

Planning Policy's Copy

Streetscape

THE ROYAL
BOROUGH OF



KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

**“ Have nothing in your houses which you do not know to
be useful or believe to be beautiful ”**

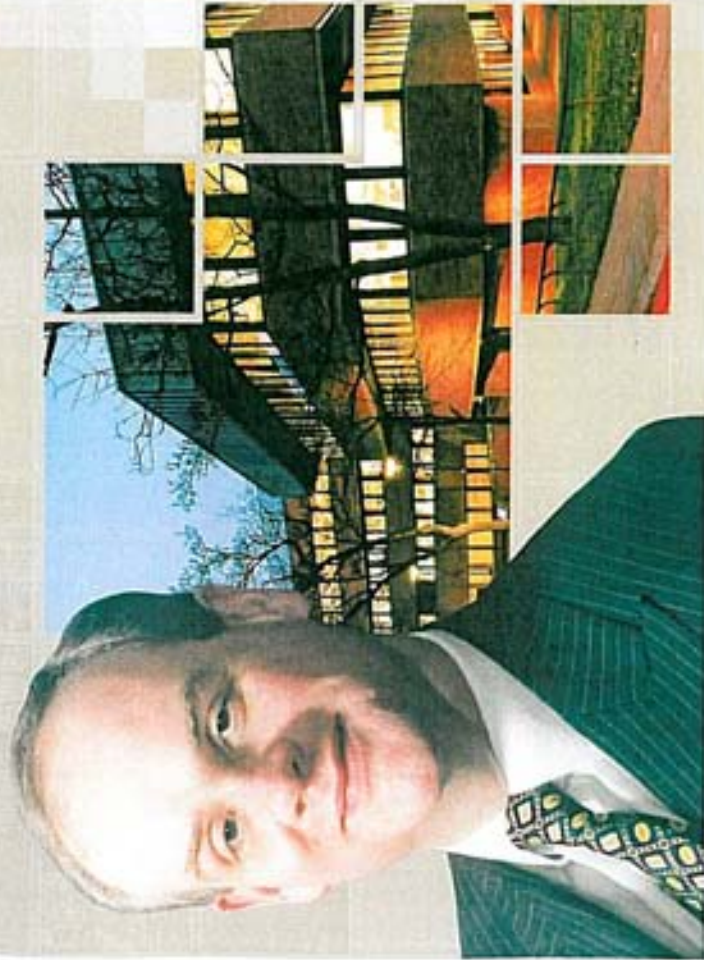
These words of William Morris, founder of the Arts and Crafts Movement,
epitomise the Royal Borough's philosophy for our streets

Our streetscape has no place for the useless or ugly

Everything placed on our streets must add to its surroundings by serving
an essential purpose or by adding beauty

Foreword

Building and maintaining a fine streetscape does for the public realm what most of us try to do instinctively for our own homes: create an attractive and comfortable place. At a time when home decoration is one of the most popular of British activities it is remarkable that up and down the country we are so often asked to put up with a streetscene that is characterised by shabby materials, third-rate workmanship, poor design, unnecessary clutter, redundant signage and constant barriers to free movement. We would not accept this in our private realm. Why should we have to endure it in our public spaces?



Kensington and Chelsea has always exemplified high standards of street construction and maintenance. In recent years, we have built on that legacy imaginatively. We are intent on recapturing for London the pre-eminent international reputation for streetscape design that the metropolis enjoyed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This manual shows how we are doing it and its emphasis on simple, classical design, free of unnecessary clutter and barriers, and on high quality materials and craftsmanship is intended to provide a basis for a solution that can not only be applied in other locations but will also stand the test of time.

The street is a microcosm of society in action and the way we design our public realm is intimately connected with our vision of society. We have a choice: either a society in which everyone is directed what to do and where to go and no-one can be trusted to behave safely; or one in which people have the freedom to conduct themselves responsibly and autonomously, relying on human interaction to place restraints on unacceptable behaviour. We believe that the first vision has failed Britain: it is time to move forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel Moylan".

Councillor Daniel Moylan

Deputy Leader of the Council

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea



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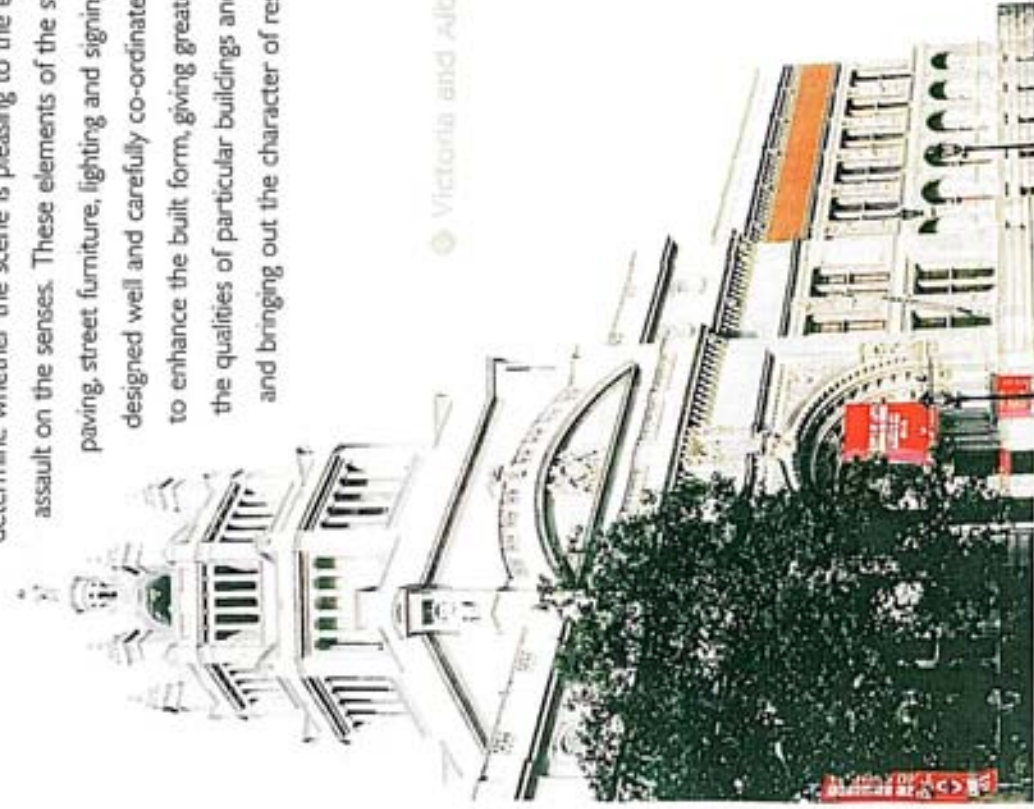
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What is Streetscape?

Streetscape is all that we see in the street – the total picture

Streetscape is not only the buildings around us but also the scale and proportion of the spaces between those buildings. The quality of paving, the design of lighting and street furniture, general lack of clutter and an air of good maintenance can

determine whether the scene is pleasing to the eye or an assault on the senses. These elements of the streetscene, paving, street furniture, lighting and signing, when designed well and carefully co-ordinated, can be used to enhance the built form, giving greater emphasis to the qualities of particular buildings and landmarks, and bringing out the character of residential areas.



Victoria and Albert Museum

In Kensington and Chelsea there are many examples of world-class architecture and these fine buildings should be complemented by streets designed and maintained to the same high standards. Nowhere in the Royal Borough should be excluded from a thoughtful approach to the treatment of streetscape that seeks to bring out the best in an area.

It should be remembered that streets are places in their own right, not just routes from one location to another, and are central to giving identity to an area and structure to a city.

In Kensington and Chelsea roads such as Holland Park Avenue (marked at its western end by the landmark water tower on Holland Park Roundabout), with its full canopy of London plane trees, is a stunning route into Notting Hill Gate and on to Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park.

The King's Road, whilst of a very different character, is equally interesting to walk, bicycle or drive along, with Sloane Square towards its eastern end acting as a landmark location emphasised by the iconic Peter Jones store. In the case of both roads and, indeed, all roads in the Royal Borough, it is the role of street management to enhance their qualities.

In contrast to what is often a low-key approach to complementing the street scene, street management has a further, more visionary role, of recognising opportunities to develop initiatives which bring about a dramatic improvement to a particular location. Such initiatives might include the redesign of a traffic management scheme to introduce a less complicated layout that would strengthen the sense of identity of a location and might create an opportunity for the introduction of a landmark structure or sculpture.

