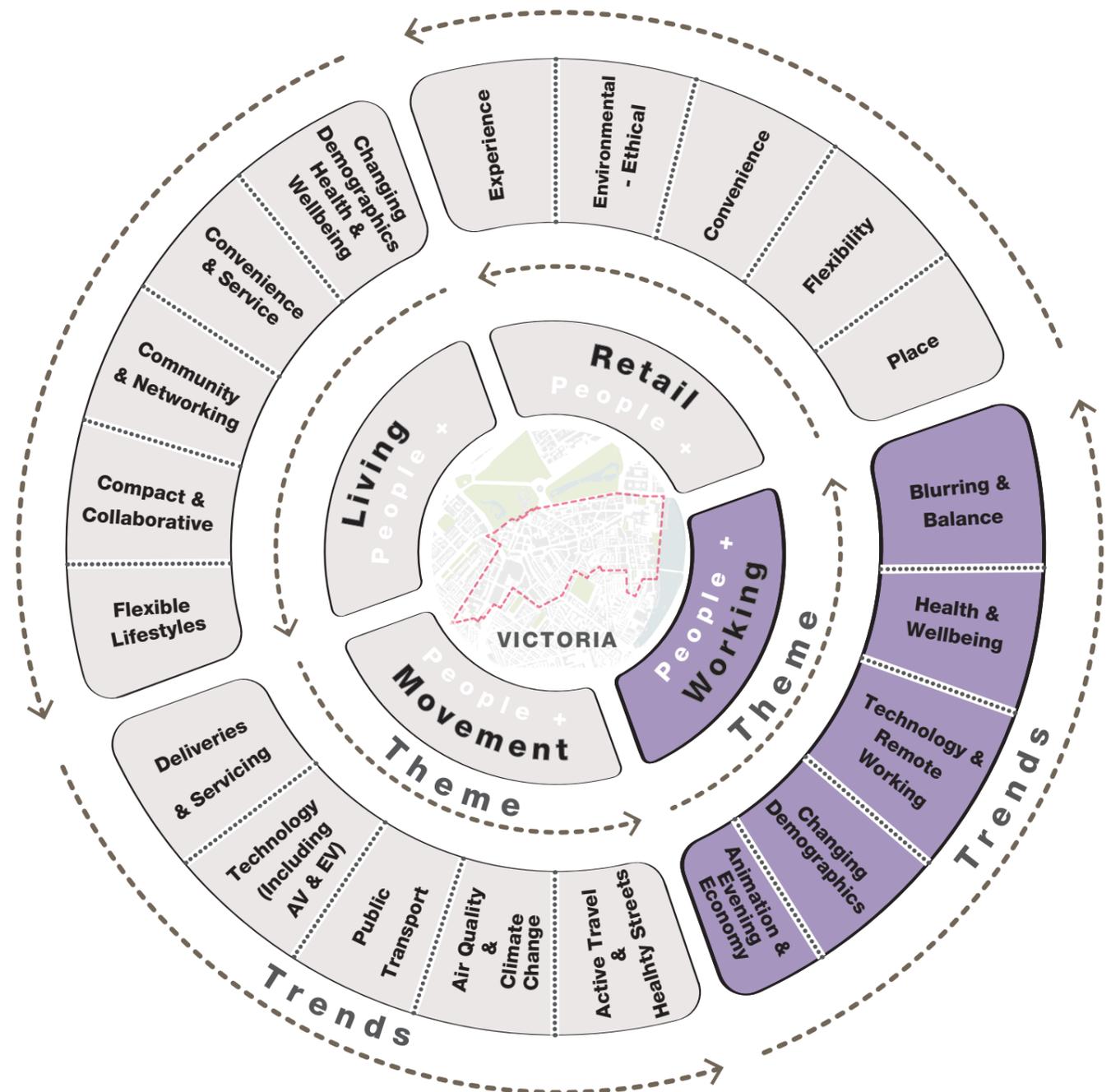


Fig.174  
People and Working Key Trends

### 3.3 PEOPLE AND RETAIL KEY FINDINGS

*Experience*

The value of experience will separate the physical and the digital retail and changing High Street experience. The public realm will play a significant role in adding to the experience of the wider place, and actively influence peoples decision to shop at one place or another. Locational proximity with other uses such as food, leisure, entertainment or community are increasingly key, as is a successful evening economy.

*Environmentally Ethical*

Growing awareness on issues of sustainable and socially conscience choices will continue to influence the experiences people choose to engage with.

*Convenience*

The retail experience on the high street must offer an easy and convenient place to get to and move around. Perceived isolation from other quality environments will be barriers to attract people into high street environments.

*Flexibility*

The creation of adaptable mutli-use destinations that offer people an evolving and continuing diverse range of opportunities including temporary/seasonal uses.

*Place*

A strong identity which symbolises a destination creates a sense of uniqueness and desire. Essential that a place can attract customers to it and subsequently support a retail environment . Complementary supporting uses such as leisure, entertainment, culture and dining are key for a successful retail place, offering a combined experience. The evening economy can be key.

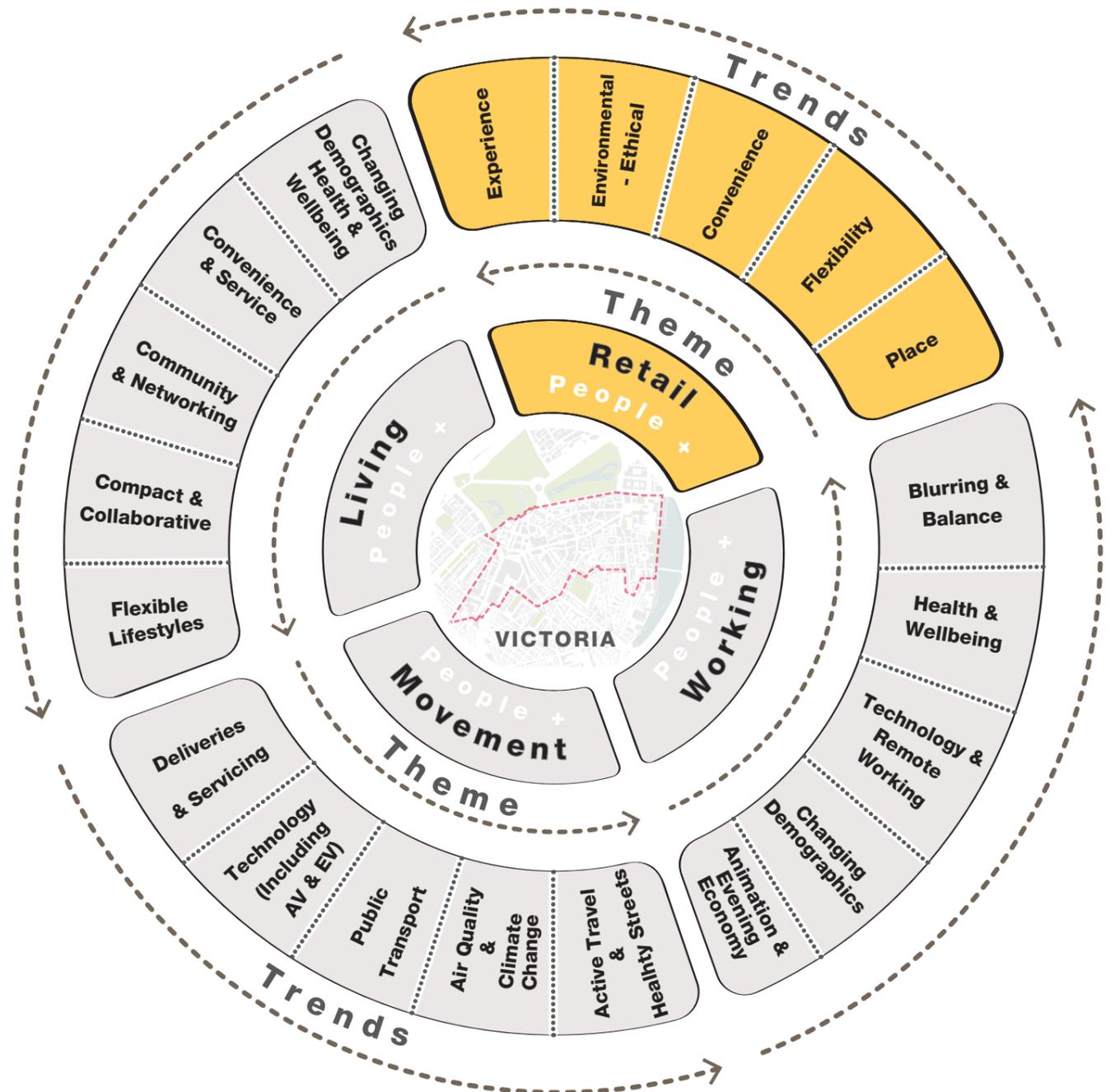


Fig.175  
People and Retail Key Trends

### 3.4 PEOPLE AND LIVING KEY FINDINGS

*Changing Demographics and Health and Wellbeing*

Urban populations are rising, with a growing percentage of over 65s forming part of the increase in the coming decades. People are living longer. This, and rising obesity in younger people, is focusing greater attention on health and wellbeing in 'Living' environments.

*Convenience and Service*

Intense urban lifestyle requires the ability to access multiple services easily and conveniently. High quality service will be essential to attracting users.

*Community and Networking*

People desire to live in locations that offer a sense of vibrant local community to engage with. Communities, and community based places, offer the opportunity to network on a human level, offering advantages over digital networking.

*Compact and Collaborative*

Residential development densities are increasing generally. High density residential developments based upon more 'communal' living are also emerging, in response to rising costs and land shortages. The Private Rented Sector is also growing.

*Flexible Lifestyles*

As people's lifestyles change and adapt to the pace of the modern urban environment, the availability of flexible and adaptable spaces to complement compact high density living models will increase.

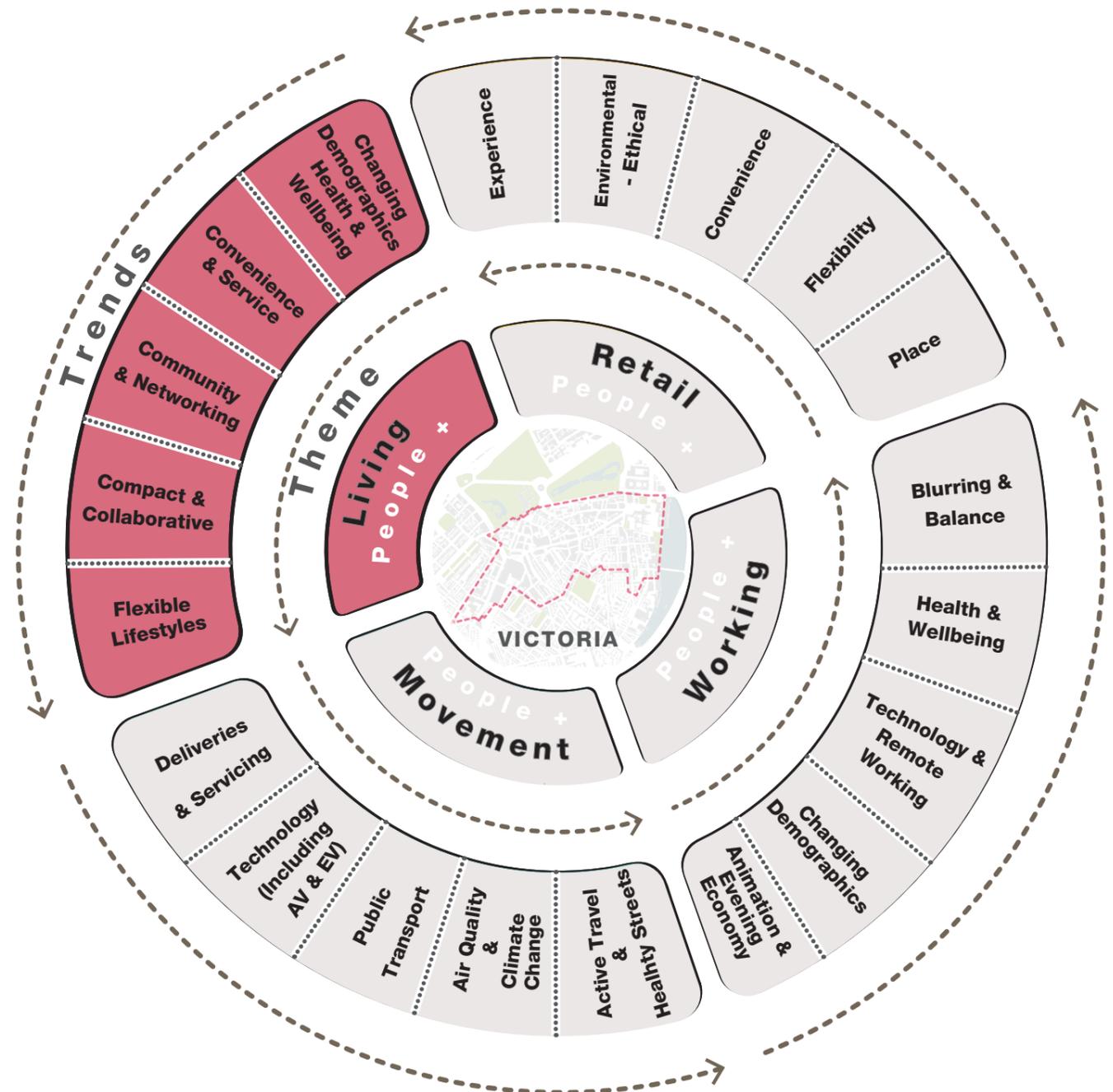


Fig.176  
People and Living Key Trends

### 3.5 PEOPLE AND MOVEMENT KEY FINDINGS

*Active Travel and Healthy Streets*

Encouraging people to take up sustainable and healthy transport modes such as walking and cycling requires the public realm to provide welcoming and accessible environments in which to do so.

*Air Quality and Climate Change*

Our public spaces and streets need to be free of air pollution and respond to climate change in both accommodating changing weather patterns and providing mitigation to further climate change. Transport and traffic initiatives that reduce traffic volumes, promote use of public transport, and reduce vehicular dominance are key.

*Public Transport*

Access to reliable and well connected public transport remains a key component of a successful place. Further emphasis on the environmental benefits of multi occupant transport will continue to reinforce the role of public transport in successful city places.

*Technology*

Technological advancement can help issues such as air quality and convenience. However careful consideration must be given to the life cycle of materials and supporting infrastructure required for emerging forms of transport, including electronic and autonomous vehicles.

*Deliveries and Servicing*

Deliveries and servicing are fundamental to successful places, particularly commercial and retail environments. Initiatives that promote delivery consolidation are increasingly key in order to help reduce traffic domination and improve air quality.

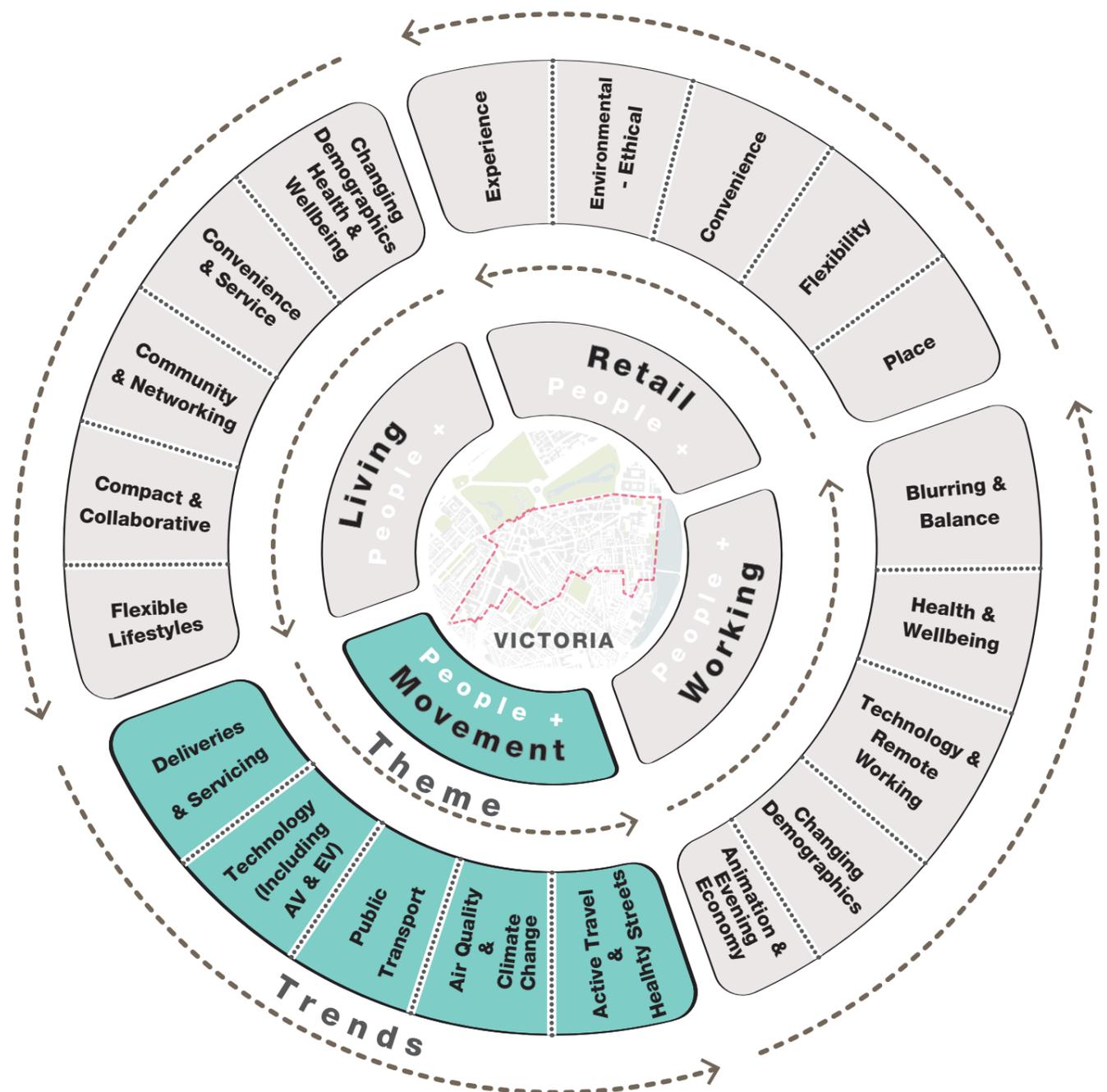


Fig.177  
People and Movement Key Trends

### 3.6 SUMMARY FINDINGS

*Number of commonalities between the sectors...*

This section brings together the key structural trends which are emerging in the four sectors of our cities environment: Working, Retailing, Living and Movement as reflected in the adjacent diagram. From review it is possible to see that there are a number of commonalities between the sectors that are interesting from a public realm and placemaking perspective and include the following:

*The importance of experience for the user*

*The Importance of Experience for the User* - The user and the experience of the user is driving many sectors, putting emphasis upon designing for people and their experience, and how they use and experience an environment.

*Changing demographics*

*Changing Demographics* - Changing demographics is shifting the way people work, live and socialise and the demands required.

*Technology*

*Technology* - Technological advancements are on the rise in regards to smart cities, smart houses, smart retail experiences, remote working and smart transport systems.

*Health and wellbeing*

*Health and Wellbeing* - Creation of people centric places which promote health and wellbeing.

*Sustainability, climate change and air pollution*

*Sustainability, Climate Change and Air Pollution* - Increasing recognition that all sectors have a role to play in helping to address sustainability and climate change from energy consumption to efforts to consolidate servicing and delivery traffic. Alongside tackling air pollution and ethical considerations are embedded in everything we do.

*Coalescence and community*

*Coalescence and Community - Work Life and Living* - Creation of a sense of community across work life, social life and living where people can socialise and spark a spirit of collaboration.

*Flexibility*

*Flexibility* - Notion of flexible spaces (and lifestyles). Spaces need to be flexible enough to accommodate a range of functionalities or different styles of working and living which is further supported by technology.

*Place*

*Place* - Location and the initiatives in place to improve the sense of place.

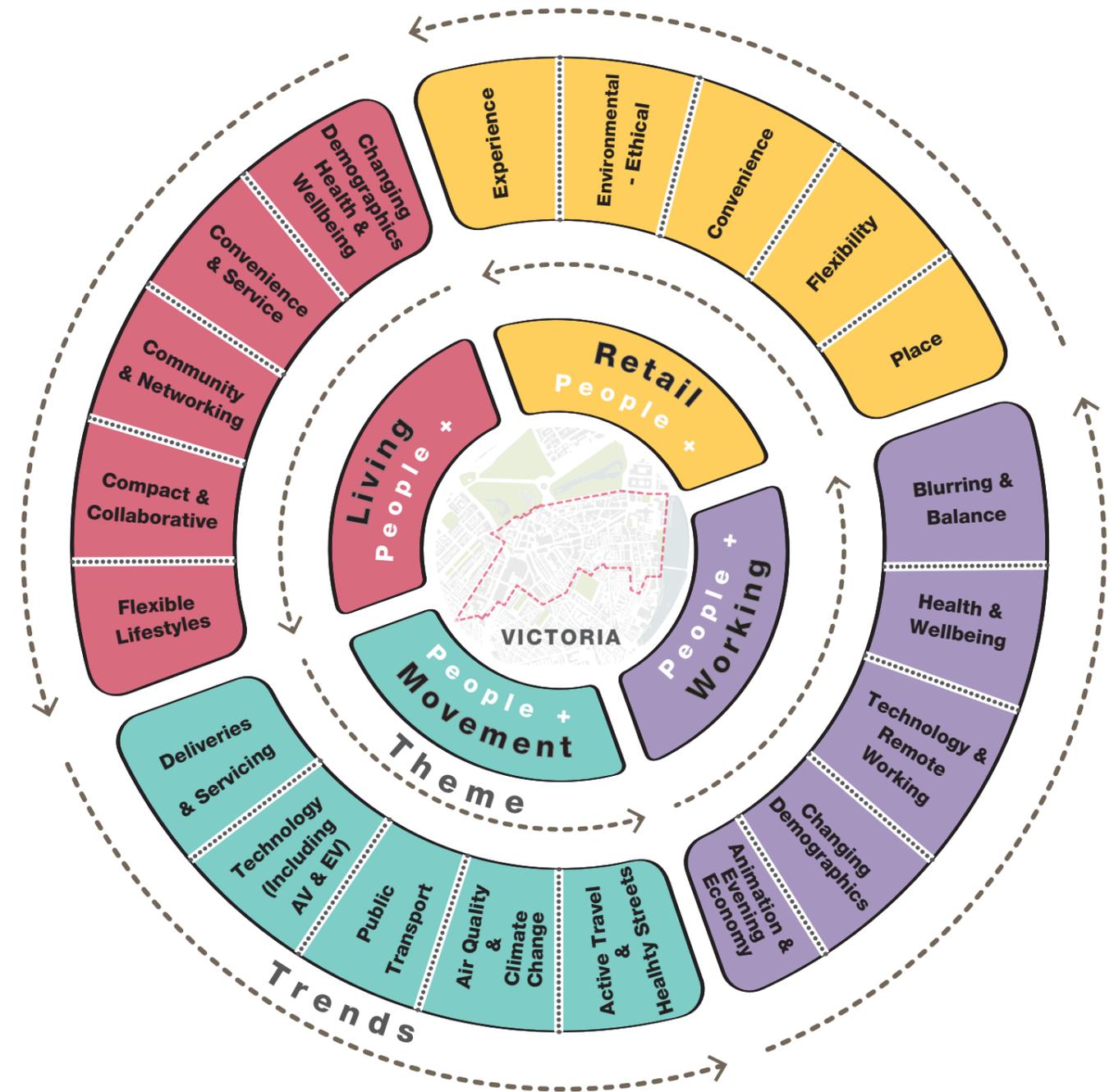


Fig.178  
Summary of the Trends





## 4.1 STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY: WINDS OF CHANGE

For a long time Victoria has been synonymous with transportation (Victoria Station) and large and largely non-descript office buildings interspersed with occasional points of significant interest – Buckingham Palace, the theatres, Westminster Cathedral, and a mix of architectural styles of residential buildings. This perception is beginning to change. Over the past several years a significant amount of investment has been and continues to be channelled into Victoria leading to some transformed and rejuvenated streets that complement and add to the area’s accessibility, commercial and cultural offer, and serve to round out Victoria’s position as an emerging and exciting destination for all. This activity, has gathered momentum and of course further focus has been brought by the restoration and renewal plans for the Palace of Westminster.

As well as Victoria Station, the area also includes St James’s Park Tube station and Wellington Barracks, as well as Parliament Square. It is home to many historic and cultural assets as well as a variety of established hotels and blue chip organisations. Whilst benefiting from a rich and diverse mix of businesses, its identity is also defined through its function as home to the seat of national government. Major multi-national corporations thrive alongside small start-ups and bustling creative industries are complemented by a thriving hospitality and leisure sector. However, the area does suffer from traffic domination, from pockets of poor public realm, poor air quality, poor pedestrian connectivity and inadequate signage.

Much has happened since the publication of the ‘Public Realm Vision for Victoria’ study in 2015. Landsec’s developments have continued apace with buildings along Victoria Street being completed and the final phases of NOVA are being refined prior to commencement on site in 2019.

The success of initiatives such as at Kings Cross St Pancras and London Bridge has seen a resurgence of interest in the role that transport interchange rejuvenation can play in successful regeneration and placemaking. The opportunity for potential over station development at Victoria Station, the second busiest station in the UK, has taken on added significance and attention. London Underground’s upgrade works to Victoria Station with new and extended ticket halls, step free access to the station, new escalators and new and improved station entrances are also recently completed.

This work has served to re-emphasise that the Victoria Transport Interchange, with a direct rail link to Gatwick Airport, also acts a visitor’s first impression of Victoria and indeed of our capital city, as can the nearby Victoria Coach Station. A Crossrail 2 station is also proposed for the area and Network Rail are working with stakeholders to explore the potential to revitalise Victoria Station and its environs, including alignment with Crossrail 2, recognising that the country’s second busiest railway and gateway to Gatwick Airport will only get busier still.

Within Victoria and towards Westminster a minor revolution in design techniques and planning is taking place as the House of Lords prepares for a temporary relocation to the Queen Elizabeth II conference centre as part of the multi £bn restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster. This project, possibly accompanied by significant upgrades to Parliament Square, introduces an opportunity for both permanent and interim public realm interventions that could significantly enhance the experience of the area for residents, businesses, workers and visitors alike.

Nearby, Northacre’s six tower residential development with retail and office space and new public realm has commenced construction on the former site of New Scotland Yard on Broadway next to Christchurch Gardens. Indeed VBID, VWBID and WCC are shortly to implement their innovative £3.0m rejuvenation of Christchurch Gardens, a partnership project transforming the gardens into a contemporary and much needed green open space for the area.

Since 2010 Victoria BID has sought to harness these changes in a positive way to ensure that a revitalised Victoria benefits those who live and work in the area, visit as tourists, and for those who have yet to arrive. With the establishment of the Victoria Westminster BID, an additional layer of energy and focus has been brought to the area that will help to ensure that as Victoria Westminster’s change continues to unfold it is not only commensurate with sustainable development but is people-oriented.