The Council's main principles for good streetscape are:

Preservation of the historic fabric of the Royal Borough

Respecting and enhancing local character

Considered yet innovative design

Experimentation – a willingness to see what works

Reduction of clutter

High quality materials

Minimum palette of materials

Simple, clean designs

Co-ordination of design and colour

Equal and inclusive access for all road users

Maintaining the existing and improved environment

These principles have been tested in the award winning Kensington High Street scheme. Following on from this, a streetscape pilot area was designated to enable the principles to be tested further. This has resulted in policies and guidelines being established for future use. Clearly, it is not possible to change everything immediately, but these streetscape principles will be employed for all future schemes and maintenance work throughout the Royal Borough.

The purpose of the Guide

The Council recognises that the management and design of its streets and public space – the public realm – is a vital part of improving and maintaining the townscape of the Royal Borough.

During the last ten years a number of reports and national publications have pointed to the difficulties of raising standards of street design. The problem has been recognised and, although difficult to remedy, given the right political will this can be done. Streets are far more complex to design and maintain than a single building or group of buildings in one ownership. No single authority or agency has control or responsibility for the presentation and management of the street. In the Royal Borough the Council has taken the view that raising the standard of street design is important and that the Council is best placed to carry out this role. We start by recognising the existing qualities of a particular streetscape, its landmarks, street trees, buildings, and then move on to develop proposals for its improvement.

This guide does not provide all the answers to those dealing with streetscape design. Unlike many manuals, it is not prescriptive. The purpose of the guide is to set clear parameters, that will encourage new ideas and experimentation. In most situations there are a number of possible solutions. Our engineers are encouraged to look for imaginative and innovative solutions rather than unthinkingly accepting the standard traditional ones. The principles set out in this guide were adopted in the design for Kensington High Street. This successful scheme has been awarded a Civic Trust Commendation, a Lighting Design Award and a Best Facility Award for the bicycle parking arrangements.

This guide forms a reference manual of good practice for all concerned with the design and implementation of traffic schemes and the maintenance of the highway. It will also be of assistance to statutory undertakers and developers and, we hope, of interest to many others, especially those living and working in the Royal Borough.

Whilst we believe the 'less is more' approach should be adopted widely, our particular choice of materials is considered appropriate for the Royal Borough which had its main development over a relatively short period of time. In other boroughs, which have developed over a longer period, a wider range of materials may be more suitable.

The guide covers those roads within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea for which the Borough is the highway authority. It is recommended that Transport for London (TfL), who are responsible for the network of roads consisting of the A4, A3220, A3212 and A40, should adopt the principles in the guide to ensure consistency throughout the Royal Borough.

This guide is published in two parts:

Part one introduces the concept of streetscape and explains the policies and standards adopted by the Council. It goes on to deal with individual elements of streetscape design and their application in traffic schemes.

Part two contains detailed specifications and standard details. This section is loose bound and will be updated as necessary.



Development of the Royal Borough

The Royal Borough's greatest natural feature is the River Thames. This marks the southern boundary and creates a splendid setting for Chelsea's historic riverside buildings. The other rivers that have shaped the Borough are the Westbourne and Counters Creek and, although these cannot be seen, they are two of London's "lost rivers" and have had a lasting legacy on the character of the Borough.

Throughout medieval times, Kensington Church Street was a narrow twisting lane between the small villages of Kensington and Notting Hill Gate. Beyond Notting Hill Gate, Portobello Road wound northwards to Portobello Farm and until well into the nineteenth century much of the northern extremity of the area remained inaccessible. Chelsea was a small fishing village within a swampy area liable to flooding and was also inaccessible owing to the tidal nature of the River Thames.

Sir Thomas More was one of the first notable residents of Chelsea, moving to the area in 1520. He built a house facing the river just west of the parish church, where Beaufort Street stands today. After More's execution, Henry VIII took possession of the house and built a Royal Palace nearby.

During the early part of the seventeenth century Kensington and Chelsea became increasingly popular as wealthy people from London sought rural retreats, a short ride from the city. However, it was when King William brought his court to Kensington in 1689 that the surrounding area became "the" place to live. The nation's best architects were commissioned to transform Nottingham House (built in 1661 for the first Earl of Nottingham) into a Royal Palace. The new Kensington Palace was built by Sir Christopher Wren and eventually became the birthplace of Queen Victoria.

Although there are surviving residential streets from the early eighteenth century, perhaps the first modern commercial housing developments began in the 1780s when William Phillimore created the Phillimore Estate in Lower Phillimore Place and Hornton Street and Sir Hans Sloane was developing Hans Town. These developments marked the beginning of a process whereby the great estates would shape much of the Royal Borough's distinctive street layout and open spaces. Although private land, the garden squares of the estates have made a significant contribution to the appearance of the public realm. Similarly, the many mews in the Royal Borough contribute to its distinctive streetscape.

It was during the reign of Queen Victoria that most of the Borough's streets and buildings were developed. At the time of her birth, the population of Kensington was 12,000; at the time of her death it exceeded 176,000. The rural idyll of Queen Victoria's childhood had become covered with terraces of houses built in the Italianate, Gothic and Queen Anne Revival styles, and with shopping parades, spectacular churches, museums, hospitals, theatres and other public buildings.

The Great Exhibition of the Arts and Industry of All Nations held in Hyde Park in 1851, was the first world fair and proved to be a catalyst for the development of South Kensington. The profits of the Great Exhibition were used to buy 90 acres of land stretching southwards from Kensington Gore. The area is still dominated by the museums, colleges and learned institutions, which continue to demonstrate the aspirations of the Great Exhibition.

As South Kensington is world renowned for its museums, so Knightsbridge, the King's Road, Kensington High Street and Portobello Road are renowned for shopping. Harvey Nichols was founded in 1813 as an emporium for the sale of linens and silks and Harrods began modestly in 1849.

In the twentieth century, development of the Borough was influenced by the Domestic Revival style of architecture. Both aristocratic town houses, in parts of Knightsbridge and modest houses in the St. Quintin's area in the north of the

Borough were built in this style. In 1919, Kensington Council embarked on a project to build 202 cottages and cottage flats for 'returning heroes' from World War I. The estate, in the north of the Borough was completed in 1926 and displayed an idealised country vernacular using the 'Garden City' principles to create a picturesque form of town planning.

By the 1960s, prefabricated houses and tall buildings were widely accepted as the way to accommodate large numbers of people in affordable housing. Trelick Tower (1968-1972) by Erno Goldfinger is perhaps the most famous symbol of this era in the Royal Borough.

The Greater London Council, which was the highway authority for many roads in the Borough, was abolished in 1986. The Greater London Authority Act of 1999 established a new strategic London-wide authority. While the Council of the Royal Borough continues to be responsible for most highway matters, the GLA is now responsible for red routes and public transport.

Today the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is a borough of extremes. It is home to royalty and to some of the world's wealthiest people and yet some of the Borough's wards are within the 10% most deprived wards in the country. The Borough has an extraordinary ethnic and cultural diversity with nearly half its residents born outside the UK, representing 90 countries and speaking over 100 different languages.

The Council is very aware of its key role in safeguarding the environment and restoring the grandeur and beauty of the public realm in Kensington and Chelsea. It believes that environmental improvements should enhance local distinctiveness and reinforce those qualities that make an area special.



1. From 1968-1972 - Erno Goldfinger
2. Parkers - Kensington High Street
3. The Kensington Roof Gardens
4. Trelick Tower - Cromwell Road

● Sir Thomas More
Statue - Cheyne Walk



SIR THOMAS
MORE
STATUE - CHEYNE WALK

Streetscape – the approach

In recent years, the conventional approach to street management has been based on a 'one is good, so more must be better' approach. This accounts for the increasing plethora of signs, markings and street furniture supporting traffic schemes of dubious benefits. The Royal Borough challenges this approach with its streetscape philosophy of 'less is more'. The Council's philosophy is based on the introduction of minimalist schemes where there is a proven need based on evidence, not automatically following convention or guidelines.

Many streets in the Royal Borough were built during Victorian times when very little equipment was placed in the street. Great care was taken in both design and setting to ensure that it complemented the overall streetscape. Sadly, that is no longer the case. The collective impact of cable TV boxes, telephone kiosks, control boxes and other equipment has generated unprecedented pressure on footways, undermining the sense of visual order and hierarchy that once prevailed.

The cumulative effect of traffic schemes introduced over the years has affected the character and appearance of a number of roads. In many cases this has created a confused clutter of signs, posts and other items which has impaired the visual harmony of the street. Nonetheless, there are still demands for measures to reduce traffic speeds, to improve access for those with disabilities and to provide bus priority measures and bicycle lanes. This intense competition for road space between different users presents new challenges to streetscape design that need a thoughtful and imaginative approach to resolve them elegantly.

This guidance follows through the aims of the Royal Borough's Unitary Development Plan and complements the technical advice on Transport Standards, which has recently been published as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Traffic signs and road markings

A good practice guide

Traffic signs and road markings

Eliminating unnecessary signs and markings reduces visual clutter.