This impetus is fundamental to help ensure the area meets future needs and aspirations for growth and collectively the planning, environment and transport policy landscape also continues to evolve. Located within the Central Activities Zone, Victoria is an

Opportunity Area outlined in previous Westminster City Council policy documents such as the Victoria Area Planning Brief and most recently in the draft 2019-2040 City Plan. It is set to provide, “At least 1,000 new homes and development capacity for 4,000 new jobs...between 2011 and 2031”. With this brings increased pressure on infrastructure and public realm.

The London Mayor’s office has recently updated their transport and environmental policy plans. Its new London Plan is going through the process of adoption. More locally, neighbourhood plans are in various stages of production, with the Victoria Neighbourhood Forum and Belgravia Neighbourhood Forum proceeding with preparations. The Royal Parks is also preparing a movement strategy with regard to St. James’s Park, seeking to improve how it relates to and operates with its surrounds.

In July 2018, Central Government Cabinet Office also launched the Government Estate Strategy which has particular reference and relevance to the Victoria and Victoria Westminster areas. The Strategy recognises the major role that tourism plays in London’s economy (in 2016 over 19 million visitors came to London). It advances that the area between Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square is of particular focus and is of national and international importance. However, this area suffers from a poor public realm environment and traffic domination among other factors. The strategy presents the need for a long term vision for this area to enable it to reach its multi-functional full potential in terms of placemaking, and help high level thematic co-ordination of the range of development projects and initiatives emerging in the area.

Concurrent with these positive developments, business, residential and public perceptions about our urban environments have evolved. The importance of improving air quality, provision of high quality streets and spaces, greening, reducing traffic congestion, giving greater priority to people, pedestrians, cyclists and overall inclusivity has climbed ever higher in our collective conscience. Lifestyles and trends in retailing, leisure, and working continue to change, with employers, employees, shoppers, residents, and visitors expecting (if not demanding) more from their public realm as well as from their buildings.

The anticipated effects of climate change – warmer winters and hotter, drier summers – bring challenges that also need to be considered in terms of likely higher incidences of surface water flooding and intensification of the urban heat island effect. Wider sustainability objectives suggest the need for increasing the extent of green infrastructure in our cities in response to climate change, but also in response to increasing interest and focus upon health and wellbeing and biodiversity needs.

The transport industry is not immune to changing contexts and is also beginning to experience significant shifts, driven by a range of factors including customer demand, industry change, oil price volatility, technology (sometimes ‘push’ sometimes ‘pull’), and increasingly air quality policy. There is a growing shift towards electric vehicles and indeed various stages of autonomous vehicles. The impact upon the public realm could be significant – in terms of potential positive contributions towards improving urban air quality, but possibly adding to issues of congestion, infrastructure provision for recharging vehicles and associated visual and physical intrusion upon the pedestrian environment.

This changing context introduces new challenges but also interesting placemaking opportunities for Victoria in terms of identity, improved environment, and enhanced competitiveness as a place in which to work, live or visit. This places greater attention and pressure on the public realm and, in Victoria, the very limited supply of outdoor public realm amenity and green spaces.

So too does the increasing need for ensuring that our urban environments respond proportionately to the challenges of safety and protection associated with growing threat levels to security in our cities and the need to be supportive towards counter-terrorism initiatives. Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) has become an important element in the sensitive enhancement of existing public realm streets and spaces, as well as the implementation of new development opportunities. This will have particular relevance to existing or anticipated initiatives such as the joint WCC-GLA/TfL project exploring the potential to improve safety and security at Parliament Square, and the Westminster Ceremonial Streetscape Project (WCSP). This project (executed on the ground by WCC in Westminster) aims to provide permanent HVM measures across London’s Ceremonial Footprint.

Victoria and Victoria Westminster are urban locations with the opportunity to respond positively to these challenges, and introduce public realm enhancements and improvements with a multi-functional approach that offer environmental, community and social benefits as well as ones that are also supportive of enhancing the economic environment and competitiveness of the location for business.

Development in Victoria and Victoria Westminster has the potential to significantly change the public realm. The challenge is to prepare a renewed Public Realm Vision and Strategy for the combined BID areas as a whole, integrating them yet being respectful of their particular distinctiveness, range of inherent challenges and opportunities and responds to their opportunities. At the same time, it should also ensure that the strategic challenges, trends and opportunities common to both areas are presented and addressed in a coherent way, addressing the issue of vehicle dominance and creating places for people.

In summary, there is a growing positive convergence of a range of planning, policy, developmental, social, economic and environmental factors, with evolving structural trends in key sectors, that together present a positive imperative and opportunity for change and improvement to the public realm. This offers the prospect of supporting Victoria in the range of collective aspirations for its enhancement and growth, and helping Victoria optimise its potential as a leading location in which to work, live or visit.

This convergence offers the opportunity to consider the public realm more holistically and strategically, with a view to:

- recognising that the public realm is the glue for placemaking and introducing more human scale to the environment where it is needed;
- addressing the current domination of vehicles and creating a place with priority for people;
- creating innovative opportunities for delivering more public realm, through recalibration of the current amount of space allocated to traffic and vehicles;
- encouraging the provision of public realm green amenity space within significant development opportunities;
- focusing on the need to improve the quality of the experience of the public realm and ensure it is mutually supportive and beneficial from the perspective of working, living, shopping and visiting in Victoria;
- responding to the imperative and desire to promote health and wellbeing through the public realm for all those who work, live or visit in Victoria;
- responding to the need to increase the provision of green infrastructure within Victoria, and indeed imbue Victoria with a reputation for being one of the greenest areas in London;
- putting Victoria Station, Parliament Square and Victoria Street back at the heart of Victoria as a location;
- doing more to capitalise upon the key amenity resources upon the borders of the study area, such as St James Park and the River Thames, and indeed make more of the world class tourist attractions the area has; and
- making more of the key assets that lie within the area, such as Westminster Cathedral and its piazza.

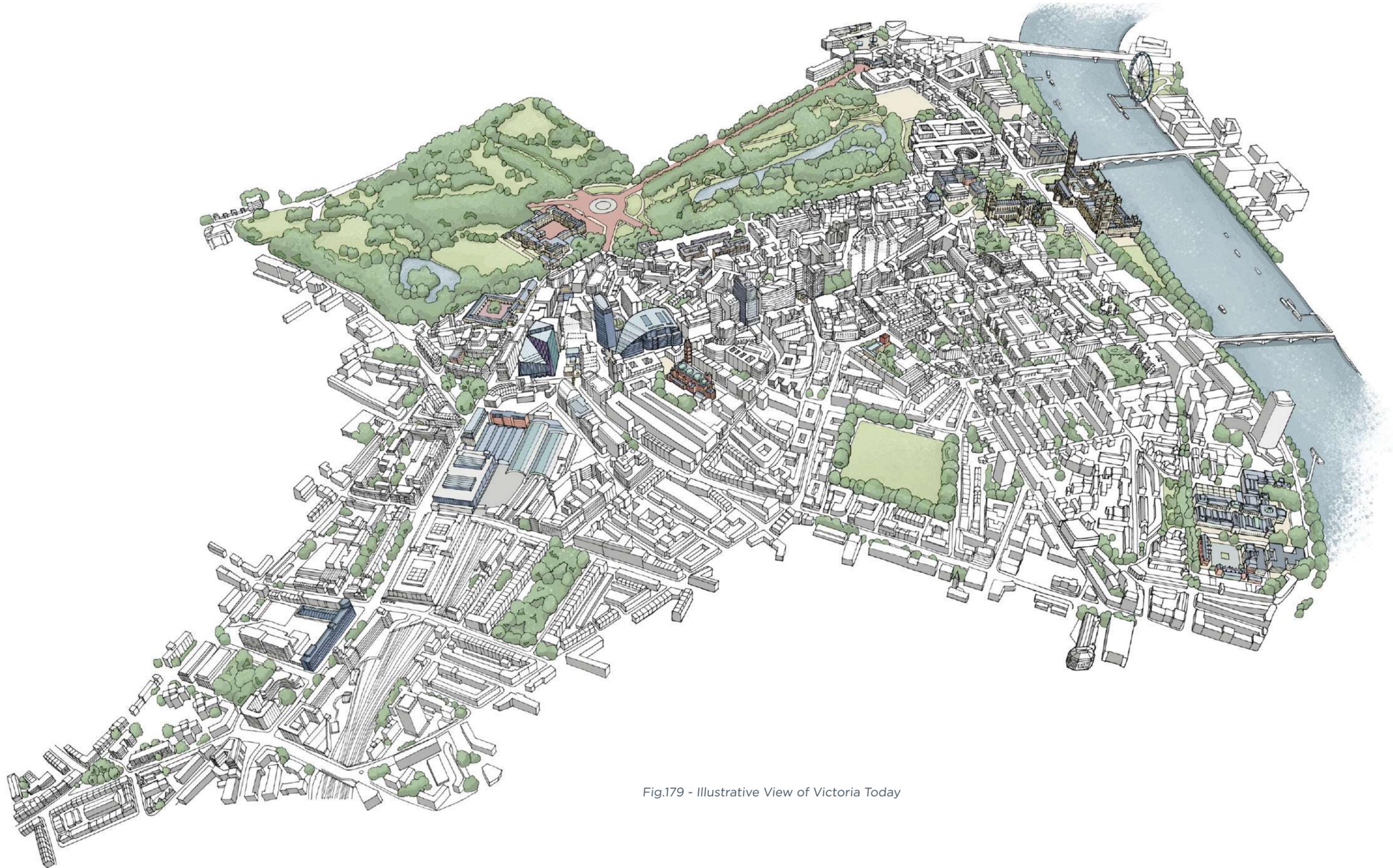


Fig.179 - Illustrative View of Victoria Today





PEOPLE WANTED:

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PUBLIC REALM VISION AND STRATEGY



## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Whilst 'Victoria' is defined as much by physical, social and economic contrasts as it is by its diverse identities, it is also reaching an important point in its urban evolution – one poised with significant prospects for positive development and change. This is increasingly recognised at a range of levels, as witnessed by recent and substantial investment in the area in terms of commercial and residential development, as well as transport infrastructure. In addition, current and emerging planning policy also recognises the key role that Victoria can play in Westminster and London, if not wider, in terms of opportunity and growth.

The public realm, as a unifying placemaking framework, offers the structural platform for helping Victoria optimise the opportunities that currently lie before us and will also arrive in the future.

Our Vision and Strategy for the public realm is made up of several components that collectively and proactively respond to these challenges and opportunities in Victoria. These are:

- Our Vision – People Wanted
- Strategic Objectives
- Spatial Framework
- Design Principles
- Project Ideas
- Timeframe

The People Wanted Vision and Strategy is presented in this chapter, along with some conceptual ideas for projects that illustrate some possible ways in which the Vision and Strategy could appear.

## 5.2 VISION: PEOPLE WANTED

“Placemaking where people feel wanted and where they want to be. **People Wanted.**”

Placemaking is a philosophy. It encompasses planning, design and urban management. Our philosophy is straightforward. It focuses on people. It's about creating a place where the public realm makes people feel welcomed and wanted, but it's also about creating a place where people want to be. To live, work or visit.

**People Wanted** is our public realm Vision for Victoria.

We want to return Victoria's public realm environment to one which places people at its heart rather than the motor vehicle. We want people to feel wanted and welcomed in terms of a high quality public realm and the overall experience they feel they have in Victoria. We also want people to come to Victoria – new residents, new workers and visitors. Without growth, Victoria cannot continue its success. A high quality public realm, with placemaking for people at its heart is fundamental in helping encourage people to 'want' to come to Victoria and having the experience of feeling 'wanted' when they arrive. We want Victoria to be the 'People's Place'.

“Placemaking where people feel wanted and where they want to be. **People Wanted.**”

## 5.3 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

In developing the vision it is recognised that:

- the area is dominated by traffic and vehicles, and the extensive spatial provision for them;
- there are few green or amenity spaces in Victoria, and fewer opportunities to provide new parks, gardens or similar spaces. Additional provision therefore needs to look to the street environment for further opportunities as well as future development sites;
- there is a great deal of commonality between the needs and aspirations for the public realm across the work, living, retailing and movement sectors, and as such public realm proposals can be mutually beneficial for all sectors;
- the physical and sensory relationship between the public realm and the buildings or structures accommodating living, working, retailing or movement uses is key in determining the overall quality of experience that people will have of Victoria as a 'place';
- the key sectors of the economic and social communities in Victoria need and expect more from their public realm if Victoria is to optimise its potential as a leading location in which to live, work, shop and visit; and
- there are changing structural trends in key sectors which are influencing the expectations people have for public realm and improving their experiences in terms of how they live, work, shop, move or visit.

People Wanted is therefore supported by several strategy objectives which collectively and individually help achieve the Vision. These are:

1. To present a public realm spatial framework and approach which knits the area together and helps Victoria optimise its growth potential as a place in which to live, work or visit;
2. To promote priority for people in the public realm and reduce the domination of traffic and motor vehicles and the urban severance it causes;
3. To support Victoria's aspirations for sustainable development through the promotion of green infrastructure and health and wellbeing in the public realm;
4. To present a complementary public realm framework for working in partnership with key stakeholders or policy makers on public realm or place-planning initiatives for the area;
5. To proactively respond to emerging structural trends in how people live, work, shop and move through creating a flexible and multi-functional public realm, and improving the experience for all people for economic, social and environmental mutual benefit;
6. To help unlock the placemaking and world class transport interchange opportunity presented by the regeneration of Victoria Station;
7. To explore the potential to recalibrate some of the extensive spatial provision for motor vehicles in order to create opportunities for new green infrastructure, biodiversity and amenity spaces and the promotion of health and wellbeing;
8. To optimise the amenity potential offered by significant green spaces and amenity assets on Victoria's borders such as St. James Park and the River Thames
9. To promote opportunities for meanwhile and greenwhile uses offered by development projects, including the medium term temporary decant of parliament during the restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster;
10. To promote the enlivenment of public realm where appropriate and the importance of placekeeping as much as placemaking.

## 5.4 SPATIAL FRAMEWORK: KEY MOVES AND SHAKES

The adjacent diagram illustrates the key spatial moves to transform Victoria into a place for people, create a destination and a successful location for all to work, live, shop and move in.

A number of strategic moves have been developed which underpins this vision and includes the following:

- 1 STATION SQUARE - New Heart for Victoria
- 2 PARLIAMENT SQUARE - Rejuvenated Heart for Parliament
- 3 VICTORIA STREET - New Linear Street Park: Heart to Heart
- 4 THE RAILWAY GARDENS - Green Link to Victoria
- 5 THE ARC - Enhanced Streetlife and Connections
- 6 ST JAMES PARK - Improving Connections to the Park
- 7 THE THAMES - Improving Connections to the River
- 8 PIMLICO - Improving Connections to Urban Village
- 9 CATHEDRAL PIAZZA - Rejuvenating the Space
- 10 GROSVENOR GARDENS - Rejuvenating the Gardens and Connections
- 11 BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD - Improving the Pedestrian Environment
- 12 VICTORIA STATION - Support Regeneration Opportunity

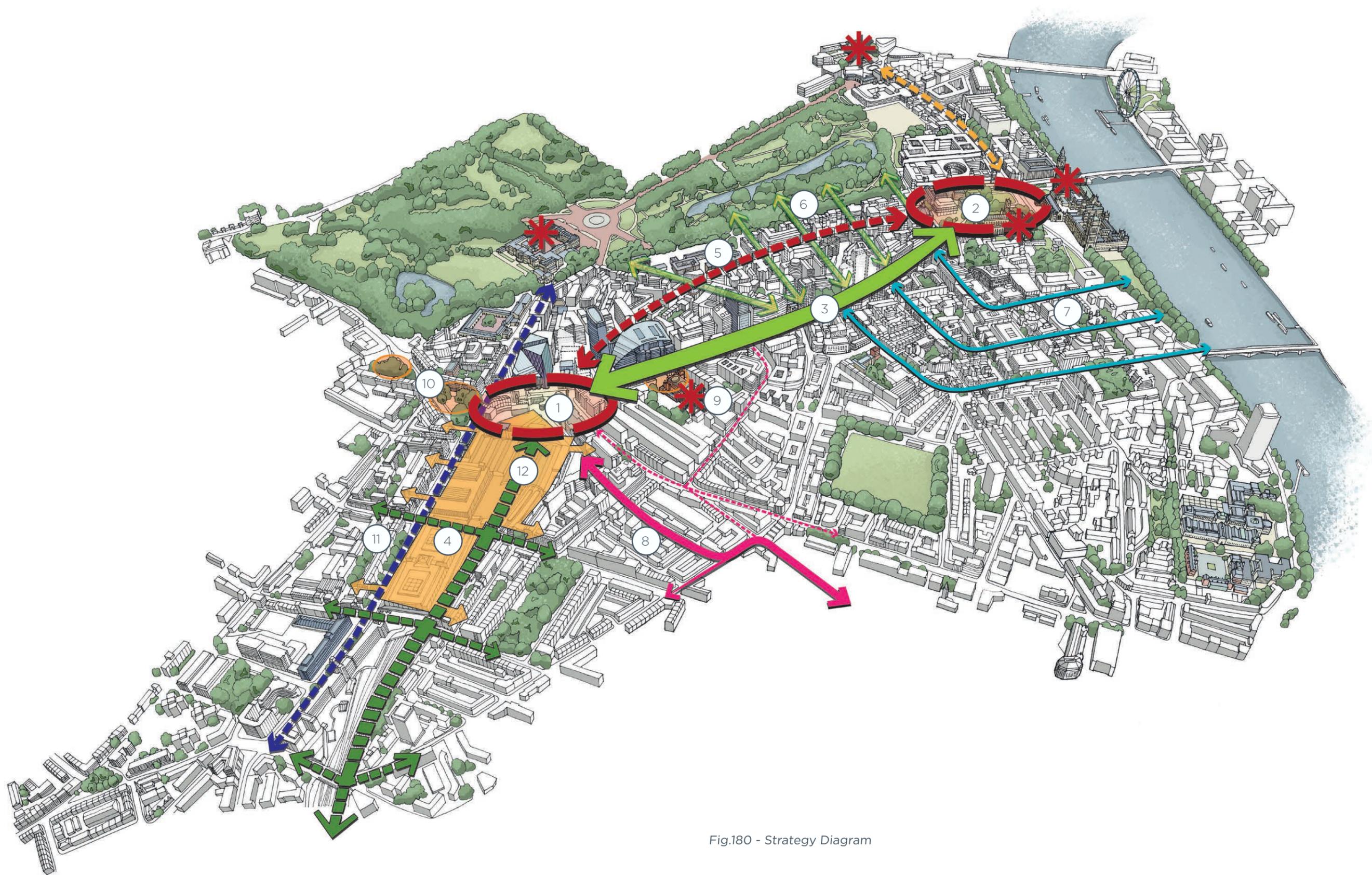
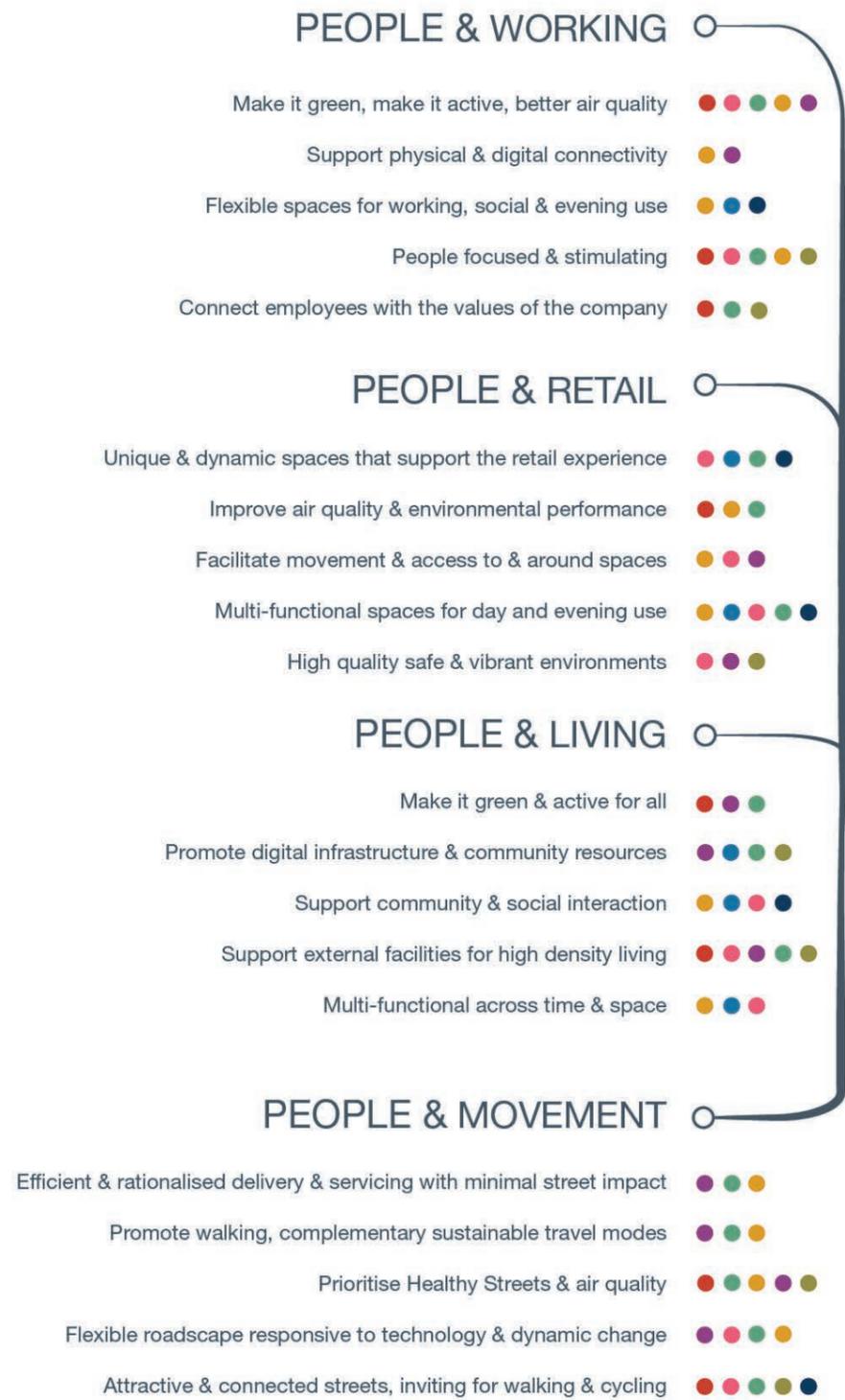


Fig.180 - Strategy Diagram





The findings from the trends analysis across the sectors have been mapped out and assessed for commonalities' within the collective set of responses. There are many common themes that occur within these sectors and as such these commonalities have been identified and are Health & Wellbeing, Memorable, Connected, Flexible, Green, Resilient, Inviting & Safe and Vibrant.

These headings therefore represent key considerations to be addressed when developing public realm schemes, and form a series of design principles. It is the application of these principles within the public realm of the Victoria area that will help respond to people's needs and aspirations, and create a people centric approach to placemaking and the public realm (refer to Figure 182).

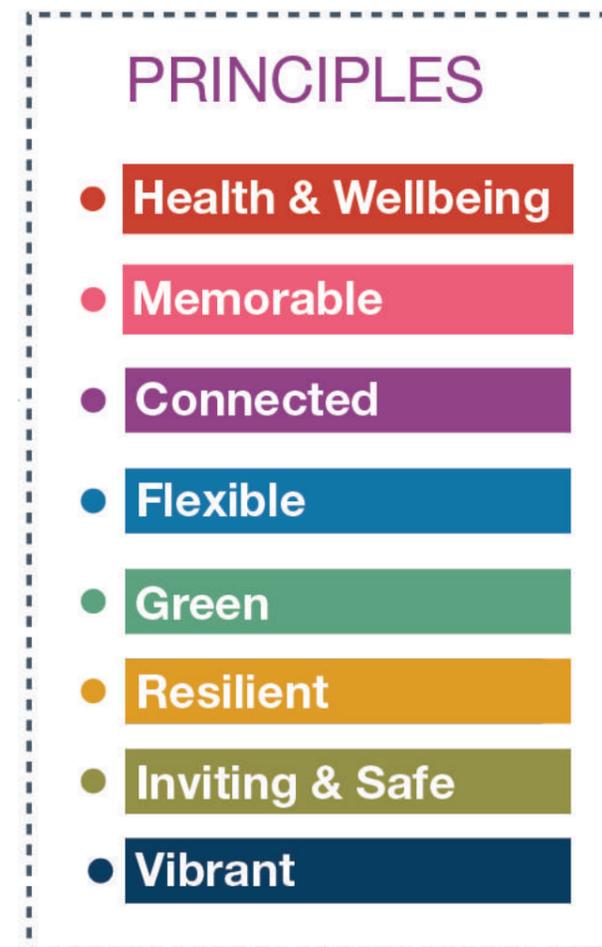


Fig.182 - Emerging Principles

# DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following design principles represent guiding strategies that should be incorporated into future public realm works across the Victoria and Westminster area. They aim to encourage a people orientated design and set out what we want people to experience on a daily basis when engaging with the public realm. They are intended to be a source of inspiration and an evaluation tool which schemes can be considered against.

## Health and Wellbeing

We want people to feel positively engaged within their surroundings and the design of the urban environment should put people and their wellbeing first.

## Memorable

We want people to have positive experiences and remember the places of Victoria and Westminster for the right reasons.

## Connected

We want people to feel Victoria is easy to get to and easy to get around. Links to neighbouring places should be legible and intuitive.

## Flexible

We want people to engage with each other in places that are vibrant and adapted to their use. Public realm schemes should offer multifunctional layering wherever possible.

## Green

We want people to think green, act green and be green. Green infrastructure should be integrated into public realm as a baseline.

## Resilient

We want people to feel the area will positively respond to change. Public realm schemes should be able to respond and adapt to the trends of the future as well as today.

## Inviting and Safe

We want people to come and join us. The public realm should be an inclusive environment for all that integrates security measures into design.

## Vibrant

We want people to feel grounded in history but stimulated by a diverse range of active and engaging places and spaces. Places should be curated to encourage people to dwell.

# WHAT THIS COULD LOOK LIKE

The design principles have been further expanded below to illustrate what practical applications of each of the principles could be considered to contain. This is not intended as an exhaustive list, but examples of the typical elements that once incorporated within schemes would contribute towards achieving the wider goals of this vision.

## Health and Wellbeing

- More green spaces/attributes within the environment
- Promote and support active lifestyles
- Safe environment

## Memorable

- Strong sense of place
- Celebration of the setting and surrounding character
- Network of valuable streets and spaces
- Facilities and amenities to support/complement living, retail and working environments
- Multifunctional places

## Connected

- A more intuitive and permeable place
- Freedom to walk, cycle, and take the bus or train
- Highly supportive of digital connectivity
- Zero emissions modes of transport

## Flexible

- Vibrant streets and spaces
- Engaging, collaborative and multifunctional spaces
- Offering a wide range of amenities
- A place for all
- Digital infrastructure

## Green

- Well connected green environment/network
- Wellbeing
- Clean air
- Carbon free
- Smart technology

## Resilient

- Curated and changeable spaces (flexible and responsive)
- Provides a range of facilities and stimulus
- Promotes wellbeing

## Inviting and Safe

- Inviting
- Inclusive
- Legible
- Safe and secure night and day

## Vibrant

- Reveal and highlight key assets and heritage
- Provides platforms for cultural activity
- Enhances character areas
- Celebrates setting and surrounding character

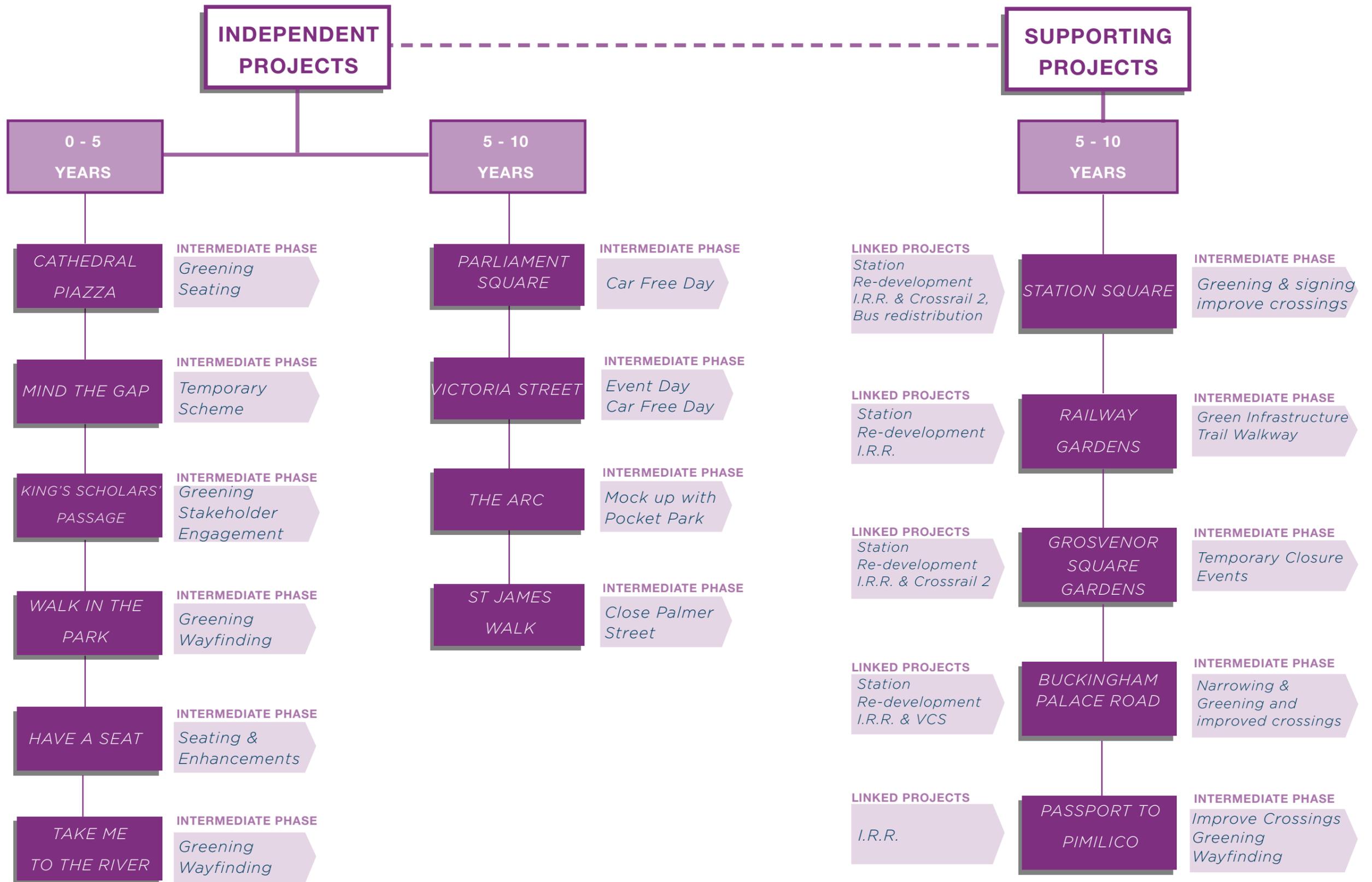


Fig.183 - Next Steps Diagram

## 5.6 TIMEFRAME

There are a number of projects which have been identified in the vision and illustrated as initial ideas. Each project will require further investigation, consultation and design development.

As illustrated in Figure 183 the projects have been divided into three categories highlighting the projects that can be prioritised in the next 5 years, 5+ years and 5-10 years.

There are projects which are reliant on linked projects that would either unlock or act as the catalyst for change, whilst others less so. The projects illustrated have further listed the intermediate phases highlighted to guide how projects can move forward initially.

## 5.7 PLACEKEEPING

Placemaking is not a singular event. Places, and particularly destinations, require ongoing investment and this can come in the form of considerations of events and activities being programmed, or the maintenance of the physical asset that has been created.

It also includes continued improvement of the created spaces, either in the way spaces are used or alterations to allow improved use. If the baseline designs are flexible and adaptable then this should only require minimal intervention if any to achieve this ongoing improvement.

It could also be a shared responsibility of a number of stakeholders with an interest in the area, the local authority, the BID teams, interested residents and volunteers, community groups, schools and educational institutions. This can ensure not only that contributions can be gathered from the many but a wider cross section of the users' groups' interests are represented when considering the placekeeping approach to take.





## 6.0 CONCEPT PROJECTS FOR PEOPLE WANTED

### Implementing the vision

The previous chapters set out a strategic vision for the enhancement of the public realm in the Victoria and Westminster area. It is intended that this vision will provide a set of guiding principles that could be applied to future public realm projects taking shape in the area, which over time will present a cohesive, welcoming and destination public realm experience for people who live, work and visit Victoria and Westminster.

This chapter explores how the established vision principles could be practically applied across a range of project scales and demonstrates the ambitious scope of change that is possible in Victoria / Westminster. Whilst each project is unique in that it seeks to capitalise and maximise the specific characteristics and opportunities of each area, it also seeks to create a cohesive destination quality to the overall area through a series of coordinated place-making interventions.

The following 15 illustrated projects range in scale between large, medium and small scales and have been identified to illustrate how potential projects would fulfil the objectives of the vision principles. They are not intended to be actual design proposals as such, but representations of how applying the Vision's principles to particular areas of the study area could be transformative to the public realm of Victoria and Westminster.

These illustrative projects are shown on the following pages and are as follows:

### LARGE

- 1 VICTORIA'S HEART: A NEW SQUARE AT VICTORIA STATION
- 2 WESTMINSTER'S HEART: PARLIAMENT SQUARE
- 3 HEART TO HEART: VICTORIA STREET LINEAR GARDEN
- 4 A SQUARE DEAL FOR VICTORIA: CATHEDRAL PIAZZA
- 5 VICTORIA STATION TO BATTERSEA: THE RAILWAY GARDENS

### MEDIUM

- 6 THE ARC DE 3MPH: PETTY FRANCE TO TOTHILL
- 7 ST JAMES WALK
- 8 GROSVENOR GARDENS
- 9 BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD
- 10 MIND THE GAP

### SMALL

- 11 PASSPORT TO PIMLICO
- 12 THE GREEN PASSAGE
- 13 TAKE ME FOR A WALK IN THE PARK
- 14 TAKE ME TO THE RIVER
- 15 HAVE A SEAT

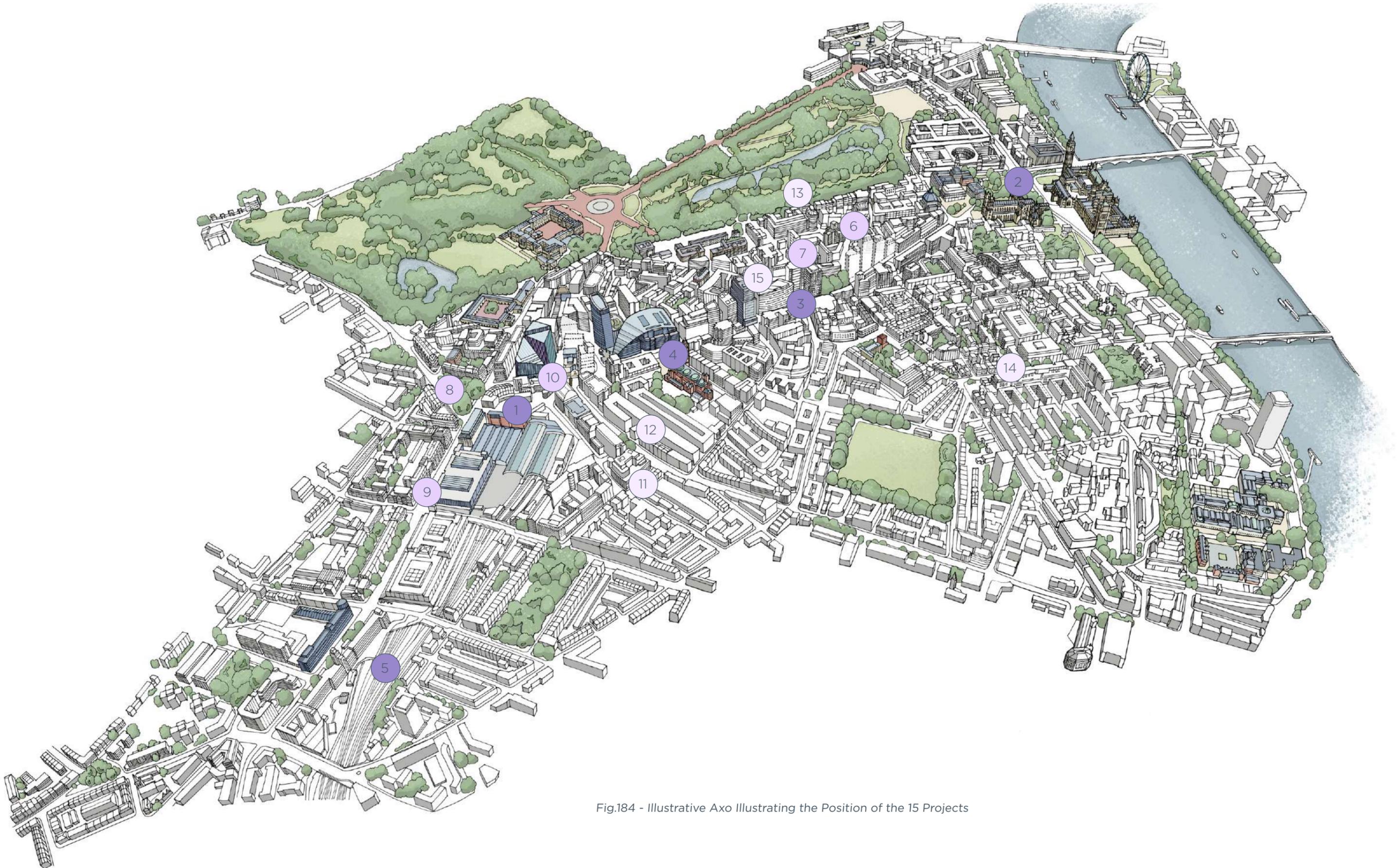


Fig.184 - Illustrative Axo Illustrating the Position of the 15 Projects

## 1

Existing  
Situation

## 6.1 VICTORIA'S HEART: A NEW SQUARE FOR VICTORIA STATION

The public realm experience around Victoria Station is currently very poor, in particular the station forecourt area, rather tellingly named Terminus Place. It presents a hostile environment to pedestrians whom are met with numerous obstacles and congestion when attempting to either arrive to or leave from the station environs. Some of the key considerations to address are:

- the sense of arrival and departure is negatively impacted by the positioning of buses and taxis to the immediate frontage and sides to the station. The station is defined by its pedestrian / vehicular conflict and poor user experience more than either its architecture or trains;
- a poor quality of public realm with poor wayfinding undermines the presence of the station and passenger experience;
- Victoria Station House presents its back to the station, providing a barrier to pedestrian movement whilst undermining intuitive wayfinding;
- the introverted nature of the station and its lack of engagement with both surrounding streets and the wider community;
- the highway arrangement, existing railings and the position and nature of entrances undermine connectivity to both the railway station and the underground;
- the environs to the station suffer from poor air quality and noise;
- the poor relationship that exists between ground floor uses and the public realm;
- the poor relationship that exists between Victoria Place and Grosvenor Gardens; and
- these factors form the first and lasting impression for people who are seeking to invest, seeking to locate a business, taking up a new job, coming to live, visiting a show or visiting as a tourist.

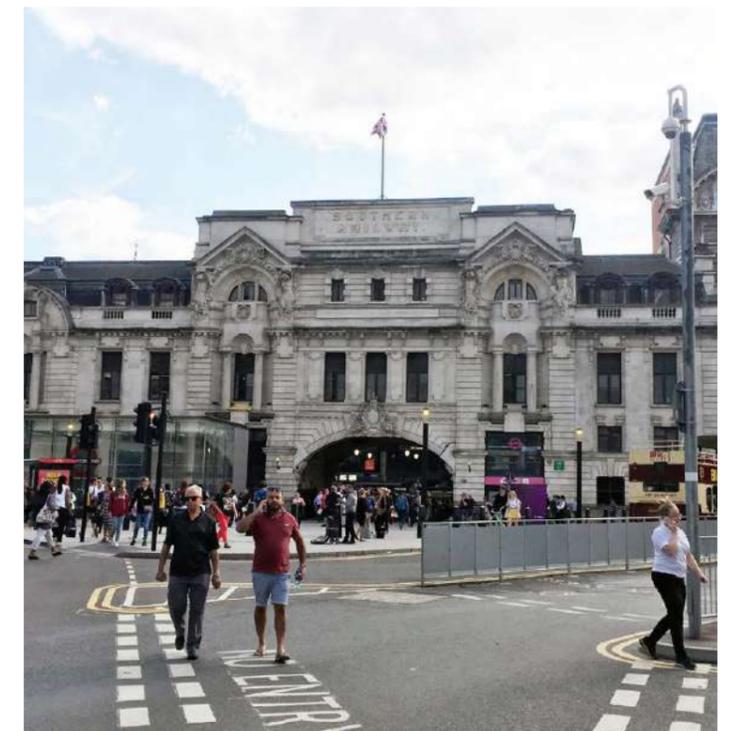


Fig. 185 - Existing Site Images of the Station Environs

Opportunities

- To improve the pedestrian environment to Victoria Place by removing vehicular conflict and creating a major new ‘world class’ public space at the heart of its community. The space must reinforce the stations identity, improve the experience of people, ensure safe and inclusive access, improve air quality and befit its location and significance.
- To strengthen pedestrian connections to Grosvenor Gardens, NOVA, Victoria Street and the surrounding community in general.
- To improve the relationship between Victoria Place and its surrounding buildings / context, promoting positive frontages, active ground floors and a high level of physical and visual connectivity with both Victoria Street and Grosvenor Gardens.
- To encourage the creation of a more integrated relationship between the station concourse and Victoria Place. A more open or extrovert concourse with strong connections to its surrounding streets would be able to function better across a broader range of hours and fulfil a stronger neighbourhood role.
- To encourage the appropriation of space by people, new and flexible uses of space and outdoor activity by retailers, restaurateurs, etc. Consider the introduction of programmed activities, technology, events, places to dwell and the integration of high quality kiosks or other retail structures.
- To ensure that any changes to, or replacement of, buildings enhance their setting and the quality of Victoria Place.
- To enhance the setting, and connection, to all station entrances.
- To enhance and enrich heritage assets including the Grosvenor Hotel and the Royal Gate on Wilton Road.
- To re-route traffic, considering timed access for servicing, a reduction in carriageway widths and the introduction of two way working to facilitate more direct routes and the creation of a better environment for pedestrians.
- To optimise the use of Buckingham Palace Road, Victoria Street, Bressenden Place and Vauxhall Bridge Road to ensure the right level of bus provision with effective and legible interchange between bus, rail and other modes. Consider restricting the western section of Victoria Street to buses and taxis, redistributing services wherever possible and rationalising to avoid the termination of services in the location.

- To promote the provision of high quality ‘green’ taxi access and ranking within Wilton Road.
- To promote cycle movement, permeability and the provision of supporting facilities.
- To enhance lighting, surfacing materials, wayfinding and promote the removal of clutter.
- To promote the incorporation of planting and stronger ‘green’ connections to The Royal Parks, Parliament Square, The Thames and Battersea Park.
- To give consideration to the provision of integrated security.
- To support our understanding of Transport for London Westminster City Council and Network Rail aspirations (as highlighted in Fig 179).
- To support the Over Station Development coming forward.

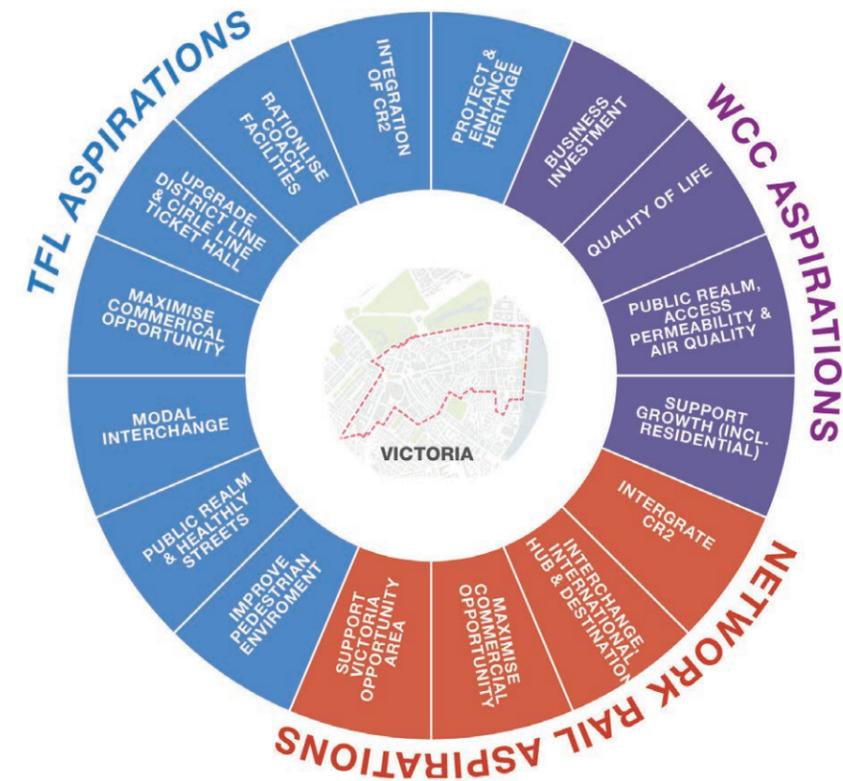


Fig. 186  
Our understanding of Transport for London, Westminster City Council and Network Rail aspirations

...Introducing STATION SQUARE

An opportunity for a world class destination

The Victoria Station environment deserves a new identity. The station forecourt should be recognised as the heart of Victoria, and it should be renamed to promote a place and a destination for people rather than a terminus for vehicles. It has the potential to be a world class civic destination, one that functions as an attractive and convenient nucleus for people coming to and from the transport links whilst presenting a new heart for the surrounding community.

People are to be at the core of the placemaking principles that define its design, as with the wider public realm vision. It should be a place that is legible and easy to get around with priority for pedestrians and cyclists. It should incorporate green space and be welcoming and vibrant.

The space should not be limited to traditional internal/external space thinking. The objective should be to extend the identity of the square inside the station building to maximise placemaking opportunities. This will enhance the ability to create a multi-functional environment which fully embraces its roles as an international transport hub, a city square, a local cultural attraction, an event space and a convenient place for people to meet in, engage with, arrive to and depart from.

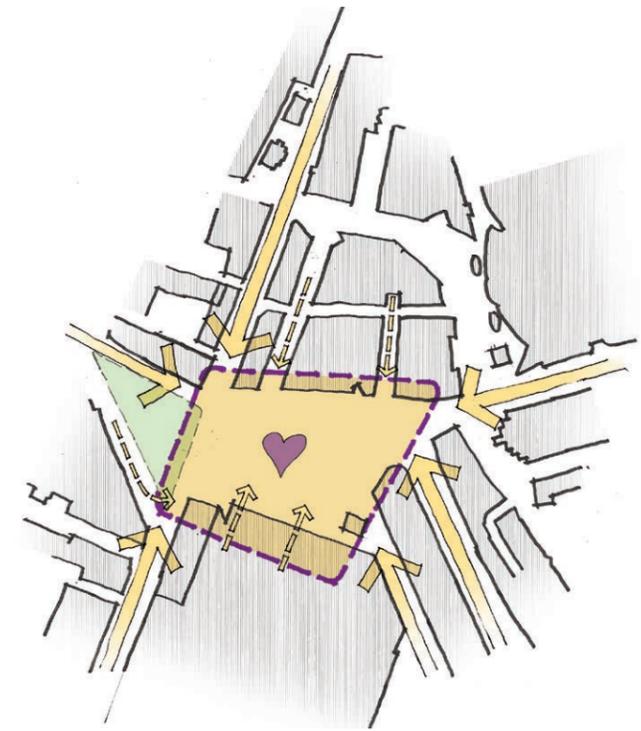


Fig.187 - 01 - A new space, a new heart and a new identity for Victoria

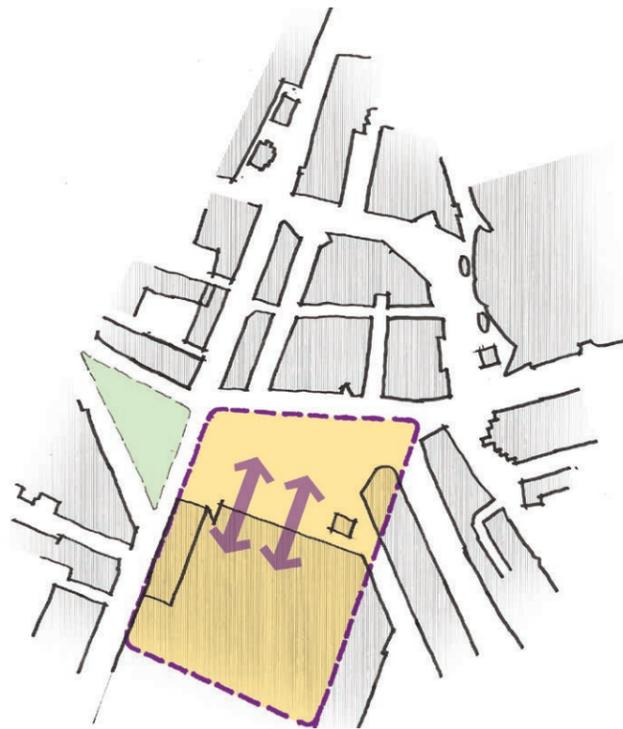


Fig.188 - 02 - Maximising the place by strengthening internal/external relationships

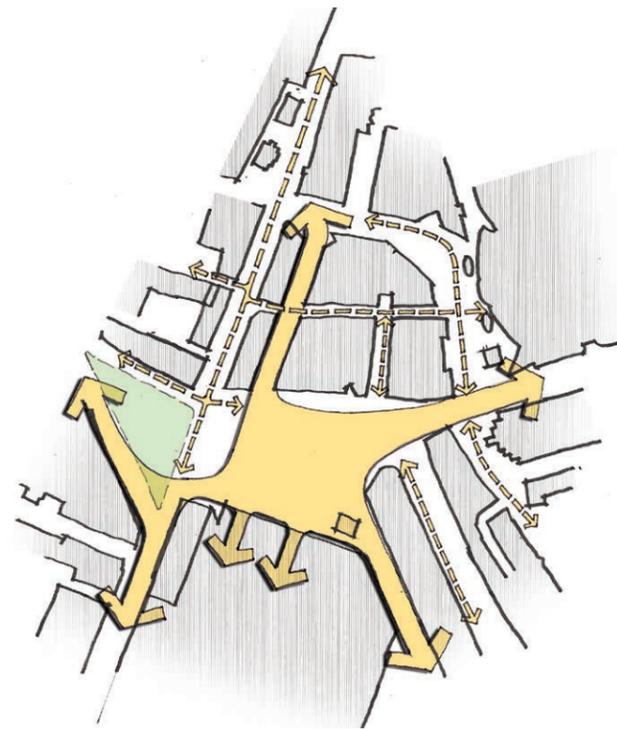


Fig.189 - 03 - Creating a legible and connected pedestrian priority environment



Fig.190 - 04 - Frame the space and respond to the surrounding urban form

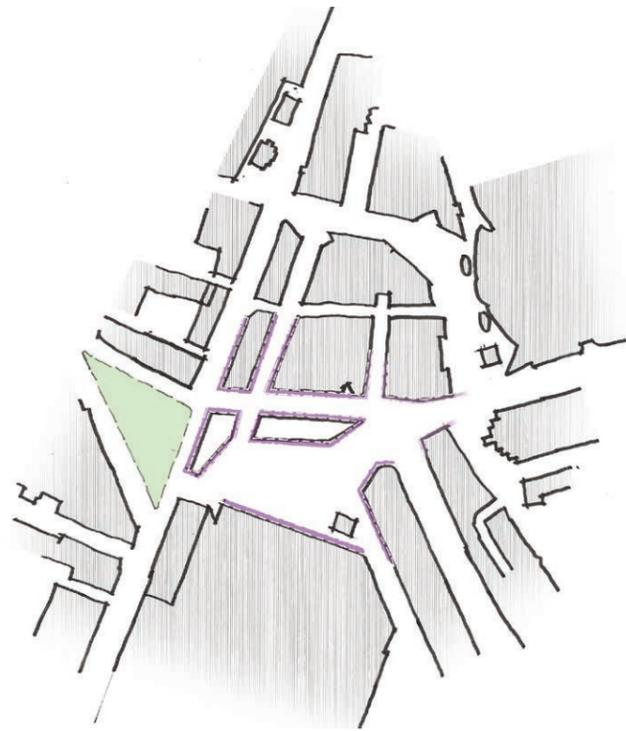


Fig.191 - 05 - Encourage a network of active edges

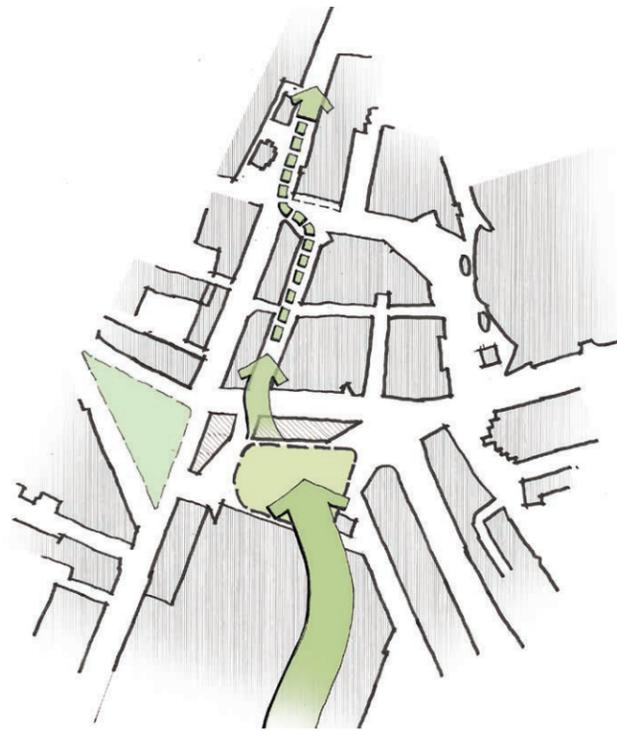


Fig.192 - 06 - Incorporate green into space and connect to other green links

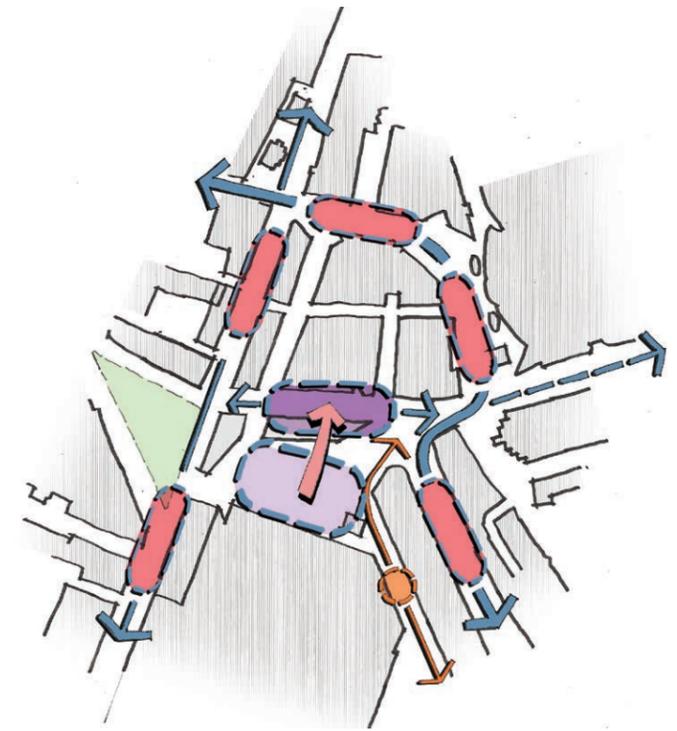


Fig.193 - 07 - Review/redistribute the bus network to allow for the creation of a people centric station forecourt and high quality bus interchange at the western end of Victoria Street.