General policies

Signs and road markings are kept to a minimum and only used where they convey essential information

The least number of signs permissible is used

The smallest variant and the simplest format of each sign is used

Signs are located on buildings, railings, walls, existing posts and lamp columns rather than new posts

Designs and colours are co-ordinated

Warning signs

The purpose of warning signs is to alert drivers to hazards on the road ahead.

Chapter 4 of the Department for Transport's Traffic Signs Manual provides advice for the use of these signs, including appropriate sizes, location and illumination requirements. Within an urban area like the Royal Borough, many warning signs are unnecessary as vehicle speeds are slower and drivers anticipate restrictions.

Warning signs not only add to street clutter but confuse an already busy environment for drivers. These signs and methods of enlarging the sign e.g. backing boards, are only installed if there is a proven need.



Signs will be illuminated if there is a statutory requirement. The Council's preference is for reflective surface signs as they are less bulky and less obtrusive at night time.

Regulatory signs

Many regulatory signs, such as parking signs, no entry signs and weight limit signs are required for enforcement purposes and the design and siting of signs and associated road markings is controlled by regulations laid down by the Department for Transport. However, all signs are reduced to the minimum size and number that will comply with the regulations.

Give way signs are not usually necessary. At the majority of priority junctions the transverse give way markings across the carriageway are sufficient to alert drivers. A comprehensive programme of before studies, reviews and safety audits are in place to assess effectiveness. If this evidence shows the markings to be insufficient, the give way triangle marking should be added. A sign is only used as a last resort.

Parking and loading signs and markings

The use of signs and markings for parking and loading restrictions is strictly regulated and the relevant advice and guidance is given in the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions and Chapter 3 of the Traffic Signs Manual. It is important to ensure that the signs and markings are the minimum required for enforcement purposes as drivers can successfully appeal against a penalty charge notice if they can show that the signs or markings were inadequate and they were therefore unaware of the restrictions.

Controlled parking zone entry and exit signs are required at the zone boundary. In addition, each parking place must be individually signed. Careful design layouts and thoughtful designation of bays can take advantage of existing posts and lamp columns to reduce the need for new posts.

Double yellow lines mean that parking is not permitted at any time. The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 made it unnecessary to install 'no waiting at any time' signs in these locations. As part of our streetscape review any existing signs will be removed and no new signs will be installed.

1. Signs are made for parking signs
2. Good use of a lamp column in Streetscape Cat 200
3. No 'no waiting at any time' signs in these locations
4. No 'no waiting at any time' signs in these locations



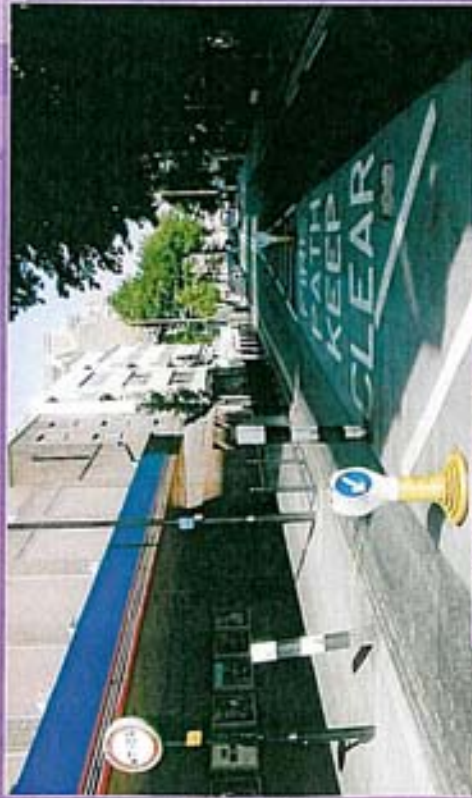
Waiting restriction time plates are not required where the restrictions correspond with the Controlled Parking Zone hours of operation. Careful consideration should be given before adopting new restrictions with different operational hours as this will require additional signing.

Where yellow lines are necessary the shade of yellow, BS 381c No. 355 Lemon, is used. The standard width of lines is 50mm. However, in many locations the old standard of 100mm still remains. These lines will be changed to 50mm width when the roads are resurfaced. On some surfaces where there are adhesion problems, such as cobbled mews, 100mm wide lines will be retained.

Signs to enforce the Borough-wide overnight lorry parking ban, for vehicles weighing over 5 tonnes, were erected when the ban was originally introduced about 25 years ago. However, owing to the limited space available on the majority of residential roads in the Royal Borough, lorry parking rarely occurs. These signs are therefore no longer considered necessary. Their replacement will be considered if complaints are received and enforcement becomes necessary.

Direction and information signs

Nowhere is the Council's approach to evidence based management of the street scene more apparent than in its consideration of requests for directional and information signs. There must be clear evidence that these non-regulatory signs are essential for the public to be able to locate the attraction before they will be considered. All the primary destinations in the Borough are already signed and it is very unlikely that any additional signs will be needed.



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Variable message signs (VMS)

Large information variable message signs have always been resisted as a result of the conflict between the effectiveness of the messages they deliver, their effect on the streetscene and their impact on adjacent residential properties.

Temporary signs

Temporary signs are discouraged. Since the introduction of brown tourist destination signs for Earls Court and Olympia in 1996, the Council does not permit the erection of AA or RAC signs advertising events at these venues. Temporary signs are allowed for events at Kensington and Chelsea Town Halls to assist drivers trying to locate these venues. Occasionally signs are agreed for one-off events in the Royal Borough or for locations outside the Borough (e.g. Battersea Park) in order to hasten traffic out of the Borough. When permitted, signs must conform to regulations, be limited to the minimum required and be removed immediately after they cease to apply. Anyone wishing to place signs on the highway needs authorisation from the Council before signs are erected.



Road markings

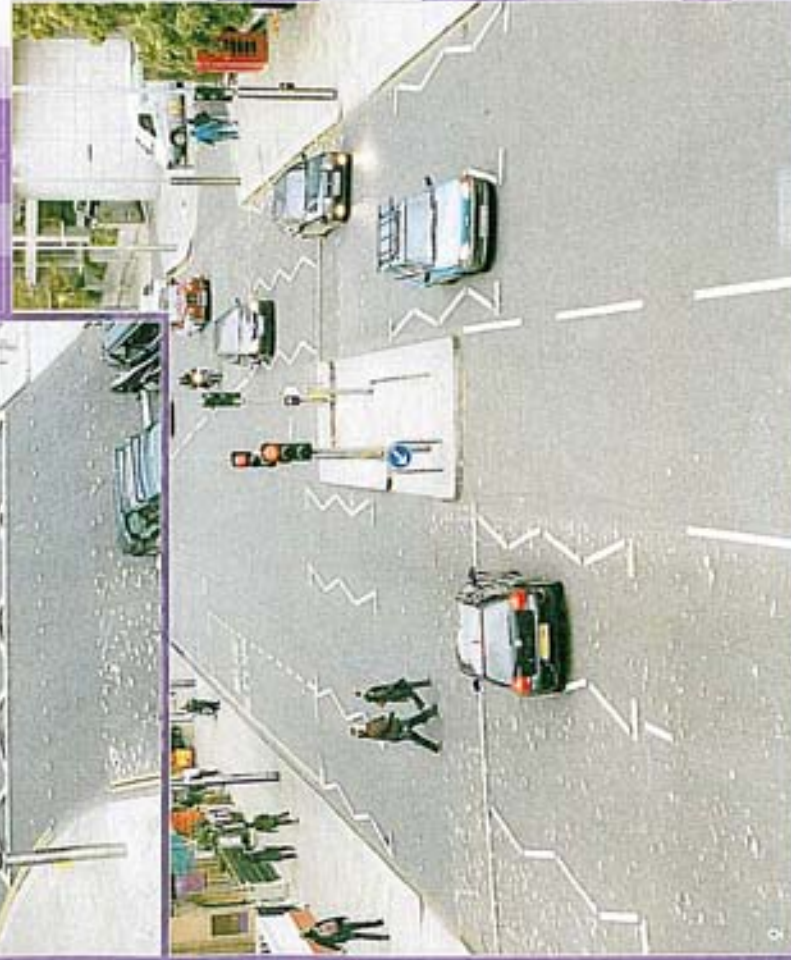
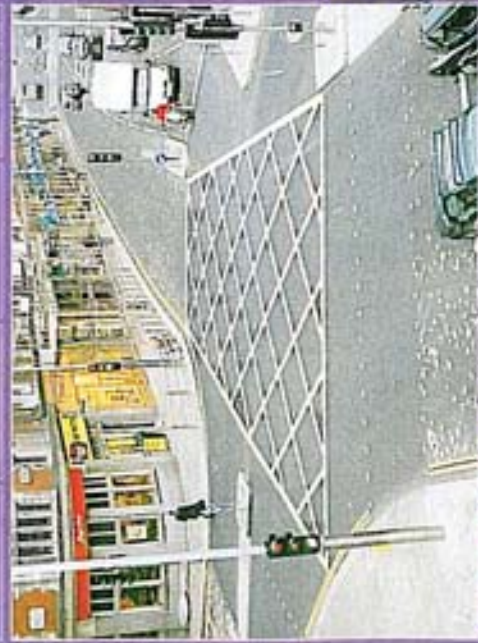
At multi-lane junctions it is usually necessary to use arrows on the approach to indicate to drivers which lane to use. However, supplementary worded markings (e.g. 'left turn' and route destinations) are not used unless the existing arrow markings have proved to be insufficient.