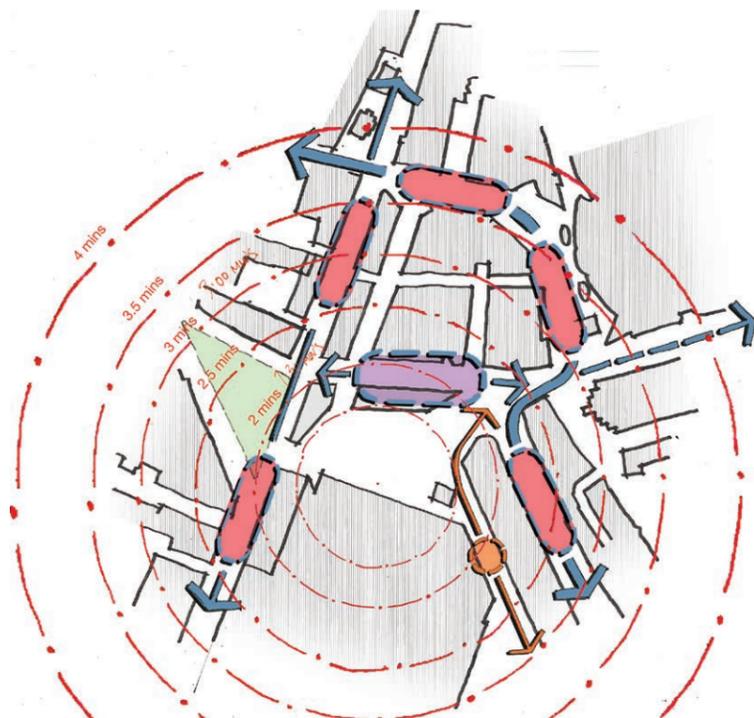


Fig.194 - 08 - Ensure convenient access and proximity to buses and taxi pickup/drop off

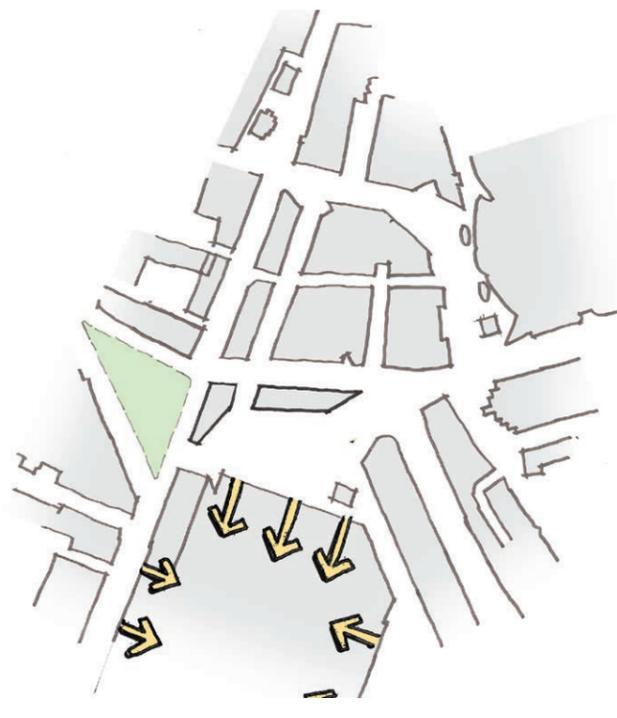


Fig.195 - 09 - Review the inward facing nature of the station

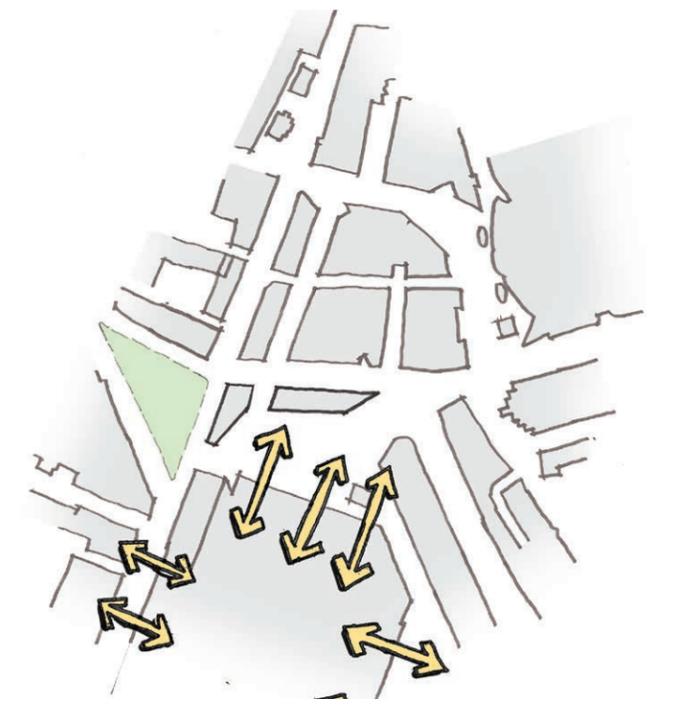


Fig.196 - 10 - Create an outward facing station environment

...Introducing STATION SQUARE

Inner Ring Road options and severance

The Inner Ring Road options have been explored in relation to their impact on the Station Square proposals and people's ability to arrive and depart from the space. Whilst none of the options have no impact, some have greater impacts than others.

It is also important to consider the potential relationship between Crossrail 2 Station and Victoria Station. Convenient access between these location should be provided at both ground and lower levels, and certain Inner Ring Road options would route traffic between the existing Victoria Station and Crossrail 2 Station location.

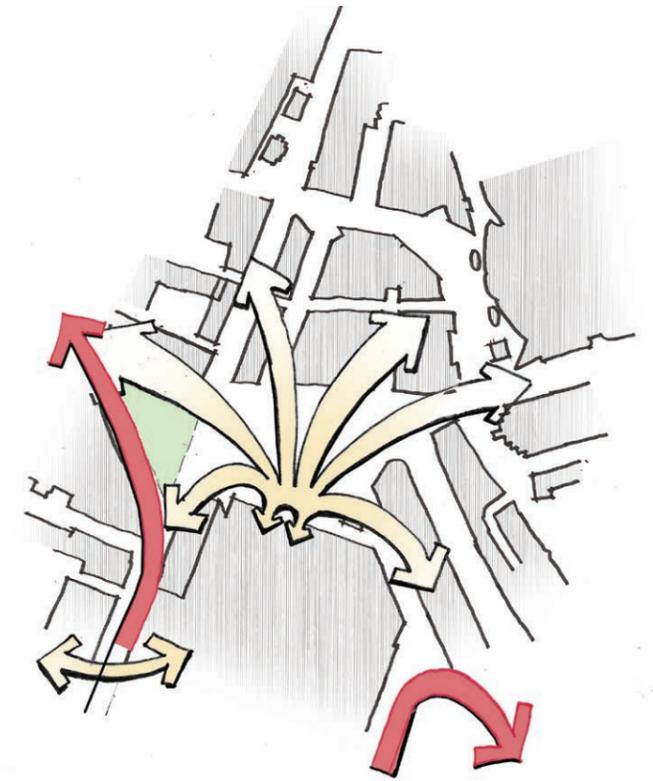


Fig.197 - Inner Ring Road - Option 1

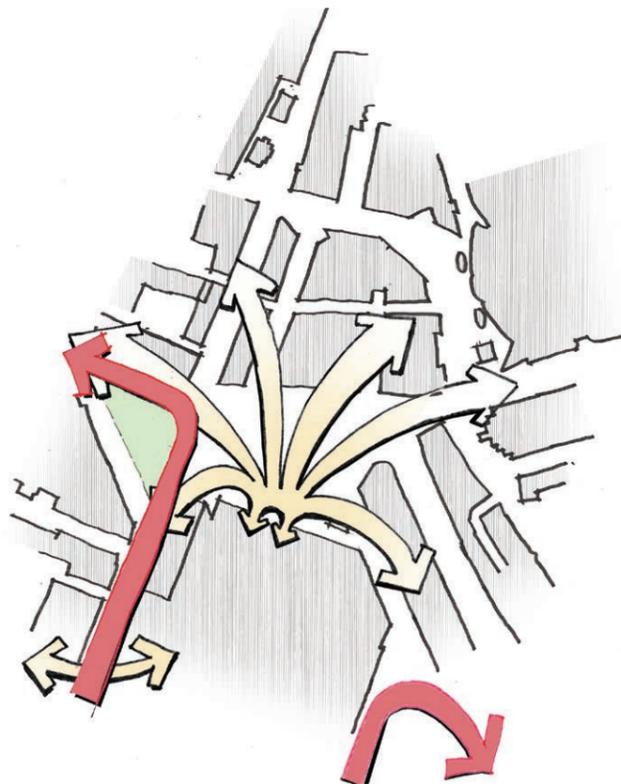


Fig.198 - Inner Ring Road - Option 2

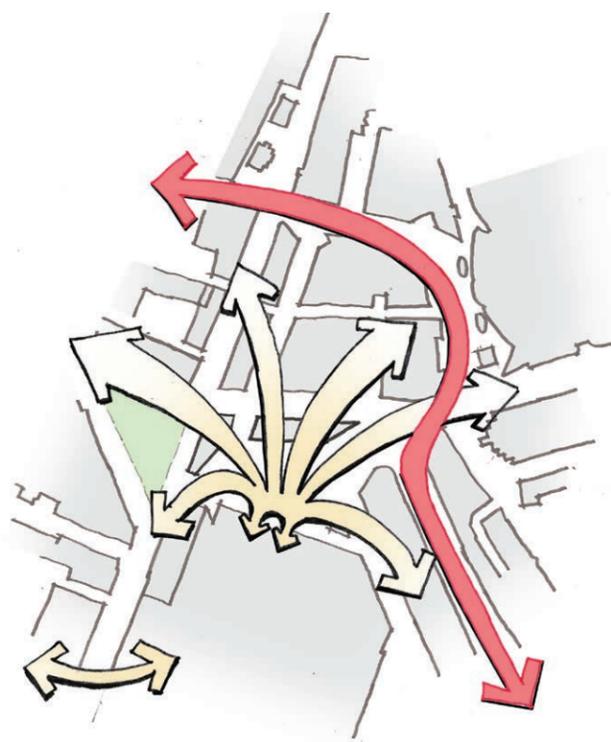


Fig.199 - Inner Ring Road - Option 3



Fig.200 - Inner Ring Road - Option 4



Fig. 201 - Emerging Station Square Illustrative View

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Enhance the internal and external connections

Strengthen pedestrian connections to Grosvenor Gardens

Strengthen pedestrian connections to Nova and Victoria Street



Fig.202 - Existing View of Terminus Place



Fig.203 - Illustrative View of Station Square

Create safe and inclusive access for all

Flexible space allows for multifunctional use

Create a space for people that reinforces Victoria's identity as a destination

Encourage and promote active ground floors and visual and physical connectivity

Introduce greenery to improve well-being and air quality, alongside wider connections to the surrounding context

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Fig.204 - Existing View of Terminus Place



Fig.205 - Illustrative view of Station Square being a multi functional space for water features, pop up events or installations

# ...Introducing STATION SQUARE

## Finding the best place for buses

The experience of the temporary redistribution of bus services from Terminus Place to on-street locations during the Victoria Station Upgrade (VSU) works suggests that it should be feasible to permanently redistribute those services onto roads within the vicinity of the station, excluding Terminus Place, now proposed as Station Square. In addition to the generally generous proportions of the surrounding roads for accommodating standing buses, the loose grid-type arrangement of roads in this area also provides for terminating buses to be turned in commencing their return journey.

The diagram on the opposite page shows candidate zones within which buses could potentially stop or stand on the surrounding street network, although future possible Inner Ring Road traffic management changes, or public realm-led considerations may favour some over others.

It is envisaged that particular sections of some streets may exclude general traffic and instead prioritise buses and others, such as taxi's and service vehicle access. This would include the western end of Victoria Street in facilitating a new centralised location for a high quality rail/bus interchange facility. There may also be the potential to explore taxi priority in the immediate area around the station.

## Enabling Steps

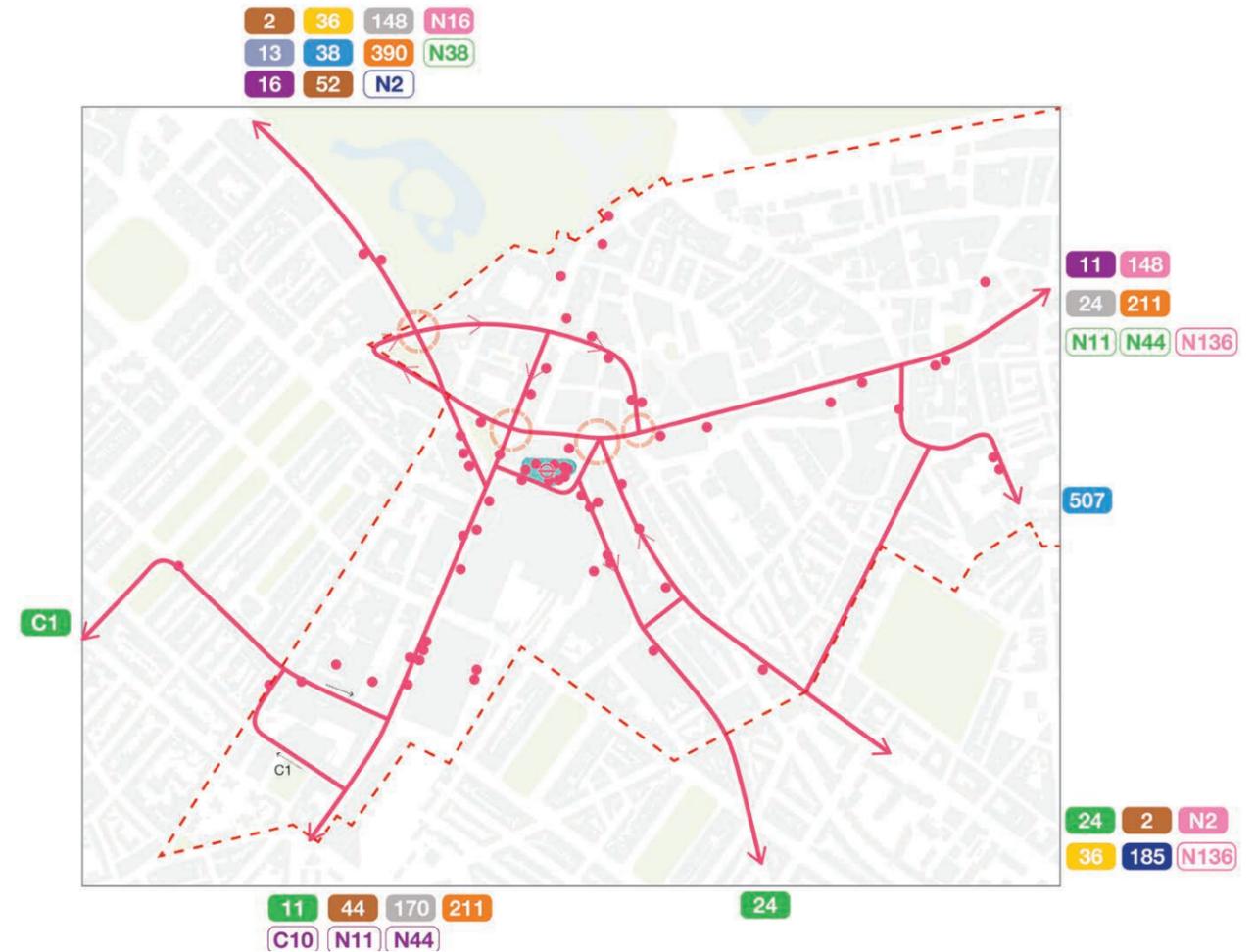
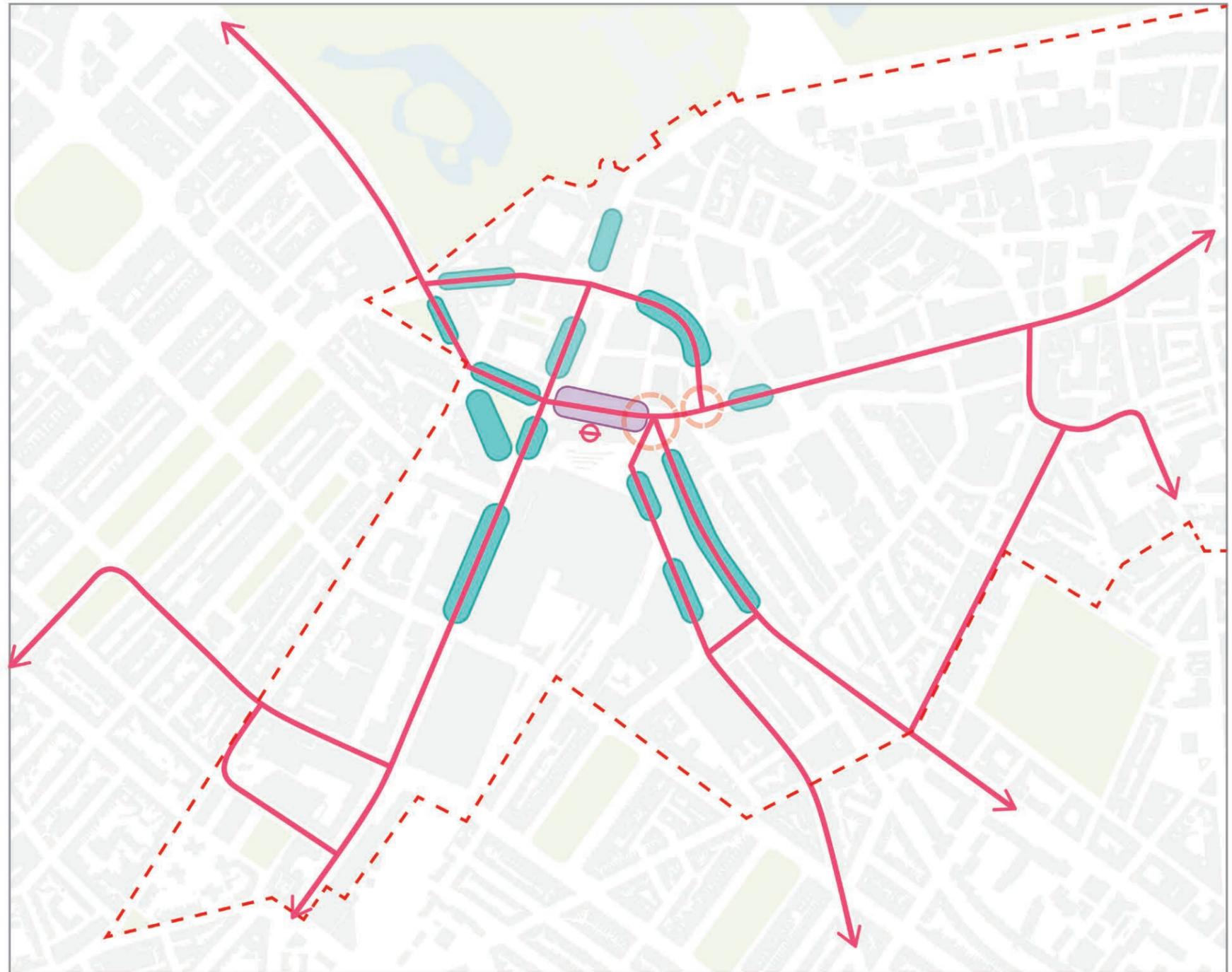


Fig.206 - Existing bus services, including the use of Terminus Place

- KEY:
- ← South West - North East Bus Service Routes
  - Multiple Bus Crossing Movements and Related Intense Movement Environment
  - ▭ Terminating Bus Services

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KEY:

-  South West - North East Bus Service Routes
-  Multiple Bus Crossing Movements and Related Intense Movement Environment
-  Potential Zones for Bus Stops and Stands
-  Zone for Potential Interchange/Bus Priority

Fig.207 - Potential zones for bus stops, stands and new interchange on the streets around station environs. This could facilitate removing buses from Terminus Place.

## 2

A nationally important space

## 6.2 WESTMINSTER'S HEART: PARLIAMENT SQUARE

Parliament Square is within a world heritage site and is an internationally recognised space that is intrinsically linked to a sense of nationhood. Strategically located it is a space for events and provides opportunities for people to democratically support or oppose national issues and policies of the day. Its importance as a people place can not be understated.

Whilst the square is surrounded by many institutional buildings such as the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey and the Supreme Court, it is isolated from all of these key buildings. Furthermore, it is not directly accessible from the Westminster Station entry/exits.

Opportunities to sit and enjoy the views to these buildings or take in the significance of the space itself with the associated statues of historic figures, are very limited and marred by traffic noise.

Further factors to consider

- the square is contained by 4 to 5 lanes of circulating traffic. The high level of traffic adversely impacts on access to, and appreciation of, this World Heritage Site;
- the main pedestrian routes between Westminster Underground Station and Great George Street / Victoria Street are very congested and this is exacerbated by a lack of pedestrian crossings to the centre of the square;
- only a small percentage (c1.4%) of the 33 million pedestrian movements in Parliament Square each year make it into the centre and a location where the best views can be enjoyed; and
- there is limited complementary food and beverage offer for visitors, information or places to leave luggage.



Fig. 208 - Existing View of Parliament Square

## Opportunities

- To transform Parliament Square into a vibrant and accessible public space, improving visitor experience, enhancing the area's identity, its historic character and its national and international significance.
- To re-route traffic removing through-traffic from both the eastern (St Margaret Street) and southern (Broad Sanctuary) sides of the square to better connect the central lawns to both the Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey. Vehicle access to Parliament could be managed through authorised access via St Margaret Street and Abingdon Street.
- To maintain the through movement of cyclists along Abingdon Street.
- Consider timed access for servicing, a reduction in carriageway widths, the introduction of two-way working to facilitate more direct routes, and the creation of a better environment for pedestrians.
- To retain Parliament Square's verdant green identity whilst giving careful consideration to the positioning of lawn relative to desire lines, the provision of upstands and the use of advanced turf technology to counter damage from high levels of footfall.
- To consider the provision of an additional connection to Westminster Underground Station from the square to relieve congestion on Bridge Street and optimise the sense of arrival.
- To incorporate infrastructure and facilities to support visitor experience, ceremonial activities and the provision of events.
- To enhance wayfinding to destinations within the area.
- To enhance the provision of interpretive information on both the square and its associated building / statues.
- To enhance lighting, surfacing materials and promote the removal of clutter.
- To promote the incorporation of additional planting and a stronger connection to Victoria Street.
- To give careful consideration to the provision of integrated security whilst maintaining the right to protest. Security solutions must ensure safety and ease of navigation whilst reflecting the important status of the area as a focus to the nation's constitutional heritage.

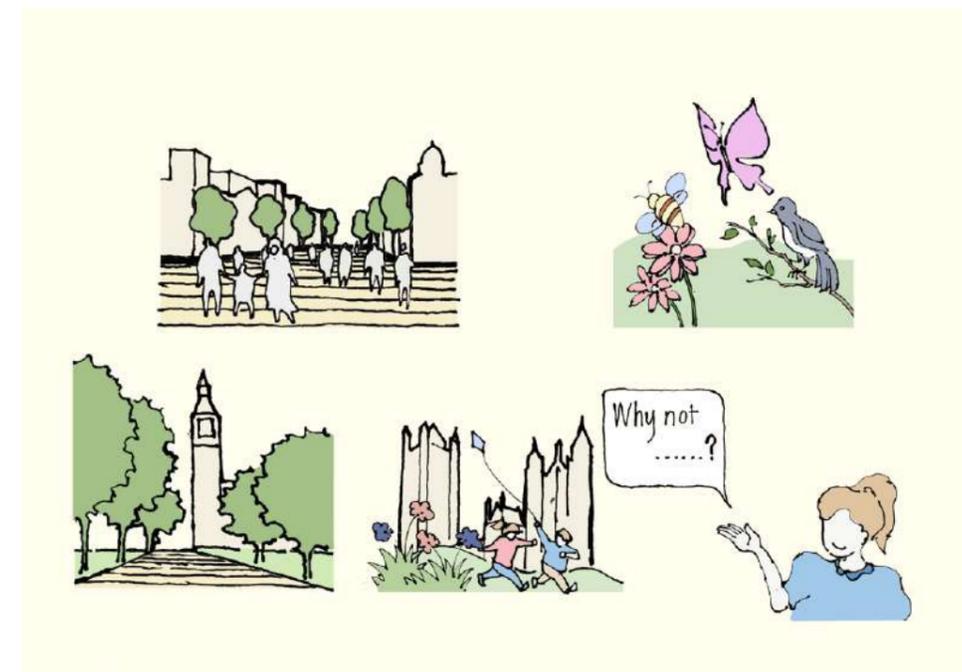
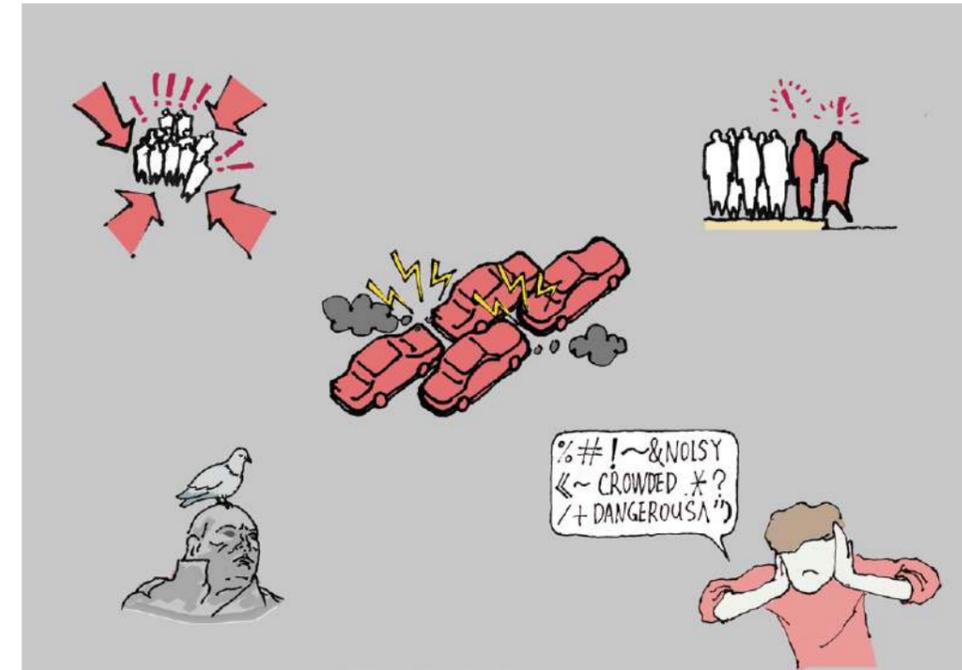


Fig. 209 - Illustration showing the key issues and aspirations

...Introducing PARLIAMENT SQUARE

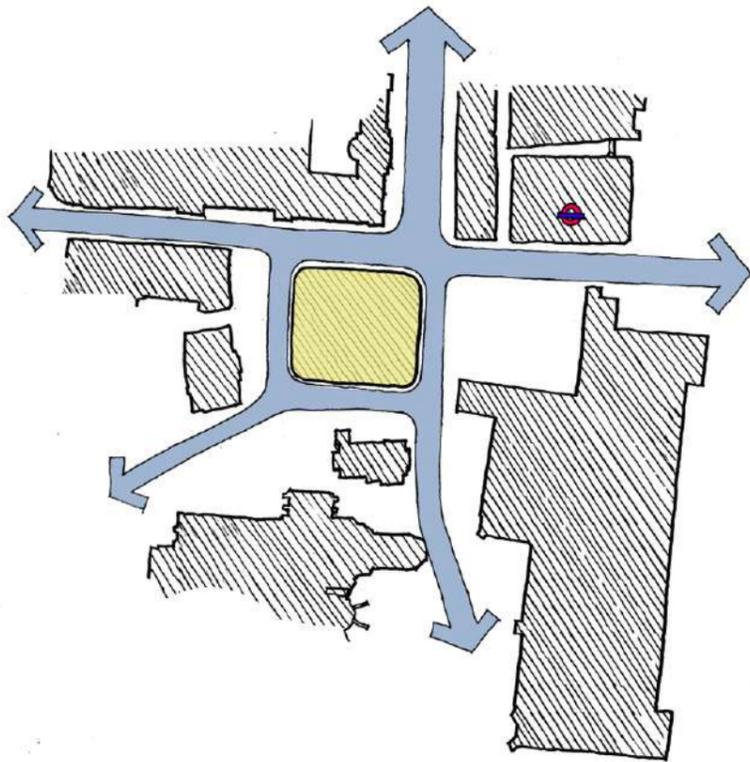


Fig. 210

Currently Parliament Square is an island surrounded by roads

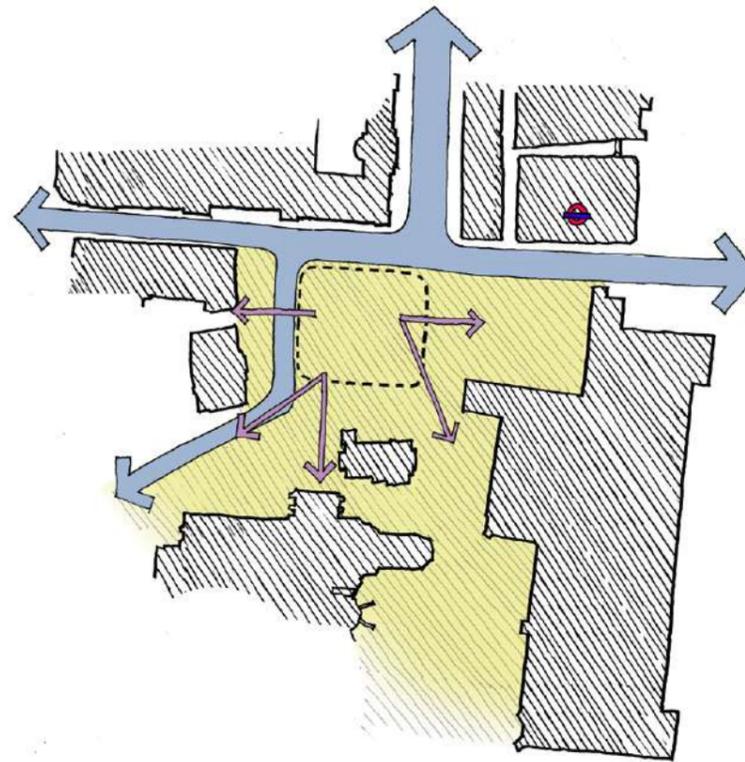


Fig. 211

Creation of a World Square that improves relationships to key buildings

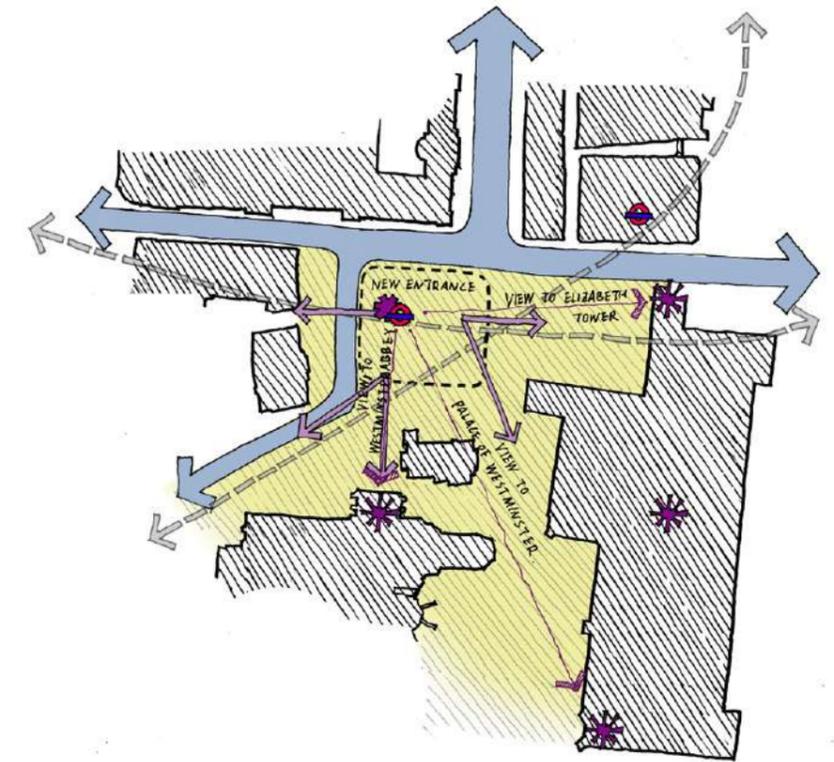


Fig. 212

Facilitate a new arrival experience

# ....Introducing PARLIAMENT SQUARE



Fig.213 - Existing View of Parliament Square

Potential for a new station entry/exit

A civic square for people that embraces the elements of the World Heritage Site

Frame views to Palace of Westminster. Remove traffic to Palace frontage



Fig.214 - Illustrative View of Parliament Square

Maintain vehicle access to western side of Parliament Square towards Victoria Street

Pedestrianised route to The Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey

Enhanced setting and approach to Westminster Abbey from Parliament Square

## 3

## 6.3 HEART TO HEART: VICTORIA STREET LINEAR PARK

A significant street that lacks welcoming environment.

Victoria Street is a key route that runs on an east-west axis from Victoria Station through to Broad Sanctuary. Once designed and imagined as a ceremonial and formal route linking the Victoria area more directly with Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. Today however, it suffers from the perception of an uninspiring route, due to the following reasons:

- the street is dominated by its vehicular traffic and is relatively sterile with a very wide asphalt carriageway and no intuitive sense of connection between Parliament Square and Victoria Station;
- the pavement widths are varied but in places they are narrow, cluttered, cold and of poor quality with particularly high levels of congestion close to Victoria Station;
- there are insufficient crossing facilities and those that do exist are of a poor quality;
- the street has the perception of being dangerous and intimidating for cyclists;
- historic building assets are relatively hidden and there is a lack of ground floor activity at the eastern end of Victoria Street in proximity to Parliament;
- retail within Victoria Street has a high street feel and there is little in the way of a local or independent offer;
- there is a lack of greenery and places to dwell and there are no intuitive connections to green spaces such as St James' Park; and
- complementary spaces lack the interest to encourage people to dwell.



Fig. 215 - Existing View of Victoria Street

- Opportunities
- To reclaim space for people by reducing the expanse allocated for vehicular use to create a high quality pedestrian and cycling experience.
  - To encourage the creation of an integrated and coherent 'green' identity for Victoria Street that links Parliament Square to Victoria Place and provides a strong walking route between two cities. Trees (potentially requiring planters) and low level planting could be used to create a strong arboreal identity to Victoria Street without adversely impacting on pedestrian cross movement, the visibility of retail displays and access to entrances.
  - To incorporate a series of multi-functional, complementary spaces and clear complementary connecting routes providing drama whilst enhancing user experience and intuitive wayfinding.
  - To create a cohesive space fronting Westminster Abbey and the Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre celebrating their roles whilst providing a strong setting to the adjacent World Heritage Site.
  - To create an enhanced setting to Westminster Cathedral, enhancing an important visual connection whilst creating a place to dwell.
  - To support enhancements to other adjacent streets and spaces including Christchurch Gardens, Broadway, Strutton Ground and Wilcox Place.
  - To create spaces that work across all hours catering for the needs of a growing number of residents, employees and visitors. Whilst some spaces will be ambitious with drama, others will need to be calmer. Each will need to be tuned to the needs of their respective users and adjacent uses.
  - To encourage the appropriation of space by people, new uses of space and outdoor activity by retailers, restaurateurs, etc. Consider the introduction of programmed activities, technology, events, places to dwell and places to play. Curate these in a way that the experience people gain from Victoria Street supports retailers, residents, employees and visitors.
  - To enhance lighting (including to colonnades), surfacing materials, wayfinding and promote the removal of clutter.

...Introducing VICTORIA STREET

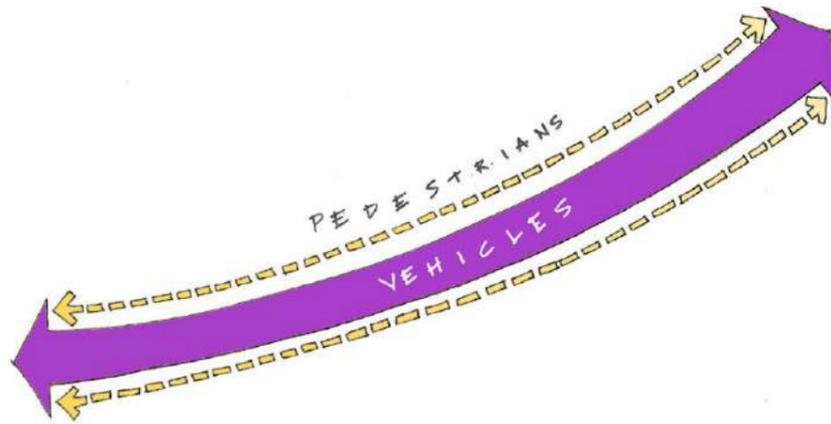


Fig. 216  
Victoria Street currently is dominated by vehicles

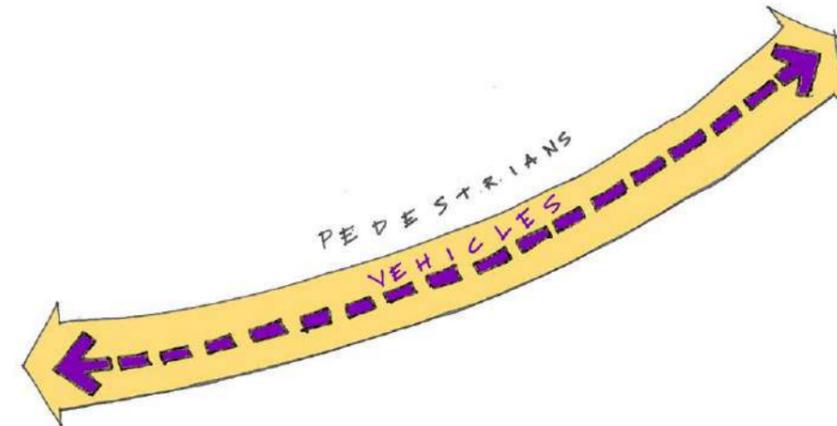


Fig. 217  
Improve the balance between vehicles and pedestrians

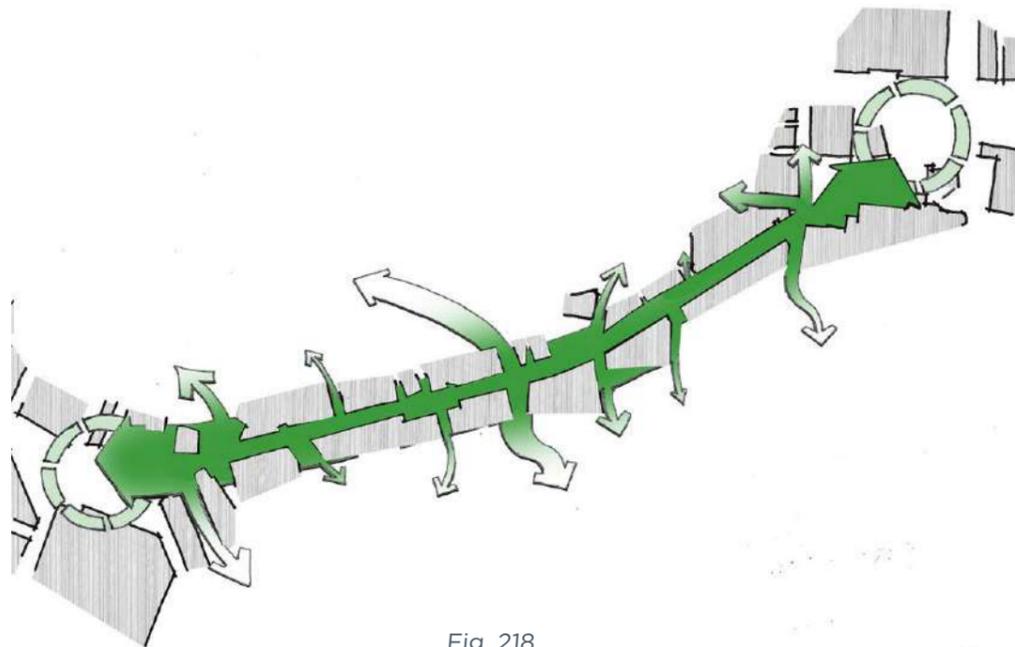


Fig. 218  
Create a connected green corridor between Victoria Station and Parliament Square, whilst strengthening connections to surrounding streets and spaces

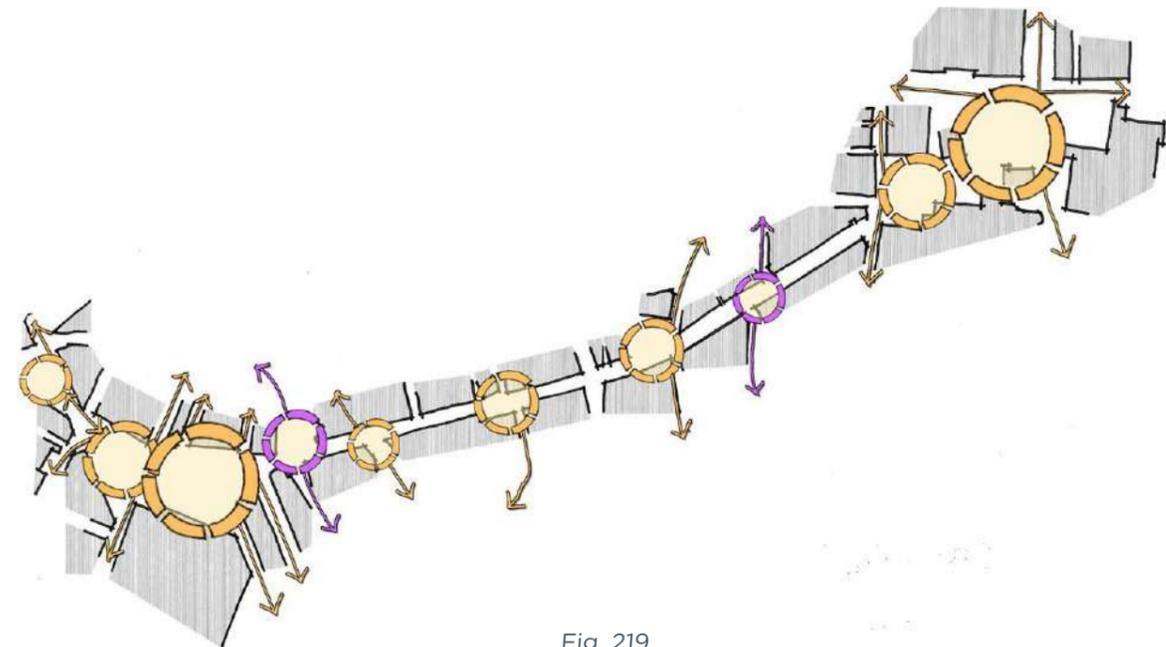


Fig. 219  
Introduce and build on a sequence of spaces

# ...Introducing VICTORIA STREET

Changing the perceived priority

Victoria Street generally enjoys a wide street section profile, ranging from 38m to 17m between buildings. The carriageway and footway widths vary, quite significantly at specific points, along its length with the footways ranging between 2.44m and 13.3m while the carriageways range from 14.6m and 12.6m. However, it should be noted that footways are often smallest where they are busiest, for example around Victoria Station.

The street typically lacks joy

The sections shown opposite (top, figure 220) illustrates the typical vehicle dominance along the street. Whilst the footways are generous the four lanes of traffic and lack greenery creates an un-welcoming environment that signals vehicles are of primary importance along the street, and the street is segregated by large expanses of tarmac.

At the Parliament Square end of Victoria Street the lanes reduce to two lanes, which suggests a limit to the flow of possible traffic. Subject to further modelling and testing, and detailed exploration of basements and below ground services, there is an opportunity to change the character and perception of Victoria Street significantly.

An opportunity to change the perception

In line with the principles of creating 'Healthy Streets' and creating an environment that encourages people to walk along its length and dwell, the street needs to adopt people orientated changes such as active and experiential frontages, comfortable footways that could incorporate greenery and places to sit and look to reduce air pollution through reduced traffic and greening.

A linear street park that integrates movement

Whilst the street should have a strong green presence, vehicle movement through the street is still considered an important part of creating a vibrant and connected street. Bus and cycling movements should be prioritised over general traffic, with stops and cycle parking incorporated between planting zones. Servicing times could be managed as far possible to ensure all additional movements are focused to times of the day that do not conflict with the other priorities and placemaking. A flexible street design approach should be adopted where at various times of the year, or even week, the street could accommodate different types of uses. Car free days/times where pedestrians could use the central zone should be encouraged.



Fig 220 - Typical Victoria Street Section (Building - Building 22.7m, Carriageway 12.6m, Footways 4.3m - 5.7m)



Fig 221 - Changed Priority and opportunities for greenery

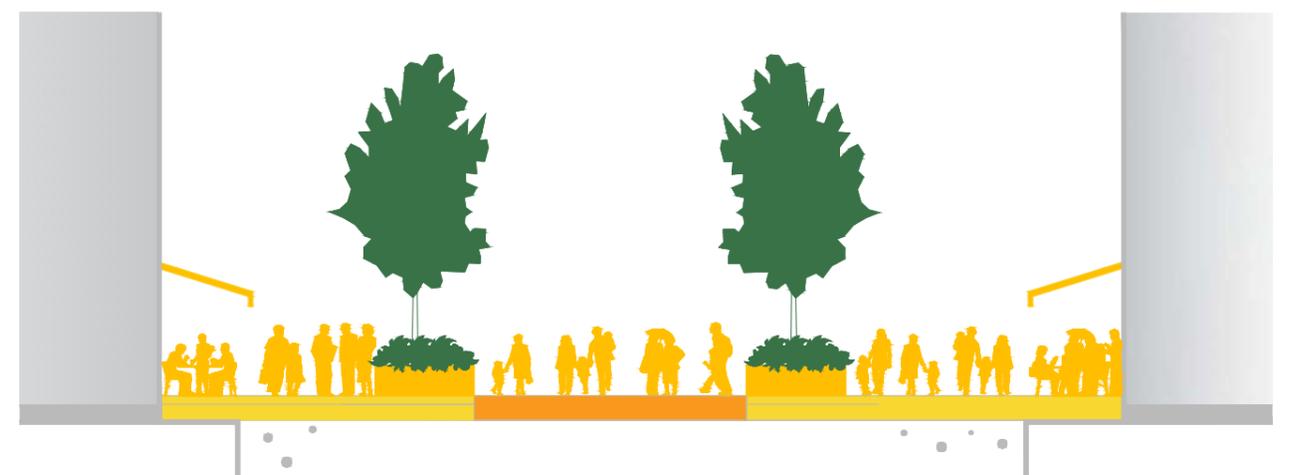


Fig 222 - A flexible street approach that could adapt to different needs at different times

...Introducing VICTORIA STREET

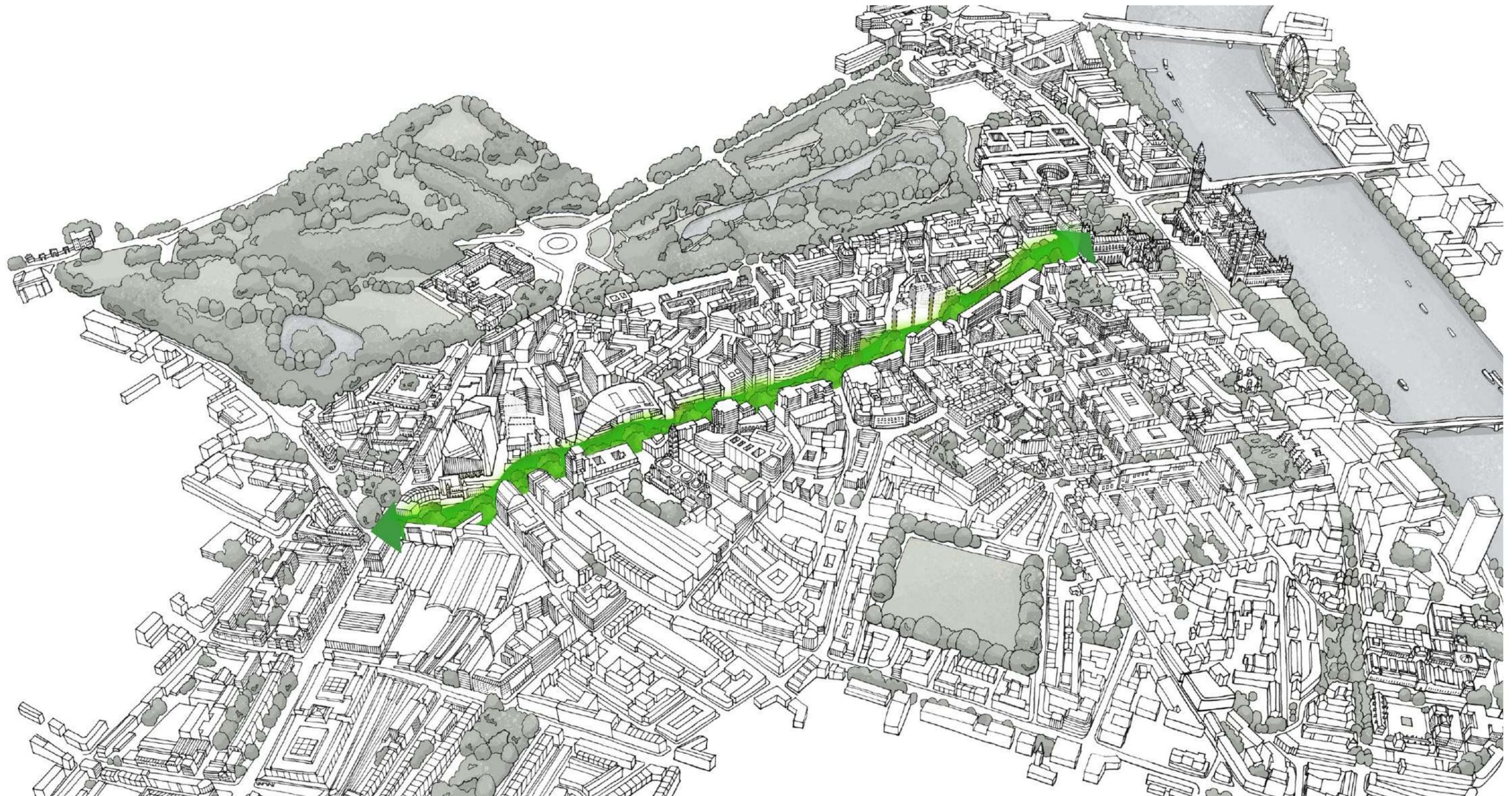


Fig. 223 - A new linear park which integrates traffic

# ...Introducing VICTORIA STREET



Fig.224 - Existing View of Victoria Street

Integrate smart furniture and green to keep streets as flexible as possible

Highlight key entrances to retail and offices

Highlight spaces and links off Victoria Street



Fig. 225 - Illustrative View of Victoria Street

Create green spaces that frame outdoor rooms

Encourage active frontages and external shopping experiences

Planting steps back where building forms step back to create large flexible central space

Explore greening opportunities

...Introducing VICTORIA STREET



Fig.226 - Existing View of Victoria Street



Fig. 227 - A flexible street design will allow for adaptability and different priorities at different times.



Fig. 228 - Victoria Street could host a number of events and activities to complement a high density city living environment.

## 4

## 6.4 A SQUARE DEAL FOR VICTORIA: CATHEDRAL PIAZZA

Existing  
Situation

The Cathedral is a landmark destination both in the Victoria area and along Victoria Street itself. The piazza space in front of the cathedral is an important urban space that should enhance the buildings setting and provide a place to stay. Currently the space suffers from a number of short comings such as:

- the poor relationship between the Cathedral and Victoria Street;
- the poor relationship between ground floor uses and the public realm;
- the discordant relationship between the Cathedral and the buildings to either side of the Piazza;
- the high level of vagrancy and anti-social behaviour associated with this location; and
- the piazza has a windswept feel and has limited places to dwell.