Hatching at corners or along the centre of roads is not acceptable unless there is a proven safety issue and yellow box markings are only introduced if there is a proven problem of obstruction of the junction.

'School keep clear' markings are only laid at pedestrian entrances to schools that are used by children. There is no need for vehicular entrances to be marked in this way unless they are also used by pedestrians. Each case is looked at in detail to take into account road layout and conditions.

Centre-line markings are only used on the approaches to junctions. Elsewhere they are only used for reasons of road safety.

For all new schemes the standard length for zig zag markings will be two marks except where there is insufficient visibility on the approach to the crossing. Zig zags will never extend into side roads or across junctions.



- 1 Box markings
→ Hampton High Street
- 2 Pedestrian Crossing
→ Hampton High Street
- 3 Zigzag High Street at night

Ground surfaces

A good practice guide

Ground surfaces

Footways and street surfaces provide the context in which buildings are seen and should be a neutral carpet complementing the adjacent buildings.

General policies

Invest in quality, both in materials and workmanship

Ground surfaces are related to the surrounding streetscape

Kerb lines are maintained and aligned generally parallel to building lines without nibs and build-outs

The number of different materials used is minimised

Historic paving is maintained and restored

Materials

In the Royal Borough we invest in quality. Although traditional materials are more expensive, they can offer better value for money as they are durable, improve with age and can be recycled. When selecting materials consideration is given to future maintenance and the need to ensure that future supplies will be available.

Quality of workmanship

A high standard of workmanship is essential in the setting out and laying of all paving. Sometimes it is impractical to prepare design drawings for each individual pavement layout. Straightforward and simple procedures, which can be easily interpreted by a mason on site, are often more successful.

- ✔ The laying of paving
High quality workmanship
is essential



Paving

Good streetscape practice demands high quality in both design and construction of paved areas. Paving forms the foreground for almost every street scene and helps to accentuate the visual continuity of a street.

A simple and well-constructed paving pattern visually unifies an area. In the Royal Borough large slabs are used and these are laid in a staggered pattern to produce a smooth uninterrupted surface. Small modules and paving blocks are not used as they result in a cluttered, untidy appearance. The provision of external access ramps will only be permitted in very rare circumstances. Internal level-access is the Council's preferred way of ensuring that buildings are accessible to all users.

Acceptable materials for paving footways are Yorkstone and artificial stone slabs, with the Royal Borough having a marked preference for expanding the role of Yorkstone to replace artificial stone. The priority for expansion of Yorkstone will depend on the relative importance of the route. Those footways which have high levels of pedestrian use or which form part of identified pedestrian routes will be first to be repaved using Yorkstone. The Yorkstone generally used in the Royal Borough is from the Appleton Scout quarry, although the stone used in Kensington High Street was sourced from the Cromwell and Manor House quarries.

Standard paving slabs used in the Royal Borough are 63mm thick and are laid on a lime mortar base. Where paving needs to be protected from over-running by vehicles, slabs are firmly bedded on a base of concrete. To ensure a clean finish all slabs are pointed using a template. In a few locations, where there are very shallow cellars beneath the footway, which prevent paving slabs from being installed, mastic asphalt is used for surfacing.

In Kensington High Street the paving has been extended to include some private forecourts, with no change of either materials or bonding pattern where the public and private areas meet. The boundary is marked with either a steel strip or a series of widely spaced steel studs.

1 Steel strip marking private forecourt - Kensington High Street

2 A clear simple pattern for paving - Kensington High Street

3 Paved using steel studs - Kensington High Street



Tactile paving

To assist wheelchair users the number of dropped kerbs at crossing points has increased over recent years. Although helpful to many, dropped kerbs have caused considerable problems for blind and partially sighted pedestrians. As a result the use of tactile paving has become widespread at controlled crossings and, at places where there is no noticeable kerb, to give warning of start of the carriageway. However, the benefits this gives to blind and partially sighted people must be balanced against the discomfort it can give to other pedestrians who may have other physical problems.

1. Dropped kerb with tactile paving high zone
2. Partially sighted person crossing high zone
3. Original kerbstone



● Kensington High Street

Stainless steel tactile stud paving

The Royal Borough has adopted the Department for Transport advice but adapted it to suit local conditions. Bearing in mind that over 70% of the Borough is a conservation area, we have modified the recommended designs to reflect our streetscape principles. Tactile paving is laid in a simplified rectangular pattern consisting of two rows behind the kerb, with no tactile tail extending to the back of the footway. (This rectangular shape may be modified to take account of radius locations.)

Tactile paving is always of the same material as the surrounding paving and the following methods are used:

- Yorkstone with brass or stainless steel studs
- Yorkstone with a blister profile ground out of the slab
- Concrete slabs with a blister profile cast into the slab

Treatment of utility box covers

In areas of Yorkstone paving utility inspection covers are normally inset into the paving to ensure a smooth uninterrupted finish. This requires an agreement with the utility companies as the Council becomes responsible for future maintenance and costs.

Where areas are repaved, inspection covers are realigned in the direction of the bond wherever possible.

Coalplates

Many residential streets have original, decorative coalplates and it is important that these are preserved wherever possible. When laying new Yorkstone paving, the old coalplates set in Yorkstone surround will be retained and the new paving stones arranged neatly to suit.

If the existing stone surround is badly damaged it is unlikely that the coalplate will be able to be removed without breaking. In these cases, the broken plate is replaced with a new one (as manufactured by Durey) and set in a new Yorkstone surround cut to suit.

Carriageway surfaces and kerbing

The Royal Borough is proud of its highways maintenance record. We use superior materials on our roads and realise the importance of good maintenance. Well-cared for roads add to the overall impression of the street environment. High quality "quiet" asphalt laid in thin layers is used extensively on major routes and hot rolled asphalt on all side roads. Bound gravel is used vary sparingly where there are exceptionally low levels of traffic and this material is sympathetic to the character of the road, for example, Earl's Terrace.

All major roads in the Royal Borough are inspected every month and minor roads every six months. All surfacing, including anti-skid, is kept to a uniform colour. Contrasting colours are intrusive and detract from the overall visual appearance of the street. In the Royal Borough bus and bicycle lanes are marked by a single white line rather than by a solid colour across the full width of the lane.

Kerb lines are usually aligned parallel to building lines. Any requirement to narrow the carriageway should be considered as an issue for the whole street, not restricted to small areas that would result in build-outs or ribs that detract from the building alignment.

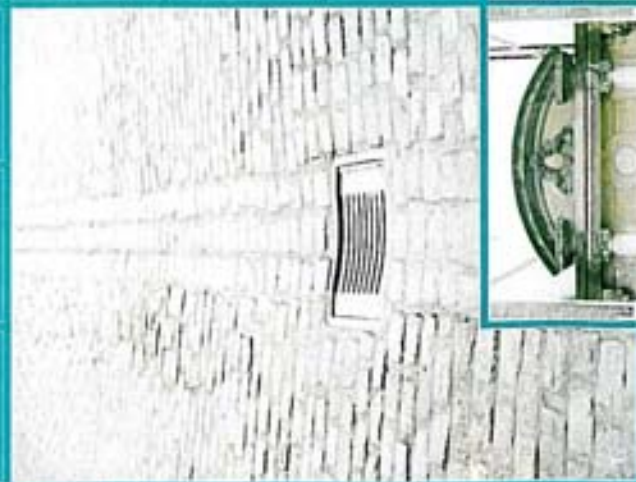
All kerbing should be of granite normally with a width of 300mm (12"). Granite sett drainage channels are retained and relaid as part of maintenance programmes.

Wherever feasible, quadrant kerbs are used at dropped kerbs to avoid the need to cut slabs or use small blocks to accommodate the slope of the kerb.

Mews

Mews were originally built for stabling horses, storing carriages and housing grooms and coachmen and as service streets behind the grander houses of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. They began to be converted into garaging for cars from the 1930s and many have now become attractive homes in their own right. Mews houses are usually positioned at the edge of a narrow granite setted road, without formal footway or front garden. Many mews have retained other original features such as setted crossovers incorporating smooth granite slabs for vehicle wheels. All original surface features together with the granite setts are kept and, wherever possible, original surfaces surviving underneath a layer of bituminous material are recovered and restored.