## Opportunities

- To improve user experience and create a strong connection between Westminster Cathedral, Victoria Street and Cardinal Place.
- To create a dramatic setting to an important cultural building and the largest Catholic church in England and Wales.
- To introduce water to animate this important space, support the provision of retail activity in adjacent buildings, drawing views towards the Cathedral. The playful use of water can additionally encourage the presence of people of all ages across a broad range of hours.
- To encourage the appropriation of space by people (with associated natural surveillance), new uses of space and outdoor activity by retailers, restaurateurs, etc. Consider the introduction of programmed activities, technology, events and places to dwell.
- To continue with the current programme of curating events within the space and providing flexible seating.
- To enhance lighting (including to colonnades), surfacing materials, wayfinding and promote the removal of clutter.
- To introduce trees and other greening to focus views on the cathedral, provide human scale and support the provision of biophilia.

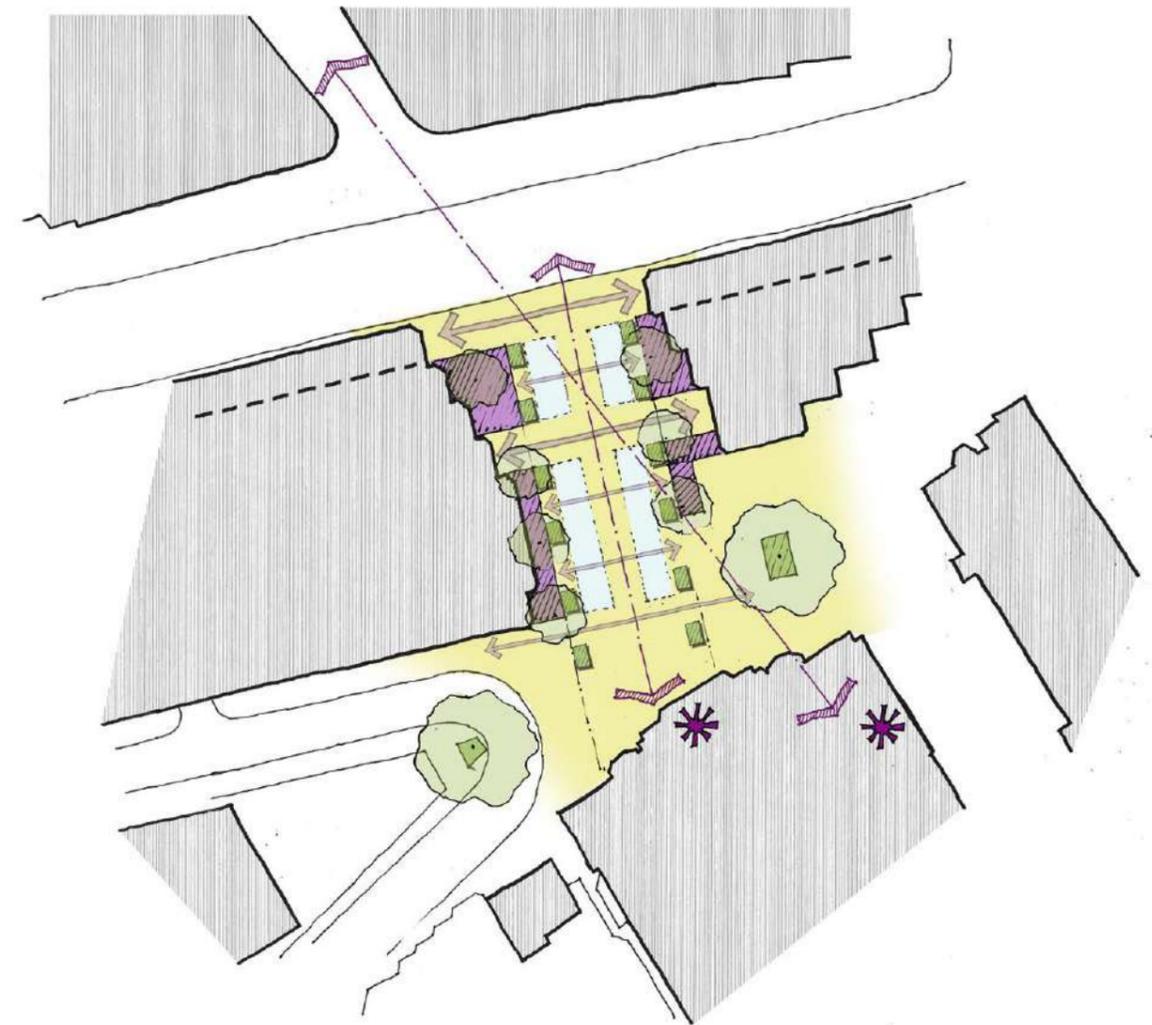


Fig. 229

Creating and improved setting to the Cathedral whilst encouraging activity on the surrounding edges

# ...Introducing CATHEDRAL PIAZZA

Activate edges and encourage spill out onto the Piazza

Tree planting softens the space and places emphasis on Cathedral



Fig. 230 - Illustrative View of Cathedral Piazza

Incorporate flexible/moveable planting zone

Water introduces a dynamic and playful element to the space

Access to shop fronts and circulation across the space should be convenient and logical



Fig.231 - Existing View of Cathedral Piazza



Fig. 232 - Derry City Centre Precedent Images

## 5

## 6.5 THE RAILWAY GARDENS: VICTORIA STATION TO THE THAMES

Existing  
Situation

The overground railway corridor that leads to Victoria station accommodates a significant portion of urban space between Victoria Station and the Thames. Whilst some east west connections exist they are limited and the tracks themselves are unattractive and offer little in the way of amenity or biodiversity. Some of the key considerations to address are:

- the rail lines into Victoria Station that extend from across the Thames to the south create a series of large urban blocks with limited east-west connection and long lengths of relatively unattractive blank frontage with limited natural surveillance and a poor quality public realm;
- the limited number of east west routes between Belgravia and Pimlico contribute to a reduction in footfall throughout much of the area and contribute to their being a stronger sense of vehicular domination; and
- routes for pedestrians between Victoria and the river are not attractive or intuitive.

## Opportunities

- To provide a sequence of new gardens and experiences for the people of Victoria.
- To strengthen pedestrian connections between Victoria Station and the Thames through the provision of a direct, convenient and intuitive linear public garden connection between Victoria Place and the Thames.
- To increase the number of physical and visual connections between communities in Belgravia to the west and Pimlico to the east.
- To enhance the public realm, improve air quality, introduce activities, encourage exploration and enhance natural surveillance.

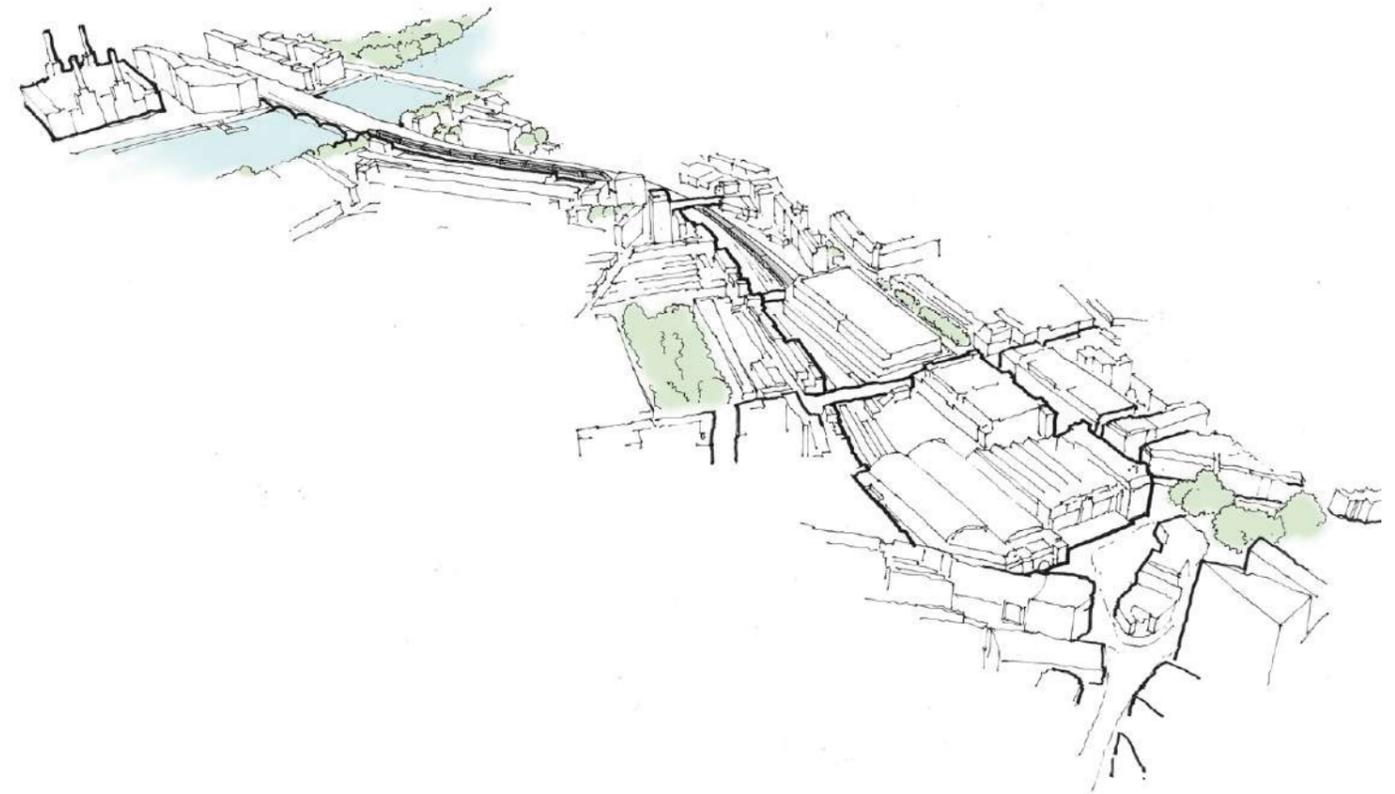


Fig 233 - Existing railway tracks and surroundings

...Introducing THE RAILWAY GARDENS

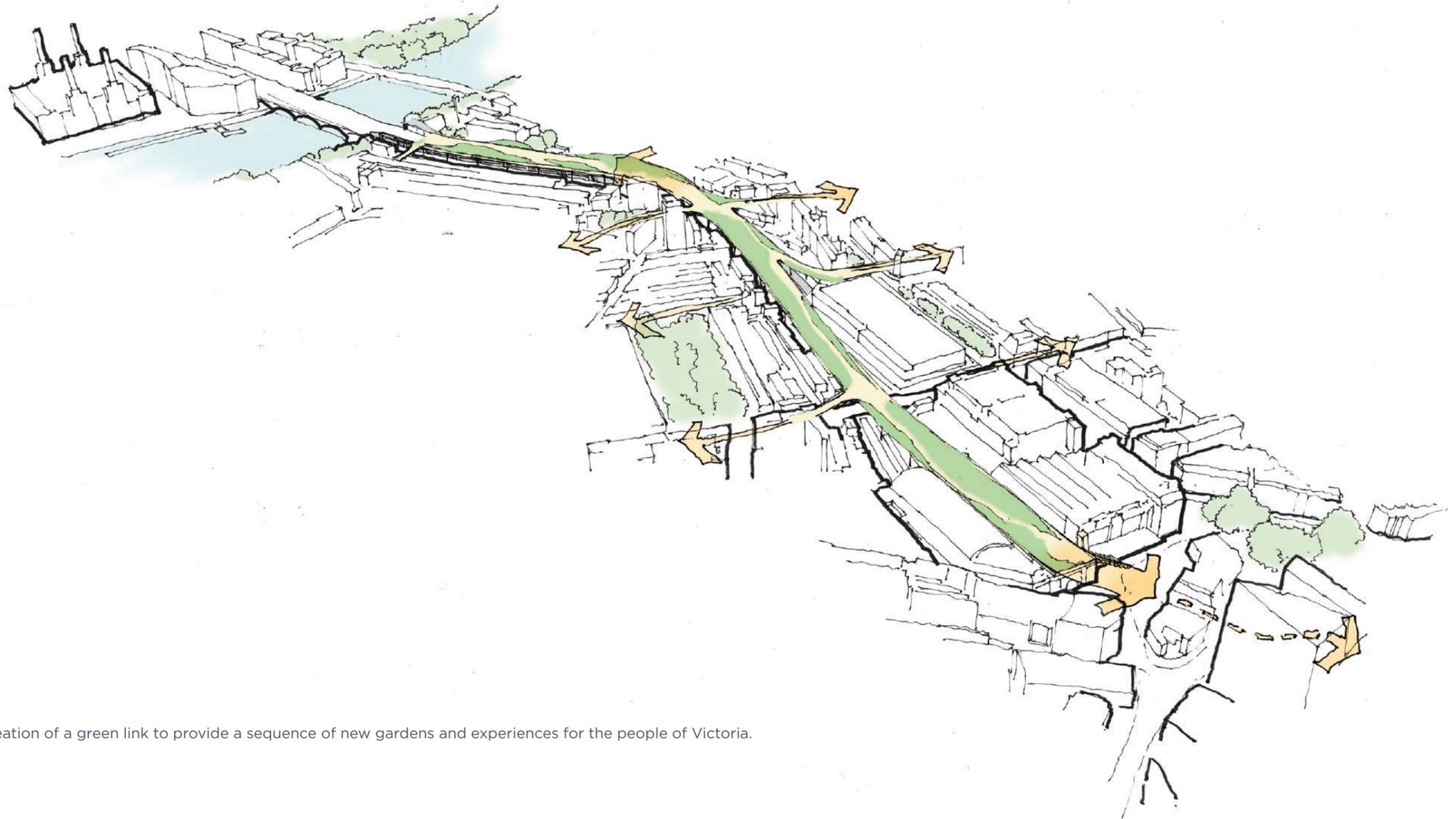


Fig 234 - Creation of a green link to provide a sequence of new gardens and experiences for the people of Victoria.

...Introducing THE RAILWAY GARDENS

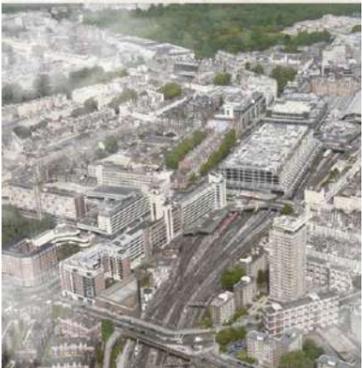


Fig.235 - Existing View



Fig. 236  
A single link between over station developments (with areas highlighted in yellow where potential development can be explored)



Fig. 237  
A dual link supporting over station developments. Greening surplus track side space (with areas highlighted in yellow where potential development can be explored)



Fig. 238

Fully covered tracks and gardens supporting over station development (with areas highlighted in yellow where potential development can be explored)

## 6

## 6.6 THE ARC: PETTY FRANCE TO TOTHILL STREET

Existing  
Situation

The 'Arc' is an alternative route to Victoria Street and a route that extends from Broad Sanctuary and Whitehall to Victoria Station via Tothill Street, Broadway (and St James's Station), Petty France, Castle Lane and Cardinal Place. Key considerations to address are:

- there are significant lengths of this route that are characterised by broad carriageway, narrow pavements, extensive street clutter, coach parking, contraflow cycle movements, a lack of pedestrian crossings and poor wayfinding; and
- there is a poor relationship between many ground floor uses and the public realm. Wellington Barracks, the northern façade to Cardinal Place and buildings to the eastern end of Tothill Street are particularly poor in this regard.

## Opportunities

- To reinforce and enhance a 'one step back' pedestrian route to the north of Victoria Street.
- To take advantage of, and enhance, this routes more organic townscape and to enjoy its diverse collection of heritage buildings.
- To introduce a series of coordinated interventions (including widening pavements and improving crossing facilities) to assist pedestrian movement and enhance the experience of people moving through the area.
- Ensure that all routes towards destinations including St James's Park / Birdcage Walk and Victoria are well signposted and intuitive to find. This might include a new route through Wellington Barracks from Petty France adjacent to its junction with Palmer Street.
- To improve the relationship between The Arc and its surrounding buildings, promoting positive frontages, active ground floor uses and a high level of physical and visual connectivity.
- To enhance the setting to 55 Broadway and the entrances to St James's Station.
- To enhance the setting to all heritage assets along this route including Westminster Chapel and buildings on Castle Lane.
- To enhance lighting, surfacing materials and promote the removal of clutter.
- To promote the incorporation of planting and stronger 'green' connections to St James's Park.
- To give consideration to the provision of integrated security and the enhancement of existing security measures.



Fig. 239 - Existing View of Petty France



Fig. 240 - Existing View of Tothill Street



Fig. 241

Creation of a better pedestrian route from Cardinal Place through to Broad Sanctuary and the surrounding areas

...Introducing THE ARC



Fig.242 - Existing View of Tothill Street

Highlight routes to St James Park

Encourage active frontages and spill out seating to animate space

New tree planting softens street and taxi parking

Encourage active frontage and spill out seating



Fig. 243 - Illustrative View of Petty France, Tothill Street and Queen Anne's Gate

Consider restricting vehicle access down Queen Anne's Gate

New public space with seating, planting and high quality and materials

Improve crossings and reduce overall carriageway width to only what is needed for continued access

Widen footways to station frontage

7

## 6.7 ST JAMES WALK

An opportunity to create a new link to St James Park Station

An opportunity exists to improve connections to St James Park Station from the surrounding area and enrich the setting of the western entry to station. Some of the key considerations to address are:

- routes west from St James Park Station are not as direct, convenient and intuitive as they might be (typically via Petty France or initially south via Broadway or Palmer Street);
- the lack of a complimentary east west street to Victoria Street, with the area behind ZigZag, Kingsgate House, City Hall and 62 Buckingham Gate having extensive lengths of blank façade and environments that are dominated by servicing activity;
- the closure of a potential access from Palmer Street to space over the Circle Line;
- the lack of any connection or relationship to both Westminster City School and the Taj Hotel; and
- ensuring that any venting and access requirements to the Underground are maintained.

### Opportunities

- To open up a new garden route from the entrance to St James Park Station on Palmer Street (next to Starbucks Coffee) to Vandon Street taking pedestrian movement over and along the line of the District and Circle Line.
- To continue this pedestrian route via new crossings on Buckingham Gate, enhancement to Seaforth Place and the decking over the Circle Line between Spenser Street and Palace Street.
- Complimentary crossings and the enhancement of Brewers Green should be considered and Spenser Street. These should connect to and building upon the success of London & Oriental's work around Butler Place and Palmer Street.
- To encourage the appropriation of space by people, new uses of space and outdoor activity by retailers, restaurateurs, etc. Consider the introduction of programmed activities, technology, events, places to dwell and the integration of high quality kiosks or other retail structures.
- To enhance the setting to St James's Station.
- To enhance lighting, surfacing materials and wayfinding.



Fig. 244 - Existing View Vandon Street



Fig. 245 - Existing View Palmer Street

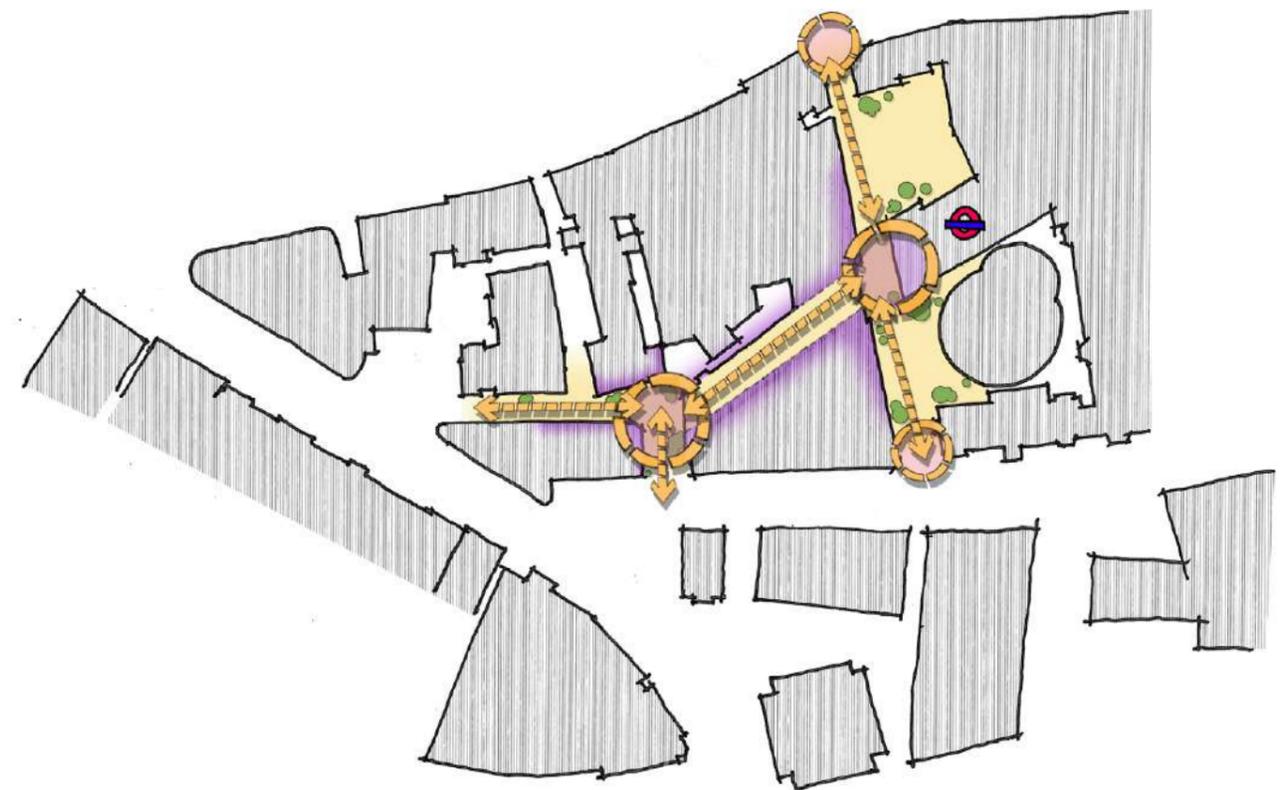


Fig. 246  
Opportunity to create a new pedestrian link that connects into St James Park Station

# ...Introducing ST JAMES WALK

Create pedestrian priority surface that can accommodate occasional vehicle use



Fig. 247 - Illustrative View of Vandon Street

Intuitive wayfinding along walking route towards St James Park /Victoria station

Active frontages

Greenery creates sense of place

Opportunity to create branding destination and identity for the area



Fig. 248 - Illustrative View of Palmer Street

High quality surfacing and intuitive wayfinding along quiet walking route towards Victoria

Explore greening opportunities

Celebrate St James Park Station entrance

## 8

## 6.8 GROSVENOR GARDENS

An important but isolated green space

As one of the few green spaces inside the Victoria BID area, Grosvenor Square Gardens is an important space for Victoria. It contains a number of large mature plane trees that contribute to the amenity of the area and provides a welcome respite from hard surfaces. However there are a number considerations that need to be addressed:

- the central gardens relatively sparse with limited planting;
- the highway arrangement, existing railings and pedestrian entrance arrangements make the gardens difficult to access;
- the entrances to the gardens are poorly positioned;
- the poor relationship that exists between ground floor uses and the public realm;
- material quality is poor and there is extensive street clutter; and
- the poor relationship that exists between Buckingham Palace Gardens and Grosvenor Place.

Opportunities

- To enhance the gardens as accessible oases through enhancements to entrances and the introduction of high quality planting.
- To improve the relationship between the gardens and their surrounding buildings (potentially including Crossrail 2 in the future)
- To give pedestrian priority given to the southern sides of both Grosvenor Gardens and Lower Grosvenor Gardens. This may give scope to increase the size of each garden.
- To promote active frontages and the sensitive incorporation of planting.
- To reroute traffic, considering timed access for servicing, to reduce carriageway widths and to introduce two way working to facilitate more direct routes and the creation of a better environment for pedestrians.
- To strengthen pedestrian connections, including those between Ebury Street and Beeston Place, between the Gardens and Victoria Place, between the Gardens and Grosvenor Place and between the Gardens and Victoria Street.
- The enhancement of tree planting along Grosvenor Place and the provision of an improved visual relationship to the gardens of Buckingham Palace.
- To enhance lighting, surfacing materials and wayfinding.
- To promote the removal of clutter.
- To promote the introduction of programmed activities, events, high quality retail kiosks, technology and play and to curate these spaces in a way that the experience people gain from Grosvenor Gardens and Lower Grosvenor Gardens supports residents, employees and visitors.



Fig. 249 - Existing View of Buckingham Palace Road



Fig. 250 - Existing View from Grosvenor Gardens

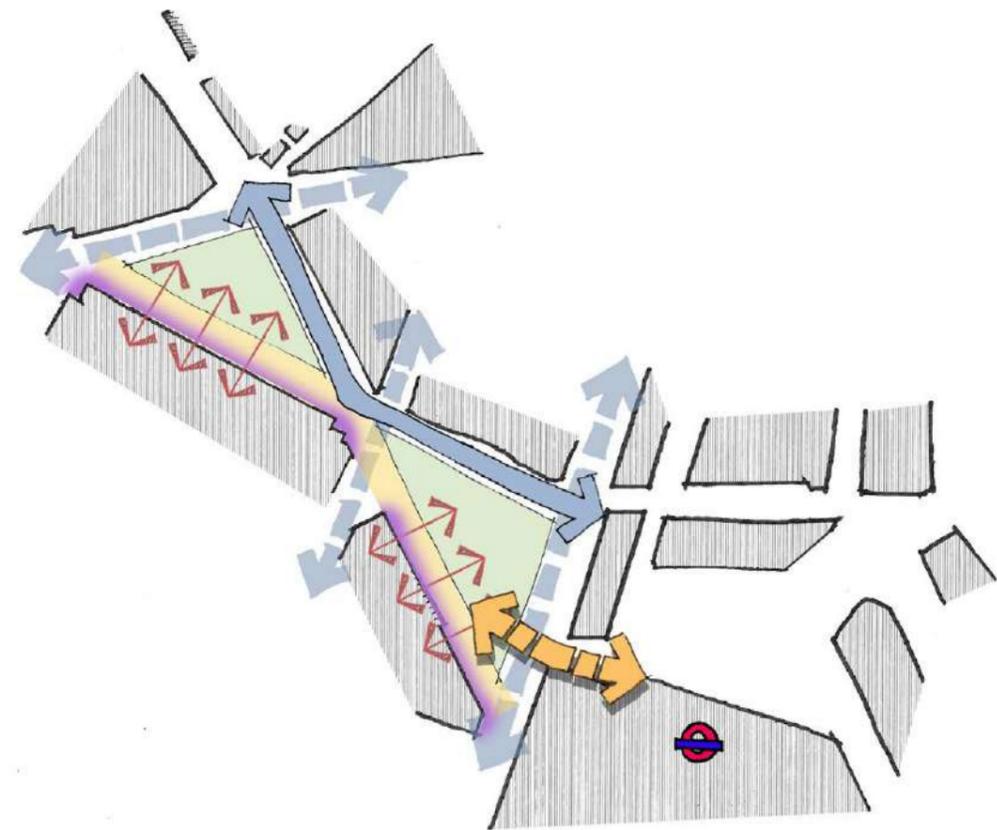


Fig. 251

Creating a pedestrian priority environment between Victoria Station and Grosvenor Gardens. Activating building edges and managing the traffic

...Introducing GROSVENOR GARDENS



Fig.252 - Existing View of Buckingham Palace Road

Create new links through gardens from Station Square



Fig. 253 - Illustrative View of Buckingham Palace Road and Improved Grosvenor Gardens Connections

Encourage active frontages

Pedestrian priority to western side of Grosvenor Gardens

Improve pedestrian links across Buckingham Palace Road

Continue tree planting from Nova

Improve pedestrian experience on Buckingham Palace Road

## 9

## 6.9 BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD

A street in need of people priority

Many people who arrive to the Victoria area experience Buckingham Palace Road. It provides an entry/exit into Victoria Station, a gateway to Belgravia and an important link to Buckingham Palace. Its character is therefore experienced by millions of visitors every year. However this experience is currently not a pleasant one, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. It is envisaged that Crossrail 2 Station building will be located on Buckingham Palace Road, therefore strengthening the need to create a suitable environment on this important street. Some of the key considerations to address are:

- the street is dominated by its vehicular traffic and is relatively sterile with a very wide asphalt carriageway and no intuitive sense of connection between Victoria Station, Victoria Coach Station, Buckingham Palace or locations such as Belgravia or Pimlico;
- the pavements are narrow, cluttered, cold and of poor quality with particularly high levels of congestion close to Victoria Station, Victoria Coach Station and the north end of Buckingham Palace Road where coach parties and tourists congregate around the entrance to the Queen's Gallery and walk north towards The Mall;
- there are insufficient crossing facilities and those that do exist are of a poor quality. There is a corresponding increase in pedestrian movement to the north of the street near the coach station and the south of the street near the rail station;
- the streets perception of being dangerous and intimidating for cyclists;
- there are significant lengths of inactive frontage and the retail offer is dominated by tourist shops with little in the way of an offer for residents or businesses; and
- there is a lack of greenery and places to dwell and there are no intuitive connections to places within locations such as Belgravia and Pimlico.

Opportunities

- To reclaim space for people by reducing the expanse allocated for vehicular use to create a high quality pedestrian and cycling experience.
- To encourage the creation of an integrated and coherent identity for Buckingham Palace Road that provides a strong walking and cycling route.
- To improve pedestrian connection through the enhancement of crossing facilities (potentially through a diagonal arrangement) along Buckingham Palace Road.
- To augment crossing facilities and incorporate measures that support intuitive wayfinding. These should reinforce the identity of individual junction or spaces, improve the experience of moving along Buckingham Palace Road and help to guide people into neighbourhoods to either side.

- To encourage the appropriation of space by people and outdoor activity by retailers, restaurateurs, etc.
- To improve the relationship between Buckingham Palace Road and its surrounding buildings, promoting positive frontages, active ground floors and a high level of physical and visual connectivity.
- To ensure that any changes to, or replacement of, buildings enhance their setting and the quality of Buckingham Palace Road.
- To enhance the setting, and connection, to all station entrances.
- To enhance and enrich heritage assets including the Grosvenor Hotel and The National Audit Office.
- To increase tree planting whilst considering opportunities to introduce more low level planting and planting to building frontages.



Fig. 254  
Improved pedestrian and vehicle route better connecting into the surrounding areas.

...Introducing BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD



Fig.255 - Existing View of Buckingham Palace Road

Add greening to street

Reduce vehicle carriageway where possible to win back pedestrian space



Fig. 256 - Illustrative View of Buckingham Palace Road

Brand area & interface signage into art walks

Create clearer & more direct crossings for pedestrians

Encourage active frontages particular where buildings step back & create opportunities

10

## 6.10 MIND THE GAP

Visually prominent site needing a short term intervention.

The demolition of 175-179 Victoria Street to enable works associated with Transport for London's upgrade works to Victoria Station have left a gap in the wider terrace of existing buildings sitting in front of Victoria Place. The gap is contained by hoardings to its front and rendered flank walls to either side. It will not be reinstated as it is within Crossrail 2 safe guarding zone and therefore a temporary installation is required to occupy this site and provide a suitable short term measure to this visually prominent site. Key considerations are:

- the visual prominence of this site being opposite NOVA and the listed Palace Theatre, adjacent to Victoria Place and terminating views west along Victoria Street from as far east as Christchurch Gardens;
- the site contains a large vent opening to the District and Circle Lines below;
- the site is structurally constrained by the presence of the Underground system below;
- the site is limited in size and contains an imposing Hostile Vehicle Mitigation barrier;
- the site is safeguarded for the routing of Crossrail 2; and
- the site is at risk from vagrancy and anti-social behaviour.

### Opportunities

- To tidy the site and remove construction hoardings whilst maintaining protection against vehicle and people / projectile incursion onto the District and Circle Lines below.
- To enhance materials and enhance the treatment of the void below ensuring that any necessary venting requirements are appropriately accommodated.
- To consider the introduction of retail activity in either a permanent or temporary form. This might involve the development of a relationship between the gap site and the buildings to either side.
- To take advantage of the views that can be obtained from upper levels along Victoria Street to the Shard.
- To consider the incorporation of facilities associated Victoria's various transport functions.
- To consider the scope for carefully considered outdoor advertising and/or artwork, taking advantage of the site's prominence whilst enlivening the street and helping to screen exposed elevations.
- To create a high quality and positive identifier for the area.
- To enhance community and visitor amenity.



Fig. 257 - Existing View of 175-179 Victoria Street

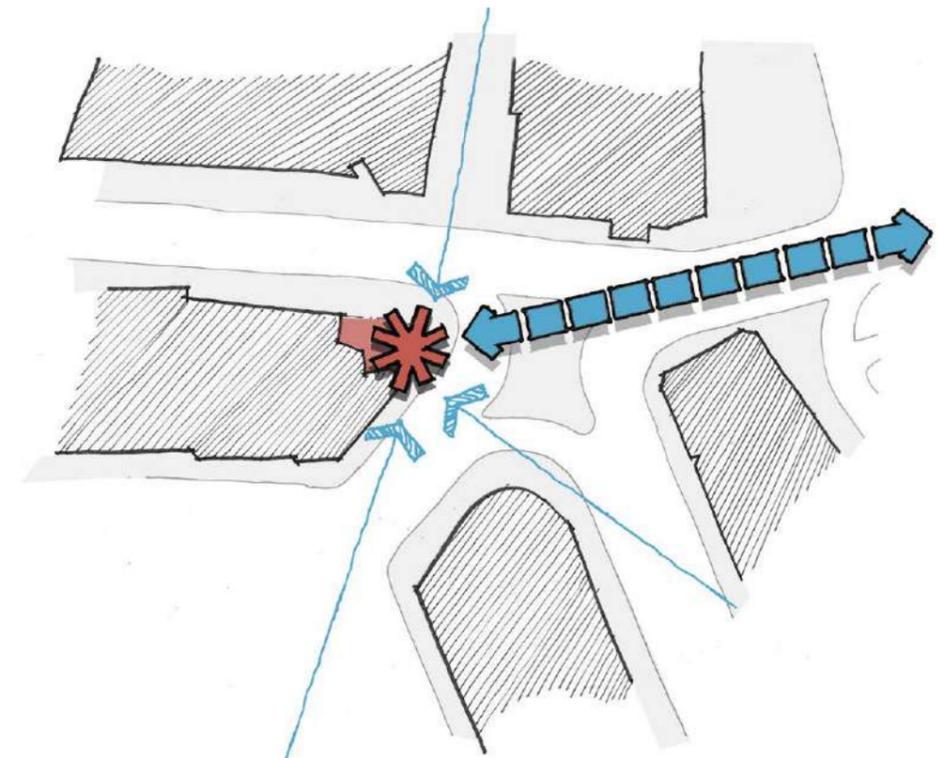


Fig. 258

The site sits at a key nodal location on Victoria Street in which key views terminate at, highlighting the prominence of the site

...Introducing MIND THE GAP



Fig. 259 - Opportunity to Celebrate Movement

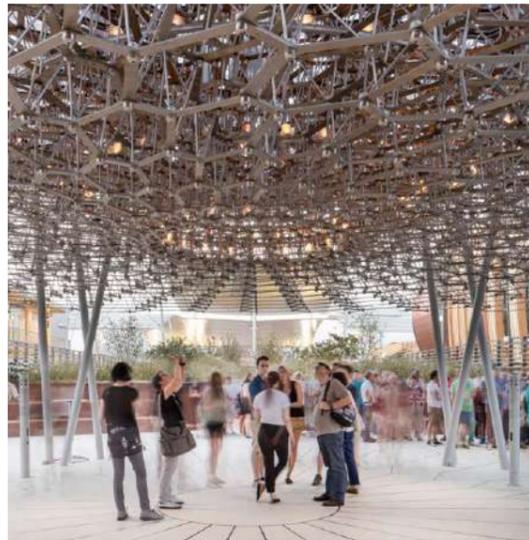


Fig. 260 - Opportunity to Create a Place that is Engaging



Fig. 261 - Opportunity to Promote Sculpture



Fig. 262 - Opportunity to Introduce a Feature Pavilion

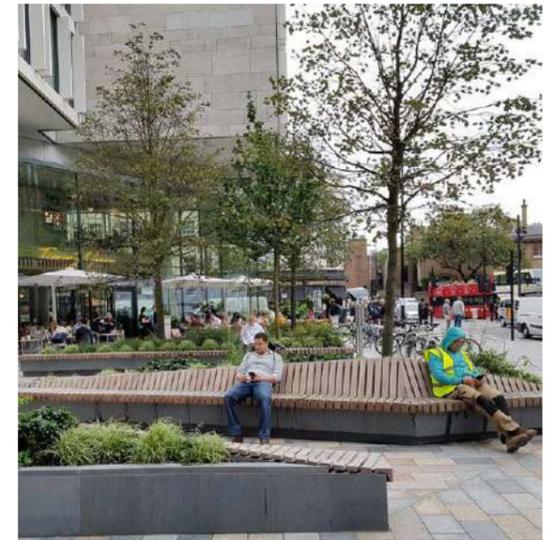


Fig. 263 - Opportunity for Seating



Fig. 264 - Opportunity for Art and Play



Fig. 265 - Opportunity to Celebrate Light and Sculpture

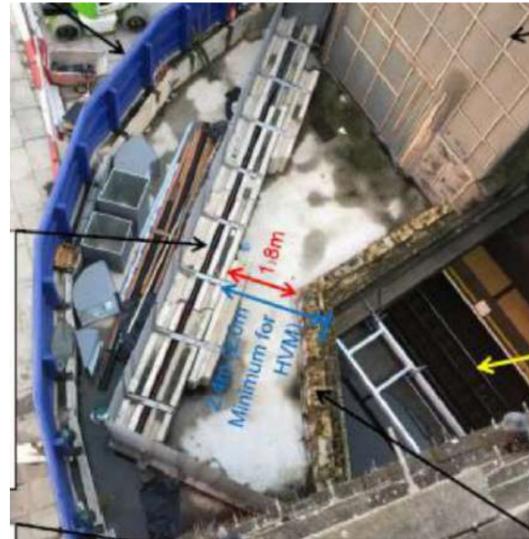


Fig. 266- Opportunity to Enhance Connection to the Tube Line Underground



Fig. 267 - Opportunity for Greening

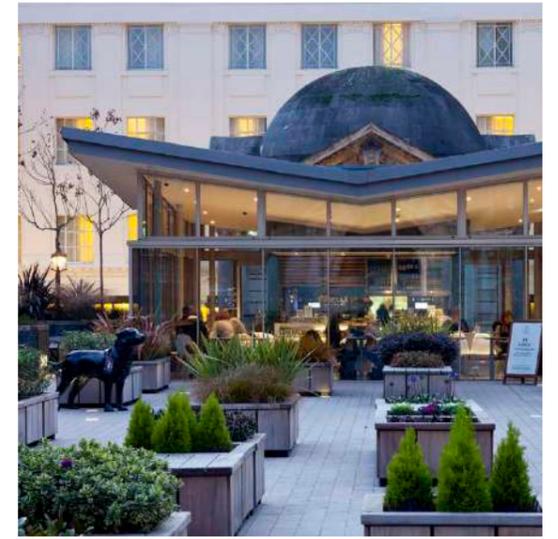


Fig. 268 - Opportunity for a Commercial Aspect

11

## 6.11 PASSPORT TO PIMLICO

Improving the relationship between Victoria and Pimlico

Centred on Vauxhall Bridge Road's intersection with both Francis Street and Tachbrook Street, this is a project focussed on supporting connections between Victoria Station / Victoria Street and Pimlico Tachbrook Street. Some of the key considerations to address are:

- vehicle dominance on both Vauxhall Bridge Road and Wilton Road, wide carriageways, narrow pavements and a poor quality of public realm undermine the experience of pedestrians and cyclists. This is particularly problematic where these streets form part of the gyratory and pass under a building at Neathouse Place;
- there are a lack of pedestrian crossings on Vauxhall Bridge Road and Wilton Road and those that exist are of a poor quality;
- the perception that Vauxhall Bridge Road and Wilton Road are dangerous and intimidating for cyclists;
- the poor quality of market stalls on Tachbrook Street;
- there is a lack of natural surveillance in King's Scholars' Passage and a general lack of ground floor activity on Vauxhall Bridge Road, Wilton Road and residential streets including Francis Street. The lack of natural surveillance can contribute to higher levels of vagrancy and anti-social behaviour;
- routes are not intuitive and there is a lack of greenery, incident or places to dwell; and
- material quality is poor and there is extensive street clutter.

Opportunities

- To enhance the transport arrangement, reducing carriageway widths and introduce two way working to facilitate more direct routes.
- To introduce a series of improved pedestrian crossings to support movement through the area.
- To create a better environment for pedestrians with improved materials, wayfinding and lighting.
- To promote the removal of clutter.
- To improve the relationship between each street and its surrounding buildings / context, promoting active ground floor frontages and a high level of physical and visual connectivity.

- To promote cycle movement, permeability and the provision of supporting facilities.
- To promote the incorporation of planting and stronger 'green' connections.
- To enhance the market on Tachbrook Street.
- To enhance security and natural surveillance within King's Scholars' Passage.
- To create a memorable place, aiding orientation, through public realm improvements to the intersection of Francis Street and Vauxhall Bridge Road. The alignment of this space with the subterranean route of the River Tyburn suggests that this might be an appropriate location to place a drinking fountain or water feature as a reference to this 'lost river'.
- There is an opportunity for this space to provide a focus to its surrounding community and a frontage to the adjacent Queen Mother Sports Centre. Planting with associated places to dwell might be used to help counter the relatively large scale of the Queen Mother Sports Centre.

...Introducing PASSPORT TO PIMLICO



Fig. 269 - Existing Site Photo



Fig. 270 - Existing Site Photo



Fig. 271 - Existing Site Photo



Fig. 272 - Existing Site Photo

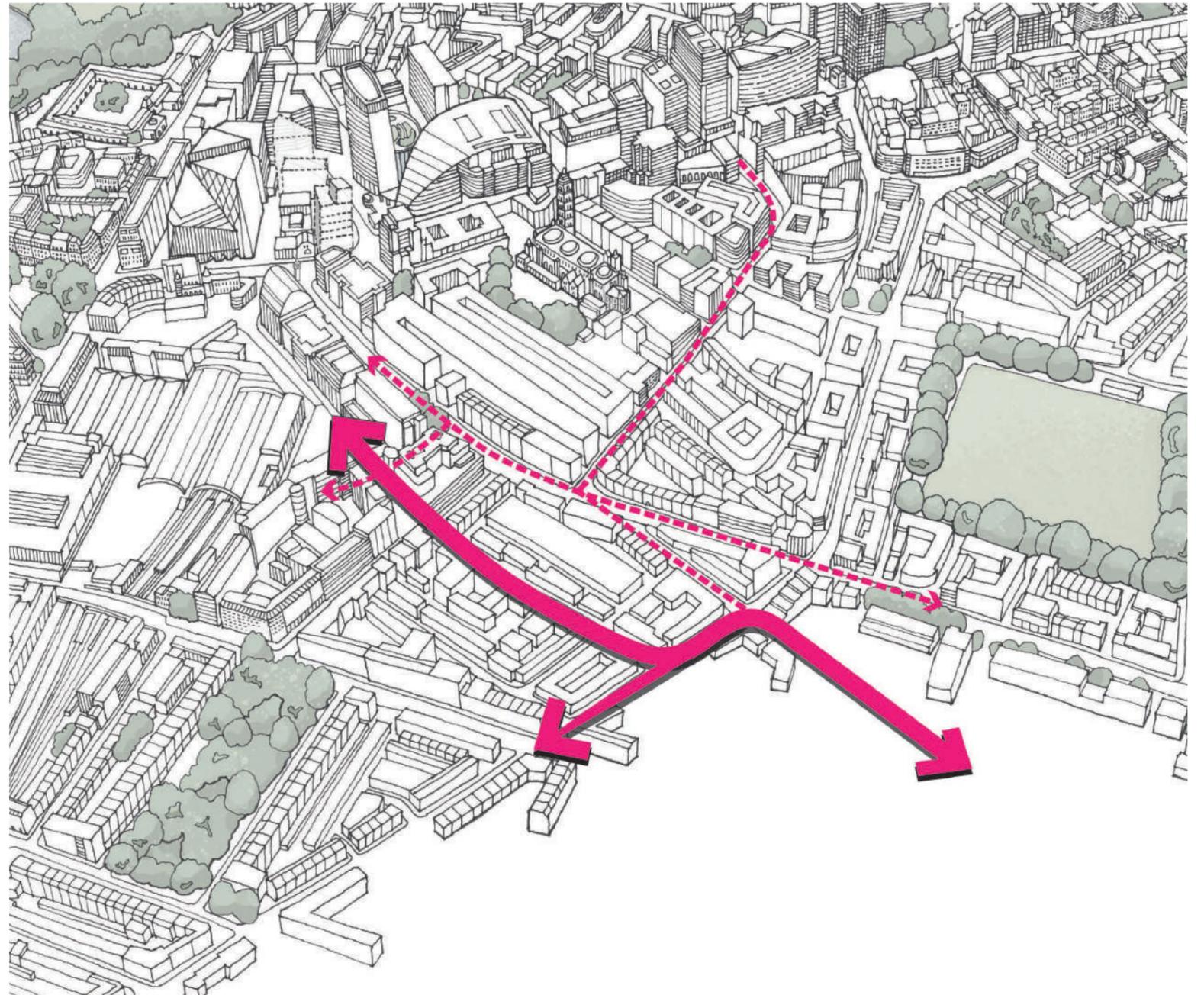


Fig. 273  
Improve and celebrate the routes from Victoria to Pimlico

## 12

## 6.12 THE GREEN PASSAGE

A backstreet that can be transformed into a space

Focused on King's Scholars' Passage which connects to Carlisle Place to the north and Francis Street to the south, this is a project intent on supporting the streets residents and business owners with the view to deterring anti-social behaviour and reduce vagrancy. Key considerations are:

- there is a history of anti-social behaviour and issues with vagrancy in the area;
- the passage has a back-of-house feel and suffers from a general lack of natural surveillance; and
- surfacing materials and lighting are poor and there is little in the way of personalisation or sense of residential occupancy.

## Opportunities

- To consider alternative means of controlling access and managing traffic.
- To consider measures to improve natural surveillance.
- To enhance materials, improve lighting, integrate signing, conceal refuse and introduce greening to provide personalisation and give a greater sense that this a residential address.

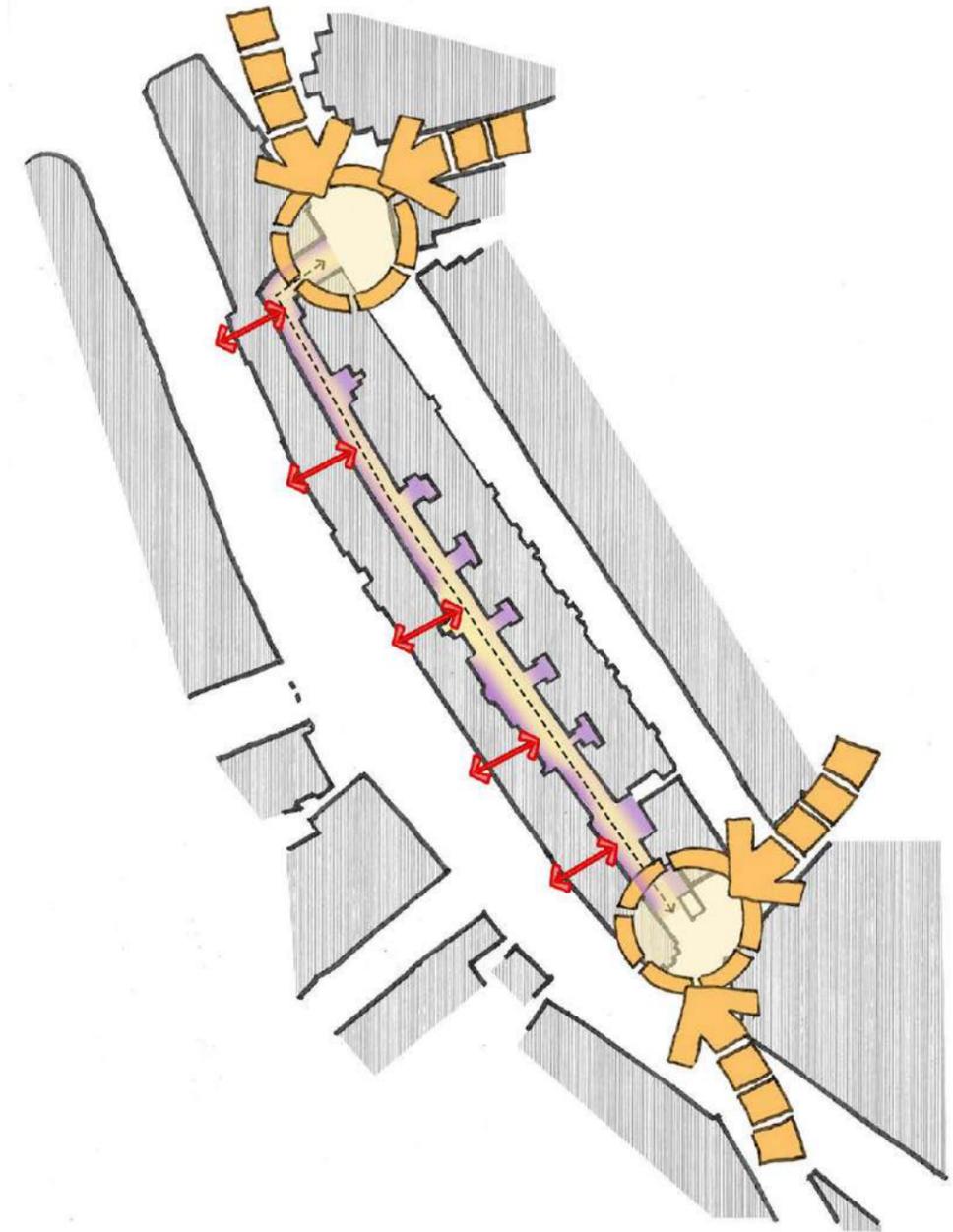


Fig. 274

Create a improved pedestrian route through King's Scholars' Passage, with improved greenery and active edges

# ...Introducing THE GREEN PASSAGE

Support residents/tenants to install green elements into the street

Explore opportunities for shop units to open out and create an active environment

Create a sense of civic pride in the street by promoting as a destination



Fig. 275 - Existing View of King's Scholars' Passage



Fig. 276 - Illustrative View of King's Scholars' Passage

Enhance street with planting to create a 'cared for' environment

High quality surface materials, reduce clutter and integrated signage

## 13

## 6.13 GOING FOR A WALK IN THE PARK

Exploring the potential from Station to Park.

Focused on Queen Anne's Gate, 'Going for a Walk in the Park' identifies a need for enhanced connections to Birdcage Walk and St James's Park from St James's Station, Tothill Street and Petty France. Some of the key considerations to address are:

- connections from Victoria to Birdcage Walk and St James's Park are poor and despite the extensive area of park available this does little to provide Victoria with a high level of accessibility to green space;
- routes are not intuitive and the area suffers from poor wayfinding;
- there is a poor relationship between many ground floor uses and the public realm. Wellington Barracks is particularly poor in this regard; and
- there are security sensitivities associated with Wellington Barracks.

## Opportunities

- To assist pedestrian movement and enhance the experience of people moving through the area.
- To improve the relationship between connecting routes and their surrounding buildings, promoting positive frontages, active ground floor uses and a high level of physical and visual connectivity.
- To enhance Queen Anne's Gate as an important connection between Park and Station.
- To consider the opening of a route through Wellington Barracks from Petty France adjacent to its junction with Palmer Street. This will require considerable sensitivity from a security perspective.
- To improve pedestrian movement along Buckingham Gate broadening pavements and by celebrating its arrival at Buckingham Palace.
- To enhance lighting, surfacing materials and promote the removal of clutter.
- To promote the incorporation of planting and stronger 'green' connections to St James's Park.
- To give consideration to the provision of integrated security and the enhancement of existing security measures.