1. Original Footway
2. Original Granite Slabs
3. Original Granite Slabs
4. Original Granite Slabs



Street furniture

A good practice guide

Street furniture

The finest streetscapes have the minimum amount of street furniture. Only items that make a positive contribution deserve a place in the street

General policies

- Plan ahead – all requirements are considered at the preliminary design stage
- Street furniture is kept to a minimum
- Superfluous or redundant items are removed
- Street furniture is well designed and appropriate for the locality
- Designs and colours are co-ordinated and items thoughtfully positioned
- Historically accurate furniture and materials are preferred to heritage style

Street lighting

Street lighting schemes are designed to provide uniform illumination along the street without dark areas and without being excessive and causing light pollution.

Currently, the most commonly used light source in the Royal Borough is high-pressure sodium, which produces a golden yellow light. However, recent policy changes have initiated a new strategy of introducing ceramic discharge lighting on a planned basis. Ceramic discharge lighting which produces a white light that is brighter and shows more true colours. Benefits include the production of clearer CCTV pictures as well as providing an attractive night time environment. All luminaries incorporate full optical control which limits light pollution and sky glow.



➤ New street lighting
Providing an attractive night time environment

In some locations it is possible to reduce clutter by removing lamp columns and fixing lights to buildings as part of a sensitively designed scheme. Where columns are needed their design will depend on local context and the correlation between the height and spacing of the light sources. In some locations slender, standard steel columns will be unobtrusive; elsewhere good modern design may be preferable to more traditional solutions. Where possible surviving historic light fittings are preserved and if appropriate re-introduced.

The Royal Borough installs four types of lamp column, which are selected to enhance the areas in which they are used. They are:

- Major roads – contemporary style columns or in certain locations the Royal Borough Heritage style may be appropriate
- Residential streets – Chelsea Coronet and Windsor columns
- Modern style – e.g. Kensington High Street (Woodhouse GEO)
- Historic Kensington Patent

There are other styles in mews and at specific locations.

The re-lighting of Chelsea Embankment and Cheyne Walk, a project carried out in collaboration with Transport for London, is a fine example of the Council's determination to retain and enhance local character whilst meeting current British Standards. The main objective was to enhance the daytime and night time visual appearance along the Embankment and thereby provide a safer, friendlier environment for the public. The lighting replaced the catenary lighting with decorative lighting columns and luminaries on either side of the carriageway.

This meant an increase in the number of lanterns used to achieve the required illumination but not in columns, thereby avoiding additional street clutter. Replicas of the original globes mounted on ornate cast iron pedestals were made to extend this attractive form of lighting along the entire length of the footpath. These changes together with accent lighting of statues and sculptures have created an attractive day and night time environment whilst retaining the original charm of the area.



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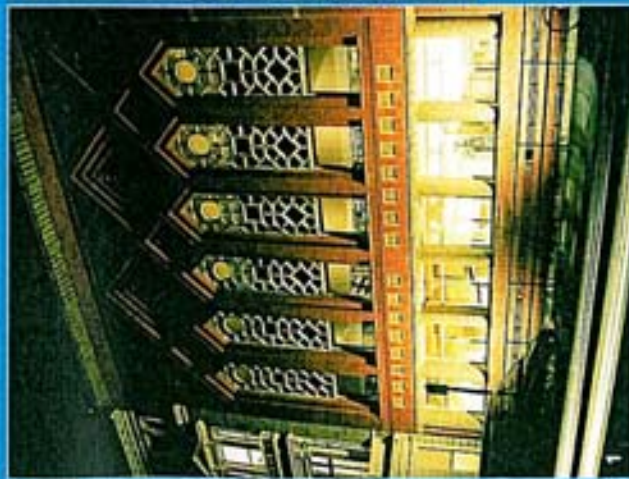
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- 1 Chelsea Coronet
- 2 Windsor Column
- 3 Contemporary Patent
- 4 Historic Kensington Patent

Lighting of buildings

Within the Royal Borough there are a significant number of fine buildings and architectural features that are enhanced by external lighting. Well designed lighting helps to reduce street crime and benefits commerce as well as giving a new dimension to the nighttime streetscene. However, this must be done with care and the daytime aesthetics of the light fittings, controls and other equipment must be considered as well as the light effects.

- 1 The Tower Bridge, South Circular
- 2 The Royal Albert Hall, Victoria Embankment
- 3 Albert Bridge
- 4 The Florence Building, Pall Mall East



Bollards

The Council's policy is to avoid the installation of bollards except where absolutely essential such as above cellars that need to be protected. In general, bollards are not used to prevent vehicles damaging the footway as this can be achieved through better enforcement and strengthening footway verges.

For locations where bollards must be introduced, designs are selected to reinforce local character and distinctiveness. In many parts of the Borough, distinctive, historic designs are restored and retained in their original locations.

The standard type of bollard used in the Royal Borough is the RBKC Ornate style with the Doric style being used on narrow footways. In a small number of locations Bell bollards have been introduced to deflect the wheels of heavy vehicles.

Street cabinets and feeder pillars

Cabinets and pillars are required for a broad range of purposes by the Council and utility companies. However, the Council has firm views that they should be designed and located so that they are as unobtrusive as possible. Wherever possible they are located underground or out of sight, for example in a basement or yard. If they have to be located on-street they are sited at the back of the footway and painted to match an adjacent wall or in the colour selected for the area, or black.

Seats

Seats may be introduced in areas that are well used by pedestrians providing there is sufficient room on the footway to prevent them causing an obstruction. The design, colour and materials must be co-ordinated to harmonise with other items of street furniture. All designs must have arms to prevent them being used for sleeping.

Traffic signals

Although traffic signals are not the responsibility of the Council, we nevertheless have strong views on how they should be installed. As signals are updated the number of signal heads should be reduced, particularly secondary signals that are discretionary. With the co-operation of the signal authority for London (TfL) signals are fixed on lamp columns to reduce the clutter of posts.

- 5 Historic bollards - Strand Street
- 6 Seating - Kensington High Street
- 7 Traffic signs mounted on lamp columns - Kensington High Street



Standard Bollard
Horton Street

Litter bins

Litter bins are only installed where there is strong evidence that they are needed. They are designed to co-ordinate with other items of street furniture and where possible are attached to lamp columns or bus stands.

Recycling

Much of the Royal Borough's recyclable waste is collected direct from premises; therefore waste bins on the streets are less necessary than in many other boroughs. Sites are only implemented after extensive public consultation and recycling bins are chosen carefully as even the best designs are difficult to reconcile with the streetscape.

Pedestrian guard railings

The policy of the Council is not to introduce guard railing unless it is absolutely essential at a specific site and to remove it where possible without compromising safety. This goes against the broadly accepted practice of installing guard railing as part of each crossing scheme, whether or not there is a proven need. We believe that guard railing is unsightly, creates a hostile, caged environment for pedestrians and can encourage higher vehicle speeds.

During the renovation of Kensington High Street 715 metres (782 yards) of guard railing was removed and only 60 metres (66 yards) re-introduced. The scheme has been vigorously monitored and it has been found that not only do a surprising number of pedestrians voluntarily use the crossings correctly but the safety record is as good as other crossings with guardrails. The benefits of dispensing with guard railings have been a sense of openness and empowerment for pedestrians who are no longer trapped in cages. Wheelchair users are also impressed with the new environment as they can now see the traffic instead of it being partially screened by the railings.

3 Sydney Place

Before and after removal of unnecessary guard railing



Cameras

Traffic speeds on the Borough's roads are not high enough to justify the provision of static speed cameras. Over recent years the use of CCTV cameras has been increasing to combat crime in high streets and residential areas. Wherever possible they should be mounted on buildings or existing street furniture to minimise their visual impact and the number of new posts necessary.

Street name signs

Street name signs make a significant contribution to local charm and character. Local variations in design, materials and lettering add richness and variety to the streetscene. To add a sense of historic continuity, where older signs survive they are retained and restored rather than replaced.

Normally signs are fixed to boundary walls, fences or railings or buildings at the back of the footway. Signs are not placed on new posts. Where appropriate, street name signs include 'no through road' signs to reduce the need for additional signs and posts.

Historic street furniture

Existing historic street furniture, such as post boxes, seats, drinking fountains, cattle troughs, monuments and cabmen's shelters are a cherished part of our past. In the Royal Borough they are preserved in-situ and where possible brought back to use.

The Council has compiled a list of items of interest and has established clear lines of responsibility for future maintenance. In some cases local amenity societies have assisted.



1



3



2



4



- 1 Bench - Chelsea Embankment
- 2 Toilet Cabin
- 3 Old telephone booth - Kensington High Street
- 4 Wall-mounted sign
- 5 Historic street name sign
- 6 Drinking fountain - Holland Park Avenue

Public amenities

Ideally, all items are combined with others into a co-ordinated design. Using this principle bus shelters have been combined with bus stop signs, payphones and even public lavatories. When new facilities are selected or commissioned the following points are considered:

- Fitness for purpose
- Durability
- Low maintenance
- Visual amenity
- Architectural quality
- Public safety
- Appropriate to urban design context

Table and chair licences

The Council licences tables and chairs on the highway (footway). Applicants must satisfy strict criteria to ensure the safety of pedestrians and the amenity of local residents. Licences are reviewed annually on an individual basis. The Directorate of Transportation and Highways produces guidance on tables and chairs licences and situations where planning permission is also required.

Market stalls

The Royal Borough has a long history of street trading with traditions going back many generations in some families. All together, there are approximately 300 street trading pitches throughout the Borough. The majority of these are in the two street markets, at Portobello Road and Golborne Road, although there are also a significant number of isolated sites around the Borough, primarily flower sellers and newspaper sellers. Market stalls add life and colour to the street scene but must be properly maintained and controlled.

- 1 Flower stall, Portobello Road
- 2 Newspaper stall, Portobello Road
- 3 Flower stall, Portobello Road
- 4 Newspaper stall, Portobello Road



Trees and other planting

The environmental benefits of urban trees – clean air; shade, a home for wildlife and their role in signifying the change of seasons and the passages of time are well understood. Trees are an integral part of the urban landscape and its architecture, where they contribute to local character.

The Royal Borough has some of the earliest plantings of street trees and many mature trees in parks and private gardens, all of which interact with a wide range of styles and periods of building from grand Italianate terraces, through to those of the picturesque Arts and Crafts style. Today, the Royal Borough has approximately 8,000 street trees comprising of 162 species and varieties.

The Council is keen to plant new trees and has been successful in this regard in recent times despite the increasing difficulty of finding new and suitable sites without underground services or vaults. Careful consideration is given to all new sites. Street trees should be regarded as inescapably architectural features and the planting of new trees is not always appropriate.

Many formal streets of Georgian and Victorian houses were never intended to have trees. They were consciously omitted to give greater effect to the landscaped garden squares. All new trees should complement the existing architecture in both colour and scale without obscuring important buildings or monuments.

The Council seeks to be a good and responsible manager of its trees and uphold its duties of care and maintenance. It was one of the first Councils in London to employ Arboricultural Officers, responsible for the care of street trees, and has developed a tree policy with a strategic aim of ensuring trees are planted, preserved and managed in accordance with sound arboriculture practice whilst regarding their contribution to amenity and the urban landscape, for both current and future generations.

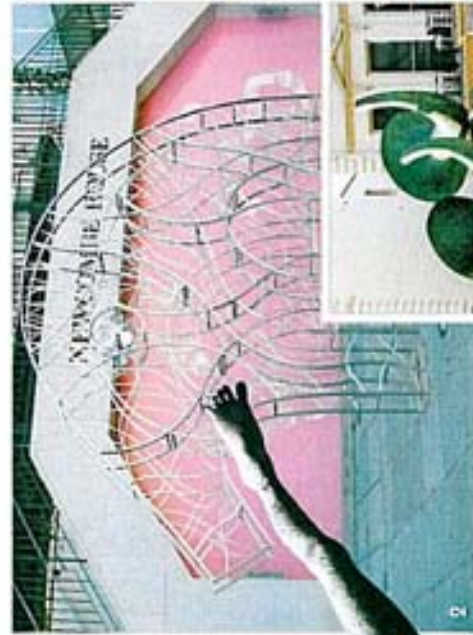


5. Beverley Place
- 6-7. Police General Terrace
8. Drovers Lane Street
9. Wellington Square
10. Junction of West Cromwell Road and Warner Road



Public art

Public art enhances the physical fabric of an area; it makes a major contribution to giving a place character and identity. The Royal Borough positively encourages the introduction of suitable pieces of art. When commissioning new works a clear brief is essential. This takes into account the wider streetscape context, as well as materials, durability, lighting, visibility from all directions and maintenance. In every case great care is taken to relate the piece to the size, scale and landscaping in which it sits.



- 1 Lord Mayor of Highbury - Graham Smeaton
- 2 The Enigma - Graham Smeaton
- 3 Ascension - Junction of Thorpe Road and Cromwell Place
- 4 Queen Elizabeths
- 5 University - Fenington Lane
- 6 Boy on Dolphin - Queen Elizabeths

Traffic schemes

A good practice guide

Traffic schemes

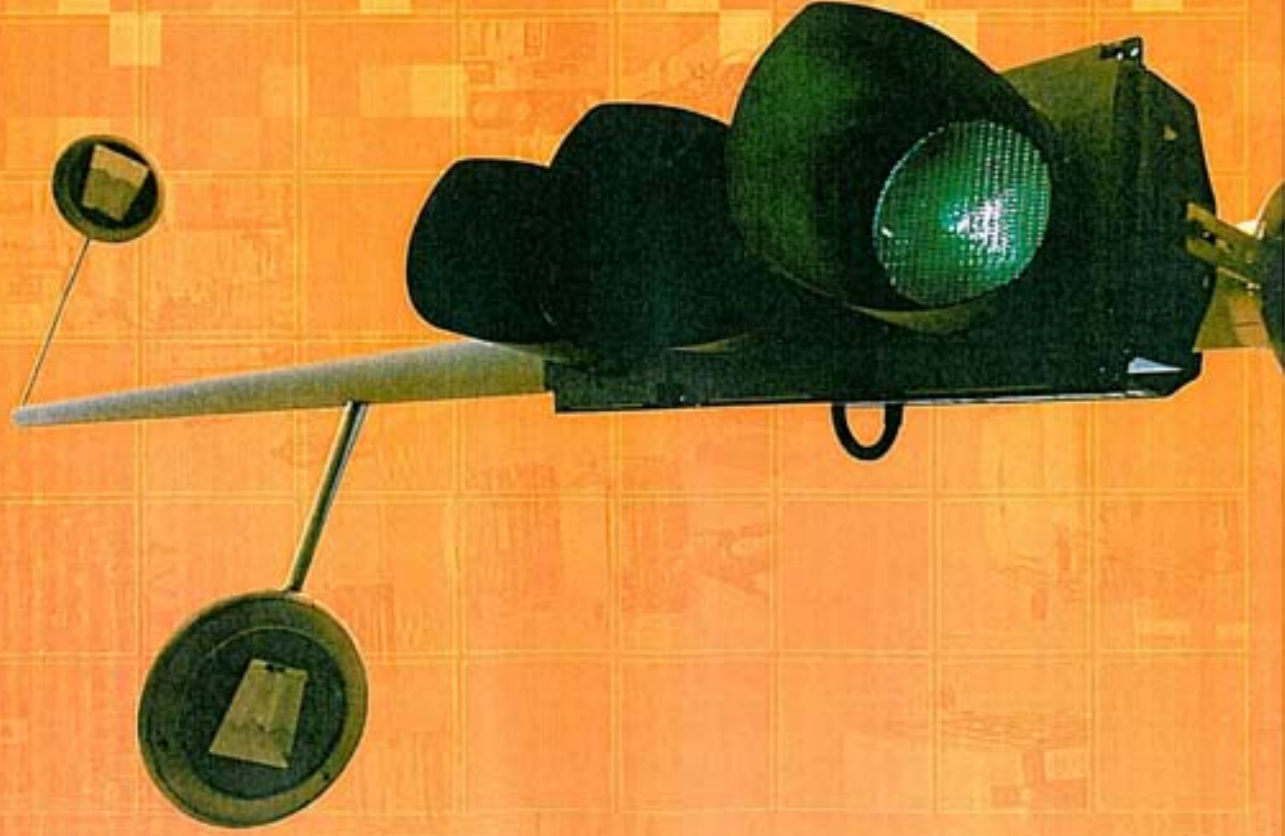
A holistic approach where there is a proven need.

The Council has a holistic approach to traffic management in which the needs of all road users are considered equally, an important issue when dealing with such a densely populated and congested area as the Royal Borough. The increasing competition between different users creates new challenges for urban design. The need for improved access for everyone using the public highway puts extreme stress on limited road space. Strategic planning and careful co-ordination are vital.

The Royal Borough is committed to encouraging road user autonomy and responsibility by removing barriers and restrictions in the allocation of road space. The Council has found this can be achieved without compromising the goal of road safety.