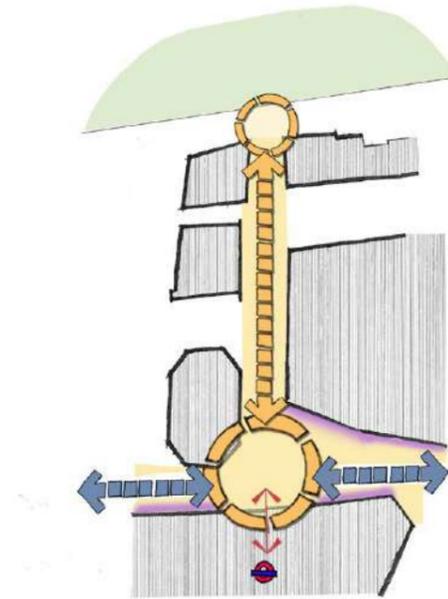


Fig.277 - Improve the pedestrian access from St James Park Station to St James Park



Fig.278 - Existing View of Queen Anne's Gate



Fig. 279 - Illustrative View of Queen Anne's Gate

...Introducing WALK IN THE PARK

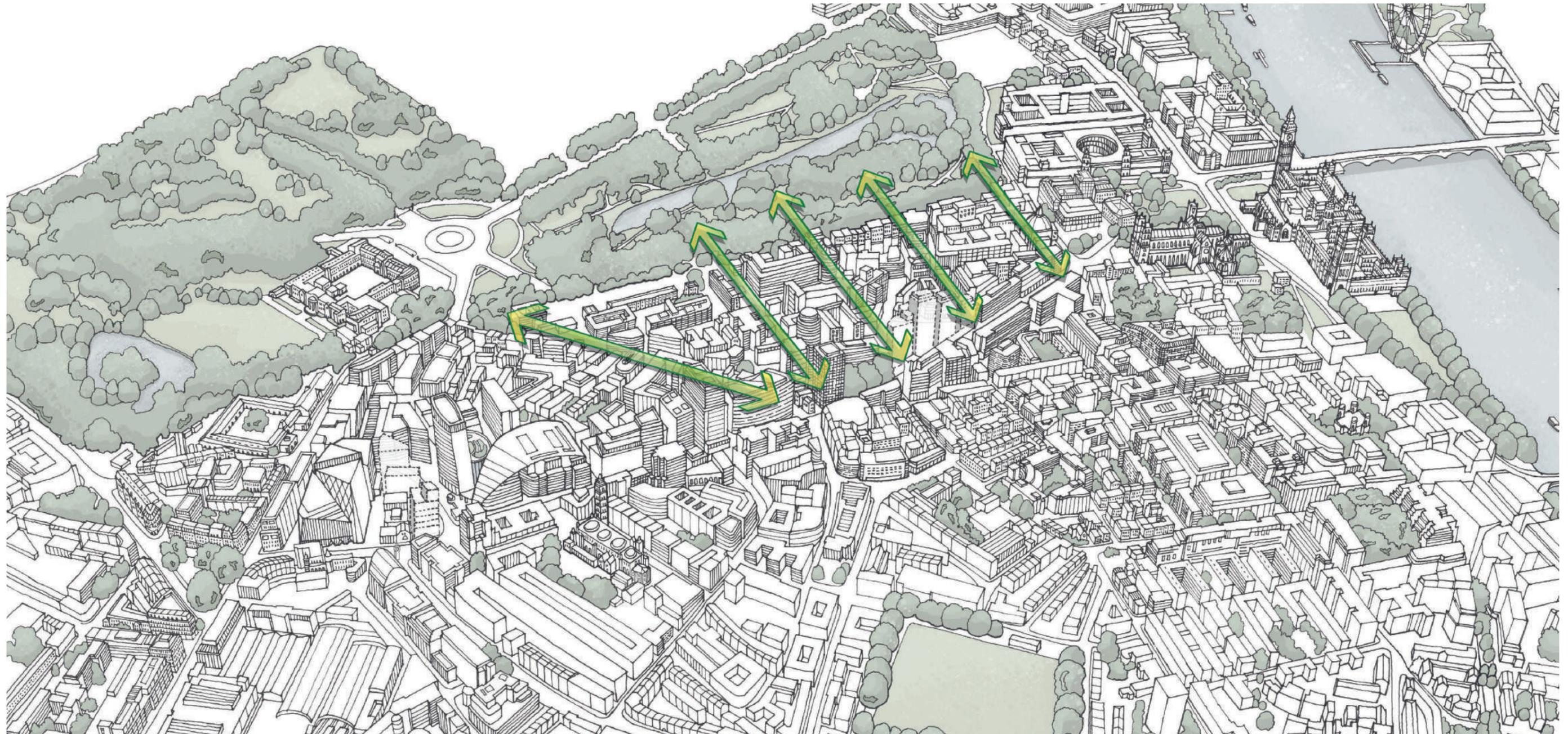


Fig. 280 - There are a series of existing links to St James Park, alongside opportunities for new routes to help improve the north-south connections.

14

## 6.14 TAKE ME TO THE RIVER

Encouraging movement from Victoria Street to the River via Millbank

'Take me to the River' identifies a need for enhanced connections to the Thames from the surrounding Westminster area. A number of east west streets that extend, or have future potential to extend, from Victoria to the Thames could be improved to encourage people to explore the Millbank area. Some of the key considerations to address are:

- connections from Victoria Street to the Thames are poor and whilst distances are short there is a sense of detachment;
- routes are not intuitive and the area suffers from poor wayfinding; and
- there is a poor relationship between many ground floor uses and the public realm.

Opportunities

- To assist pedestrian movement and enhance the experience of people moving through the area.
- To improve the relationship between connecting routes and their surrounding buildings, promoting positive frontages, active ground floor uses and a high level of physical and visual connectivity.
- To enhance Great Peter Street as an important connection between Victoria and The Thames. Enhancements to Great Peter Street and the area associated with Greycoat Place would provide the additional benefit of supporting the City's improvements to Strutton Ground and Victoria BID's improvements to Christchurch Gardens.
- To enhance other routes including those associated with Medway Street, Romney Street, Monck Street and St John's Smith Square. Some measures will be relatively easy and others such as reducing the size of urban block may take many decades.
- To enhance lighting, surfacing materials and promote the removal of clutter.
- To promote the incorporation of planting and stronger 'green' connections to The Thames.

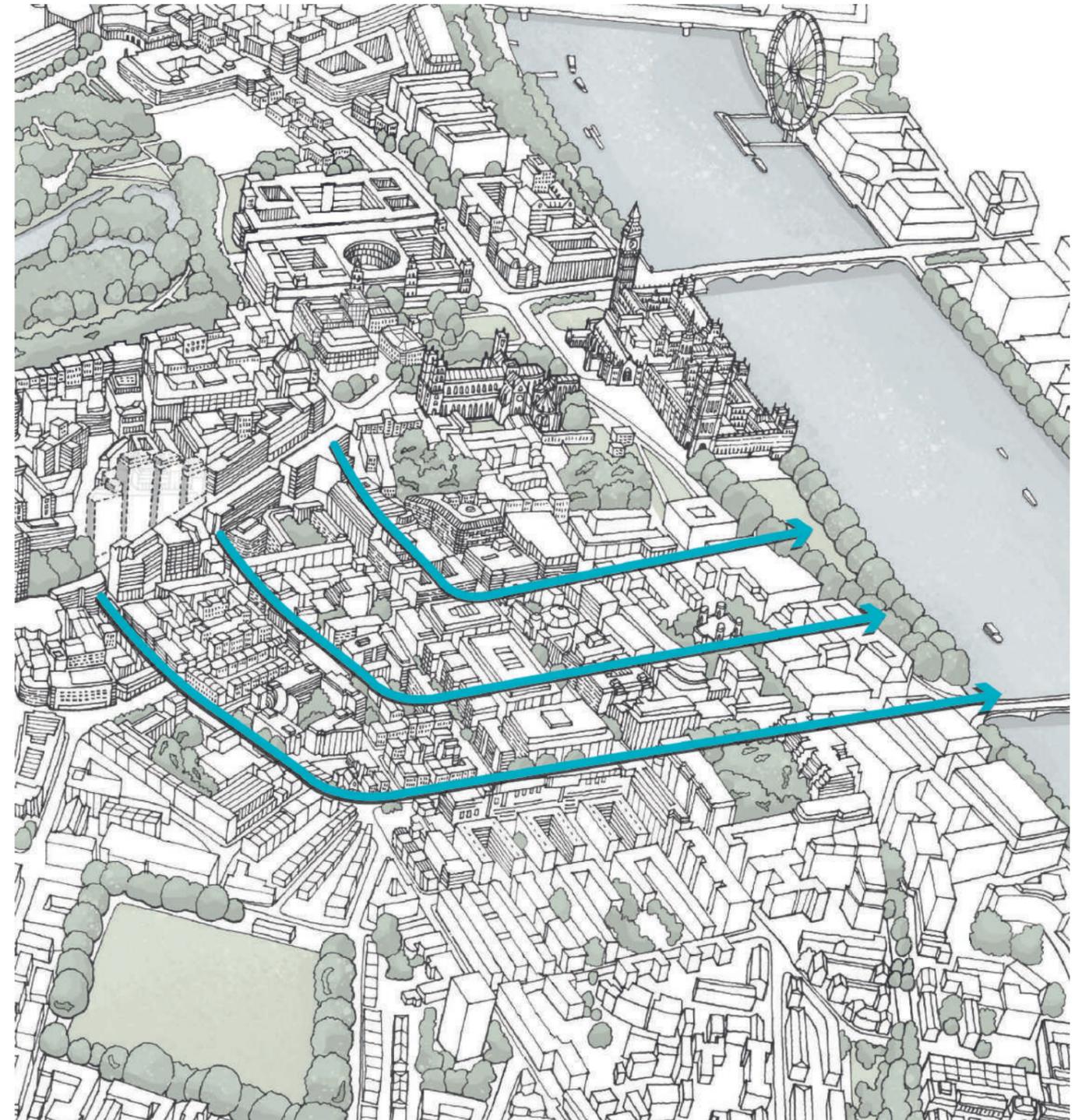


Fig. 281 - Enhance and improve the links, connections and relationship to the river

# ...Introducing HORSEFERRY ROAD

Enhance green connections through tree and shrub planting exploring the use of swale planting

Improve wayfinding throughout the area to create more intuitive routes



Fig. 282 Existing View Along Horseferry Road



Fig. 283 - Illustrative View Along Horseferry Road

Activate edges to encourage spill out and interaction

Promote green, use of existing balustrades

15

## 6.15 HAVE A SEAT

Enhancing the network of spaces beyond Victoria Street

Centred on Brewer's Green and the space surrounding the listed Blue Coat building, this is a project focussed on the creation of a place for people to dwell at the confluence of a broad number of routes including Butler Place, Spenser Street, Caxton Street, Vandon Street, Seaforth Place and Buckingham Gate. Some of the key considerations to address are:

- vehicle dominance and a poor quality of public realm undermine the character of Brewer's Green and the 1709 Blewcoat School building that sits at its heart;
- routes through the area are not as direct, convenient and intuitive as they might be; and
- pedestrian movement across Buckingham Gate is particularly difficult due to its high levels of traffic use, the positioning of taxi bays, its width and the lack of appropriate crossing facilities.

## Opportunities

- To support pedestrian movement through the provision of new crossings on Buckingham Gate and a reduction in carriageway width.
- To consider adjustments to traffic management on Buckingham Gate and the relocation of taxi bays.
- To consider emphasising Brewer's Green as a space that extends from building to building and a space that integrates and calms, rather than being divided by, Buckingham Gate,
- To provide a broader range of quiet places to dwell within this highly connected space.
- To encourage the appropriation of space by people, new and flexible uses of space and outdoor activity by retailers, restaurateurs, etc. Consider the introduction of programmed activities, technology, events and, potentially, the integration of high quality kiosks or other retail structures.
- To support wayfinding through the celebration and enrichment of features including The Blewcoat School, its associated features / greening and the mature London Plane trees at the heart of Brewer's Green.
- To enhance lighting, surfacing materials, wayfinding and promote the removal of clutter.

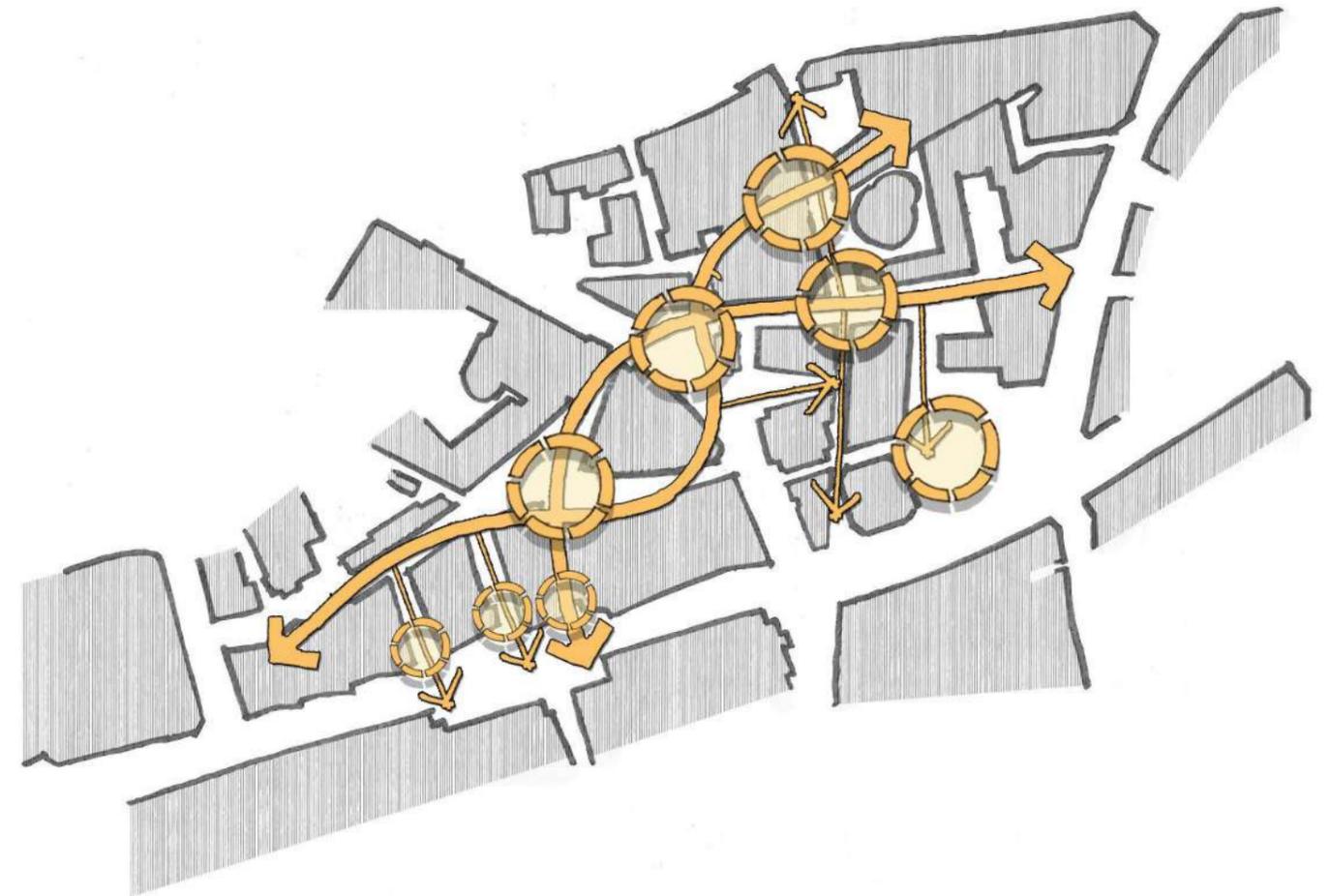


Fig. 284

There are a series of pedestrian routes in which there are opportunities for seating to be located and improved, creating a network of spaces adjacent to Victoria Street

...Introducing HAVE A SEAT



Fig. 285 Existing View of Brewer's Green

New public space with a water feature, seating, planting & high quality and materials



Fig. 286 - Illustrative View of Brewer's Green

Improve crossings & reduce overall carriageway width to only what is needed for continued access

Provide high quality seating along pedestrian routes to promote staying

Encourage healthy streets via bicycle parking close to commercial buildings



# APPENDIX:

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- WINNING BACK SPACE
- PERMEABILITY AND OPPORTUNITY SITES
- BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE



## WINNING BACK SPACE - VBID + VWBID SURFACE AREAS EXISTING



The adjacent plan Figure 287 and pie chart Figure 288 below illustrates the existing makeup of surfaces in the public realm across the VBID and VWBID area. It demonstrates that currently the largest percentage of surfacing in with the BIDs area is tarmac. Furthermore being over 50% of the area reinforces the perception that the Victoria and Westminster areas are places for vehicles.

The total area of greenspace within the area is very low. Whilst this is somewhat offset by surrounding green space, the lack of greenery further contributes to the perception of the area being an environment that is vehicle orientated and lacking joy for people.

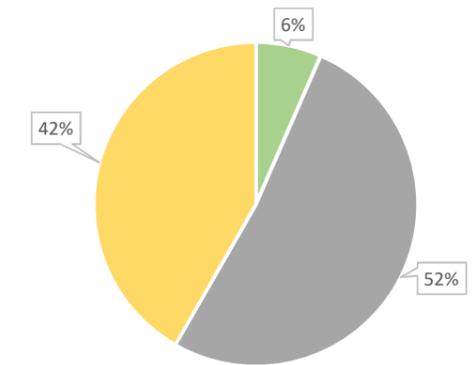


Fig.288

<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Existing Pedestrian Area	10.8 ha
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> Existing Vehicle Area	13.4ha
<span style="color: green;">■</span> Existing Green Area	1.7ha

KEY:

- Study Area
- Victoria BID Area
- Victoria Westminster BID Area
- Existing Green Space
- Existing Carriageway/Vehicle Priority
- Existing Footway/Pedestrian Priority

Fig. 287 - The existing surface area coverage reflects the perception of a vehicle orientation environment.

# WINNING BACK SPACE - VBID + VWBID SURFACE AREAS POTENTIAL



Fig. 289 - Changing the perception of the area could be achieved with strategic projects aimed at improving pedestrian environment

The adjacent diagram Figure 289 and below pie chart Figure 290 outlines an example of how the perception of the area could be changed towards a more people orientated and welcoming environment. Illustratively applying the principles of this Vision to a number of strategic streets and spaces has shown that a large positive change could be made, and further application of this approach potential across the wider area would further enhance the environment and perception of the area.

The following areas were targeted as having high potential for accommodating a shift in the balance towards pedestrian orientation: Victoria Street, Victoria Station, Buckingham Palace Road, St James Park Station associated frontage, Deans Yard, Castle Lane, Artillery Row, Spenser Street, Wilton Row, Grosvenor Gardens and Parliament Square.

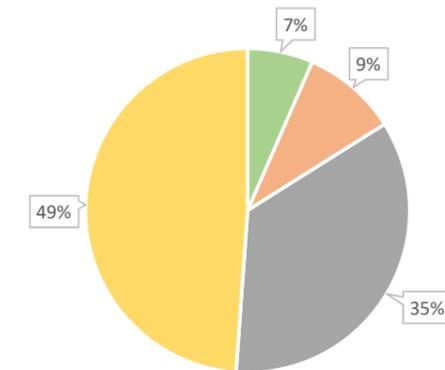


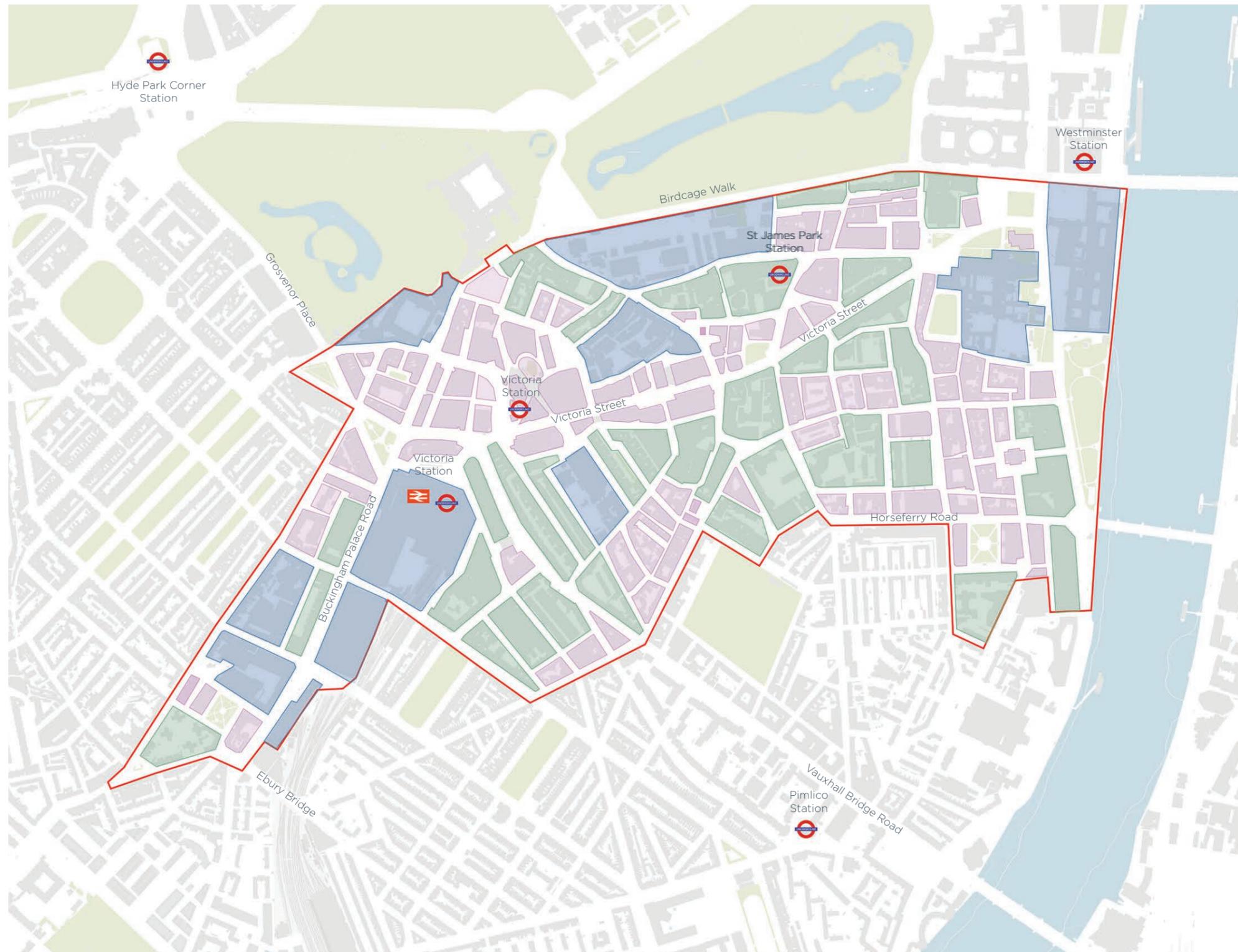
Fig. 290

<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Potential Pedestrian Area	12.9 ha
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> Potential Vehicle Only Area	9.3 ha
<span style="color: green;">■</span> Potential Green Area	1.7 ha
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Potential Pedestrian Friendly Area	2.5 ha

**KEY:**

- Study Area
- Victoria BID Area
- Victoria Westminster BID Area
- Green Space
- Pedestrian Priority
- Carriageway/ Vehicle Priority
- Footway

# PERMEABILITY EXISTING



The permeability across the Victoria and Westminster area is varied. In many places long or large blocks limit the ability of people to move freely along desire lines or convenient routes.

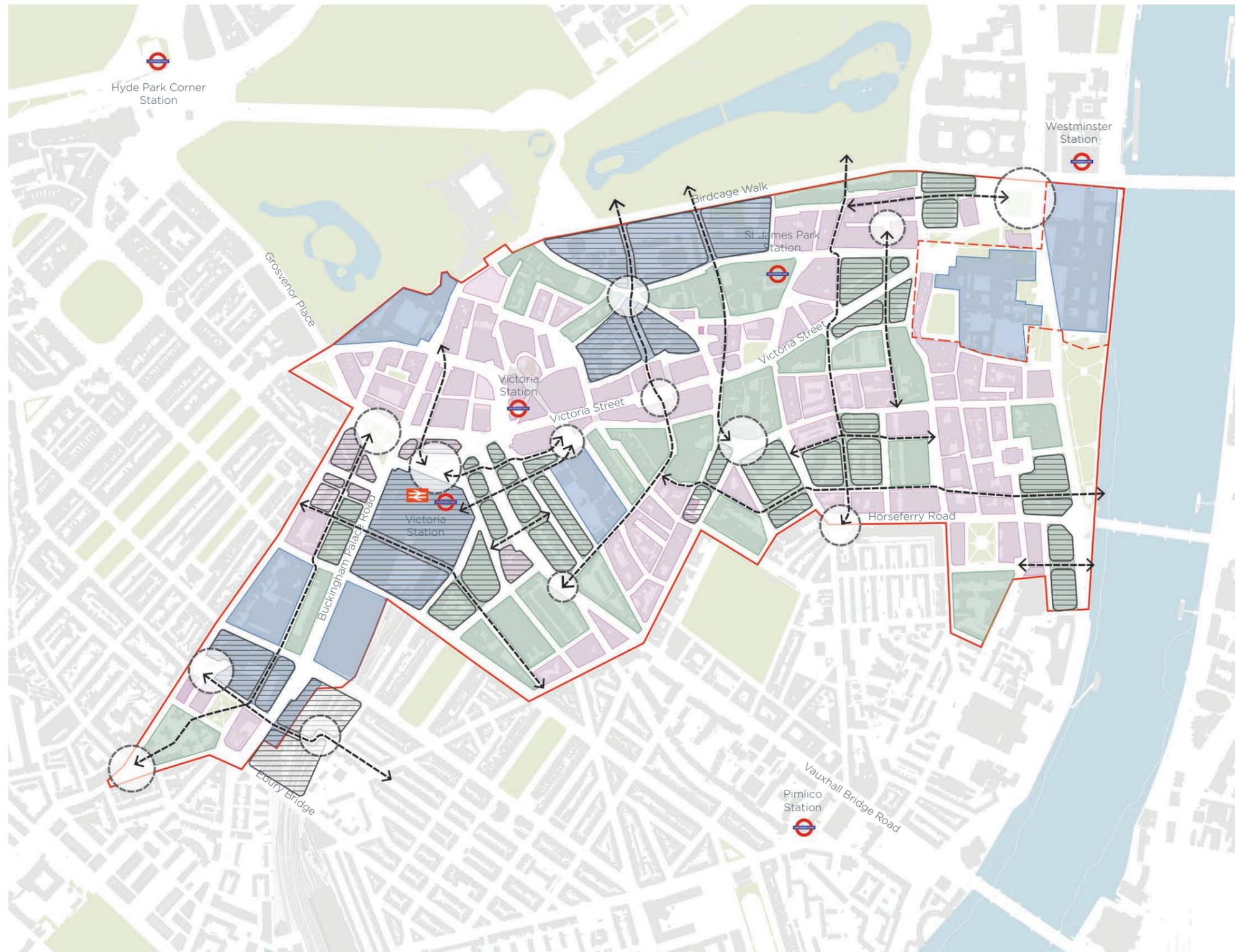
Where permeability is good, there is a tenancy to see a vibrant street environment and activity - Nova, Kingsgate House/Zig Zag developments and the streets around Christchurch Gardens are good examples.

- KEY:
- Study Area
  - Large Urban Block: Restricted Permeability
  - Medium Urban Block: Limited Permeability
  - Small Urban Block: Good Permeability

*The plan has been developed using the typical block size of Nova as representative of good permeability*

Fig. 291 - Assessment of the urban grain and the resulting permeability across the area

# PERMEABILITY AND OPPORTUNITY SITES POTENTIAL



Using the existing urban fabric as a starting point, a series of new routes and associated spaces could be explored when the opportunity for development arises. The adjacent diagram Figure 292 illustrates the potential for enhanced permeability across the area by introducing new routes and spaces that would further complement existing permeability.

This exercise has deliberately discounted the current use of buildings or blocks and any heritage status. (The exception to this has been the Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey as part of a significant world heritage site.) This is to ensure no bias is placed on some opportunity sites over others. There are obvious conflicts, the Wellington Barracks and M15 locations are two such examples.

In its simplest form this is a theoretical exercise to explore what would improve the overall permeability, however as future, as yet unknown, opportunities come to light this exercise could be used as a catalyst to ensure permeability opportunities are explored in the context of the wider area objectives.

- KEY:**
- Study Area
  - Opportunity Spaces With Potential For Enhancement
  - New Routes That Could Be Created
  - Opportunity Sites (Potential to Improve Permeability)
  - World Heritage Site (Excluded from Opportunity Sites)
  - Large Urban Block: Restricted Permeability
  - Medium Urban Block: Limited Permeability
  - Small Urban Block: Good Permeability
  - Green Spaces

Fig. 292 - Improving the permeability and introducing new routes can explored through opportunity sites

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