In the Royal Borough traffic schemes are carefully considered and only introduced if there is a proven need or they would provide a positive benefit. All traffic schemes have an impact on the streetscene, so our challenge is to minimise any adverse effects. Engineers are encouraged to be innovative and to look for alternatives to the common options. The Council will not consider any schemes that would transfer traffic from one residential road to another.

All traffic schemes are made up of a collection of the individual elements discussed earlier in this guide. They may include major features such as crossings or roundabouts or they may simply consist of signs and road markings. Regardless of the size of the scheme, the main principles of streetscape design apply. A minimalist, co-ordinated approach that respects the local character and enhances the public realm must prevail and all elements including street furniture must be considered in the initial stages of scheme design.



The Department for Transport has set casualty targets for the year 2010 requiring a 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents; a 50% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured in road accidents and a 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate. The Mayor of London has set additional targets for London relating specifically to vulnerable road users. In order to achieve these targets, it has generally been the practice to introduce a variety of traffic schemes aimed at combating identified accident problems. We consider engineering measures have been exhausted in the Royal Borough and that the time has come to challenge these conventional methods and explore other methods to achieve these targets.

The past successes of our area traffic studies have reduced the number of accidents to such a low level that it is no longer possible to assess trends and patterns in our accident statistics. The Royal Borough is looking at other methods including better education, improved enforcement and initiatives such as the school travel plan and increased use of the internet.

www.rbkc.gov.uk/schooltravel

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the 'SCHOOL TRAVEL' website. The page features a large, colorful logo for 'SCHOOL TRAVEL' with a bus and children. Below the logo, there is a navigation menu with links for 'Home', 'About Us', 'Parents', 'Schools', 'Partners', 'Contact Us', and 'Feedback'. The main content area includes a welcome message: 'Welcome to the Royal Borough's School Travel Website. From here you can:' followed by a list of services: 'Play interactive games and take the school travel challenge!', 'Find out information on road safety, campaigns and training in schools', 'View the School Travel Plan for your school', 'View the School Travel Plan for your area', 'View the School Travel Plan for your borough', and 'View the School Travel Plan for your borough'. The footer contains the text '© 2010 Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea'.

Traffic calming schemes

Traditionally traffic calming schemes, such as chicanes, kerb build-outs and speed humps, were used to slow traffic. In the 1980s the Royal Borough worked closely with the Transport Research Laboratory developing the new concept of traffic calming. Several of the original experiments were implemented in the Royal Borough in residential roads where traffic speeds were high resulting in many personal injury accidents. Whilst further schemes have been implemented since those first trials they have only been at locations where the original objective of reducing speed related accidents is being met. However these methods are becoming increasingly unpopular. The emergency services are concerned about delayed response times, local residents complain of increased vehicle noise and pollution and residents of nearby roads suffer the effects of displaced traffic. In addition, the benefits offered by such schemes are debatable. The small roads in the Royal Borough do not encourage high speeds and surveys have shown that in most residential streets vehicle speeds are relatively slow.

It is virtually impossible to introduce traffic calming measures that will not have an adverse effect on the street scene. Kerb build-outs and chicanes ruin kerb alignments, speed humps and cushions require ugly road markings and all schemes cause further clutter with signs and posts.

After consideration of these points the Council has decided to endorse its original objective of only introducing traffic calming schemes where there is a record of speed related accidents. When carrying out resurfacing works the Royal Borough reviews if traffic calming schemes need to be replaced. Often traffic patterns have changed or other schemes have been implemented which remove the original traffic speed/accident problem.

Pedestrian crossings

A 'straight-across' layout is generally considered preferable to a staggered crossing as it results in less delay to pedestrians. Staggered crossings are avoided wherever possible and are only installed if a 'straight-across' arrangement cannot be achieved owing to site conditions.

The main principles of streetscape design are applied to all crossings. No guard railing is introduced, tactile paving is laid to the layout described earlier, road markings and signs are kept to a minimum, with traffic signals mounted on lamp columns; surfaces are of the same colour throughout. A central refuge beacon is rarely needed and will only be installed if there is a recognised problem of drivers failing to notice the refuge and this cannot be rectified by improved lighting or other means of improving visibility.

The Council has championed the use of 'puffin' crossings that react more efficiently to pedestrian movements. The 'puffin' in Exhibition Road outside the Science Museum was one of the first in the country.



20 mph schemes

The Council will consider the introduction of 20 mph zones where high speeds are a constant problem. Where zones are introduced drivers will be informed by strategically positioned signs. There will not be any physical speed reducing features such as speed humps or cushions introduced.

One-way schemes

In the 1970s many one-way streets were implemented in the Royal Borough to enable kerbside residential parking to be provided. However, one-way streets and road closures, which were implemented to reduce traffic through the residential areas, restrict the opportunity for local residents to carry out their daily lives.

Generally, traffic patterns are now established and not subject to major change. Therefore, the introduction of a new one-way system needs careful consideration as such schemes can have a severe impact on a wide area. Nearby roads can be adversely affected by diverted traffic and roads that are made one-way can experience increased vehicle speeds, particularly narrow streets where two-way traffic previously acted as a natural form of traffic calming. In terms of streetscape issues, the main principles are applied. Signs and road markings are kept to the minimum sufficient to inform road users.

Road closures and access restrictions

Individual road closures are now rarely introduced in the Royal Borough. The adverse effect on surrounding roads, access difficulties for emergency vehicles and the necessary introduction of barriers and signs do not conform with Council policy. However, a closure was recently implemented to improve road safety for pupils walking between two school buildings.



Roundabouts

The Council policy is to introduce roundabouts where needed. All roundabouts will be constructed with granite sets forming a dome. Mini roundabouts with thermoplastic white domes are no longer to be used and existing ones will be converted to the new design as part of the maintenance process. This design is more sympathetic to the surroundings and can also be more effective in ensuring that drivers use the roundabout correctly.



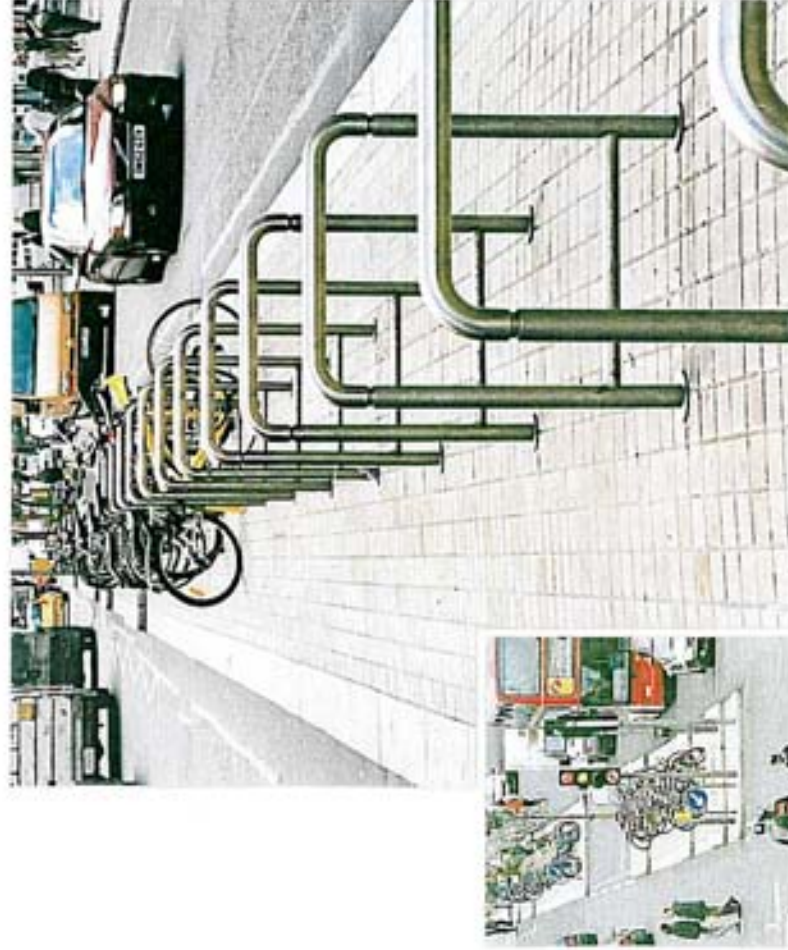
1 Thermoplastic white dome roundabout
2 Granite set roundabout



Pedestrianisation

Fully pedestrianised areas are difficult to achieve. The need for servicing for shops, accommodation of public transport and the accessibility needs of disabled people means that few areas are truly for pedestrians only. Many of the streets in the Royal Borough have a variety of different functions and most shopping streets also serve as through routes for traffic. Unless there are suitable alternative routes it would not be practical to prevent vehicles using these roads. It is not acceptable merely to move the traffic out of one street to the detriment of neighbouring streets.

The Council will consider creating barrier-free areas where the street is open and available to both pedestrians and vehicles without physical divisions.



Bicycling

In the Royal Borough all road users are considered equally and one group is not favoured at the expense of others. The Council supports bicycling by providing good road surfaces and parking facilities and promotes routes by 'soft' measures such as maps and publicity rather than physical measures such as signing.

The Council prefers to encourage a safe use of mixed road space rather than segregated traffic flows. Experience shows that in some cases mixed use roads can promote safety, whereas dedicated bicycle lanes can give a false sense of security to bicyclists.

All bicycle routes are to be accommodated in the carriageway; they will not be created by the conversion of footways to provide shared use bicycle/pedestrian facilities whether segregated or unsegregated.

Bicycle parking stands have been provided at a number of locations around the Royal Borough. These stands provide bicyclists with a safe alternative to chaining their bicycles to railings and lamp columns. Where there is a demand for bicycle parking facilities they will continue to be provided.

The recommended design for general use is the hoop stand and the preferred colour is black but designs and colours should be carefully chosen to suit the location, as in Kensington High Street where a stainless steel version has been used.

3-4 Bicycle racks - Kensington High Street

Buses

Bus priority measures have been introduced in Central London for over thirty years with the first bus lane in the Royal Borough introduced in 1974. For many years bus lanes were considered the only measure that could be introduced to give bus priority. However, with the introduction of improved traffic signal technology and the decriminalisation of parking, giving local authorities the ability to focus parking enforcement at key locations or routes, there are now alternatives to the bus lane. Therefore, the Council does not see scope to introduce new bus lanes and indeed has removed some, without measurable loss in terms of bus journey times.

In a dense urban area like the Royal Borough the provision of bus lanes has an adverse effect on other traffic and often leads to increased congestion and the diversion of traffic into unsuitable residential roads. Our aim is that any scheme which improves bus movement should also improve amenity for other road users. The Council's approach is regularly to review waiting and loading restrictions at key locations and to ensure the appropriate level of parking enforcement is committed to ensure free traffic flow.

Bus lay-bys conflict with the streetscape principle of maintaining a kerb line that reflects the building line. New bus lay-bys will not be introduced in the Royal Borough and any existing ones will be removed and the original kerb line reinstated.

The Council recognises the benefits provided by the information boards at bus stops telling passengers when the next bus is due. However, this system needs a network of bus detection beacons throughout the area. To minimise the impact of these beacons the Royal Borough has, in conjunction with Transport for London, developed a technical specification to enable beacons to be fitted to lamp columns.



● Bus shelter incorporating bus information board – South Kensington

Maintenance

A good practice guide

Maintenance

Caring for the environment we have inherited and the one we are creating

General policies

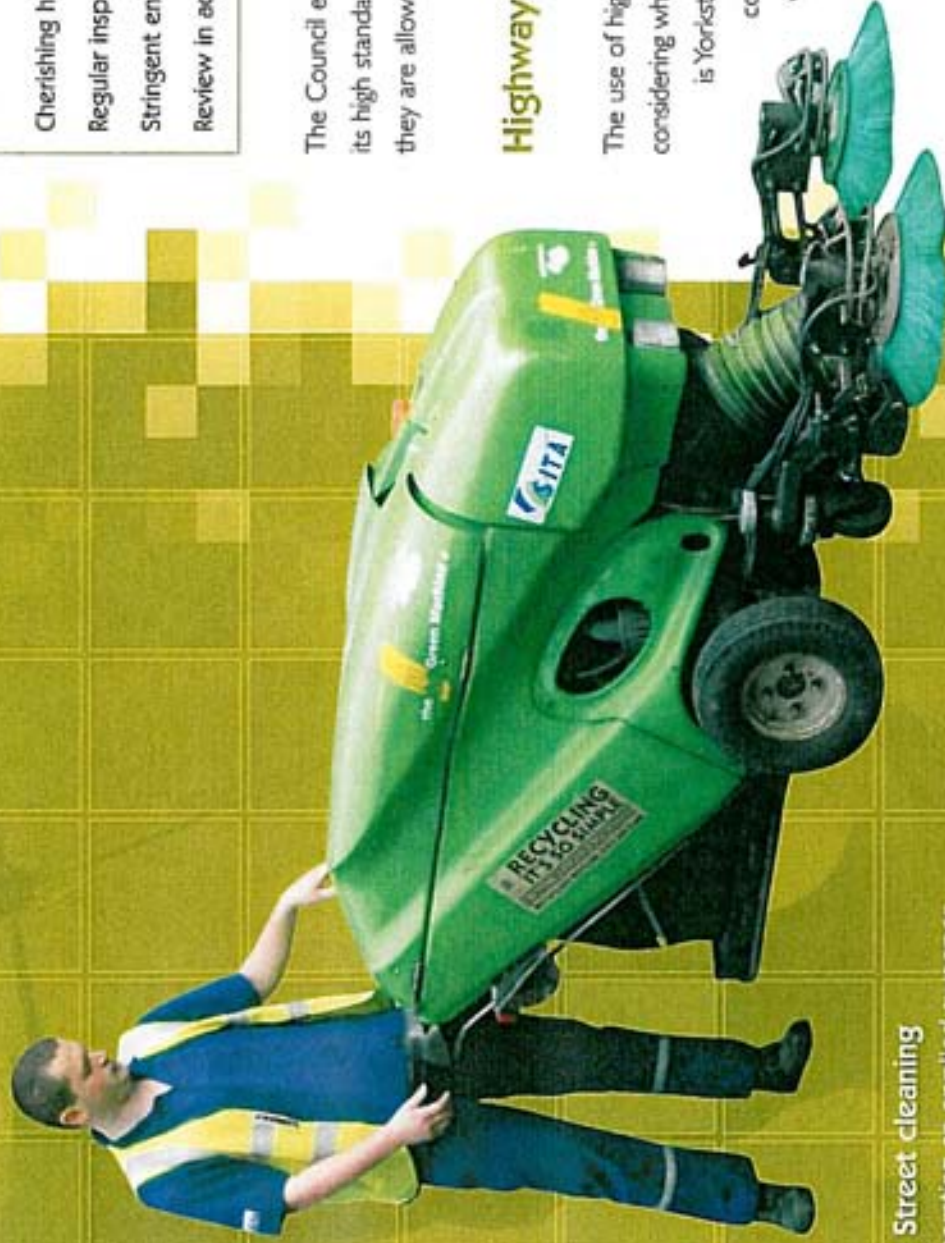
- Cherishing historic features
- Regular inspections and prompt action
- Stringent enforcement and control ensuring standards are maintained
- Review in accordance with streetscape principles

The Council ensures high standards of maintenance and cleaning to complement its high standards of design. There is little point creating beautiful streetscapes if they are allowed to be ruined by poor maintenance, litter and graffiti.

Highways maintenance

The use of high quality materials makes maintenance less arduous and when considering whole life cost assessments, represents good value for money. An example is Yorkstone, a material that is not only inherently stronger than precast concrete, more resistant to frost damage or breakage and weathers with age to give an increasingly attractive appearance, but also has an anticipated life in excess of 50 years or over three times that of precast concrete.

In accordance with Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980, the Council has to ensure its duty to maintain the public highway is carried out.



Street cleaning
Operating an applied sweeper

Highways enforcement

The Council has established strong enforcement teams to help keep the streetscene clean and uncluttered. One team focuses on action against refuse bags dumped on the highway, initiating well over 600 prosecutions for litter offences each year (normally the option of paying a Fixed Penalty Notice is offered to those facing prosecution). Another team focuses on action against nuisances such as prostitutes' cards, abandoned cars and bicycles, A-Boards on the footway, unlicensed street trading and unlicensed tables and chairs.

Enforcement of regulations and restrictions

An effective enforcement regime is necessary to improve safety and ease congestion problems. We believe that regulations are observed because road users are responsible or they believe there is a high likelihood of being caught, not because there is a surfeit of road signs and markings.

1. Repaving and repainting - Hart Street
2. Resurfacing - Dracott Avenue
- 3-4. Bunting work - Old Broadstone Road



We hope you have found this guide interesting and informative.

The employment of clear streetscape principles that allow imaginative and innovative interpretation will be continued in our future major schemes in Exhibition Road, South Kensington, Golborne Road and Sloane Square as well as being practised in smaller, localised schemes and maintenance programmes.

In the Royal Borough we are very proud of our inherited public realm and intend to ensure it is protected and enhanced for future generations.

THE ROYAL
BOROUGH OF



RENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

An aerial photograph of a road network on a textured, light-colored surface, possibly a road or a large-scale architectural model. The roads are thin, dark lines forming a grid-like pattern. The surface has a fine, woven texture and some subtle variations in tone, suggesting a material like concrete or stone. The perspective is from directly above, showing the intersection of several roads.

www.rbkc.gov.uk/streetscape