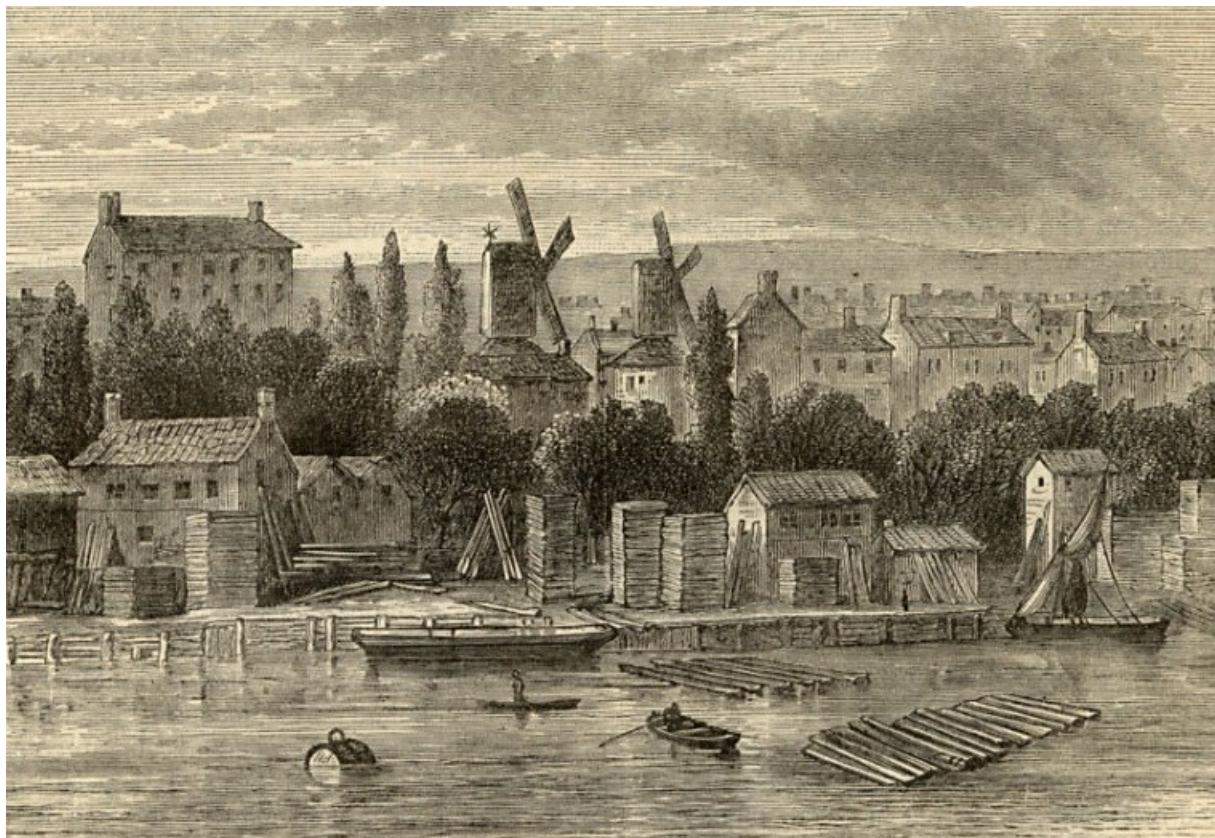


# Albert Embankment Conservation Area

## Conservation Area Character Appraisal



May 2017



Lambeth river front in the 1750s.

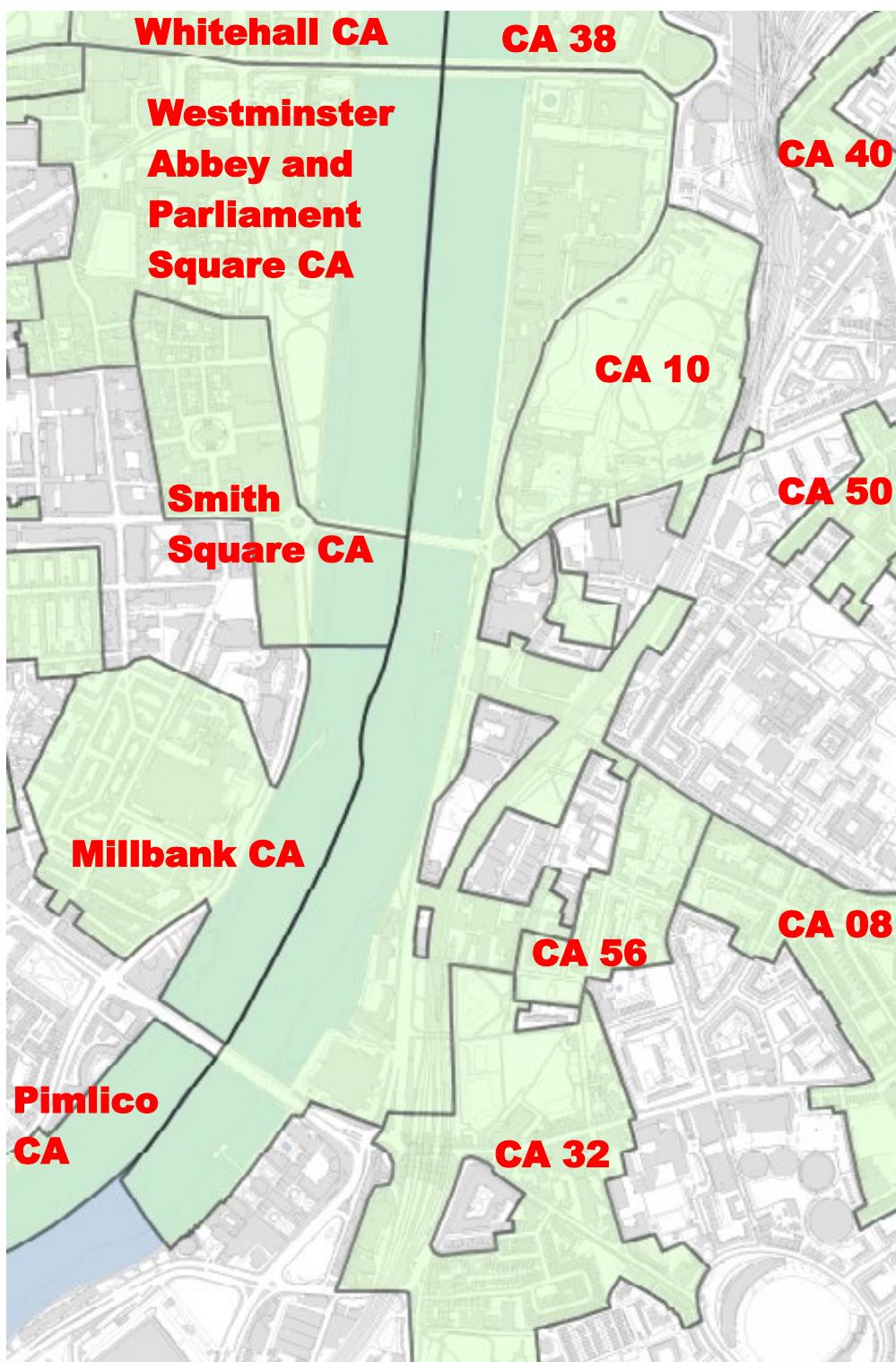


The construction of the Albert Embankment.

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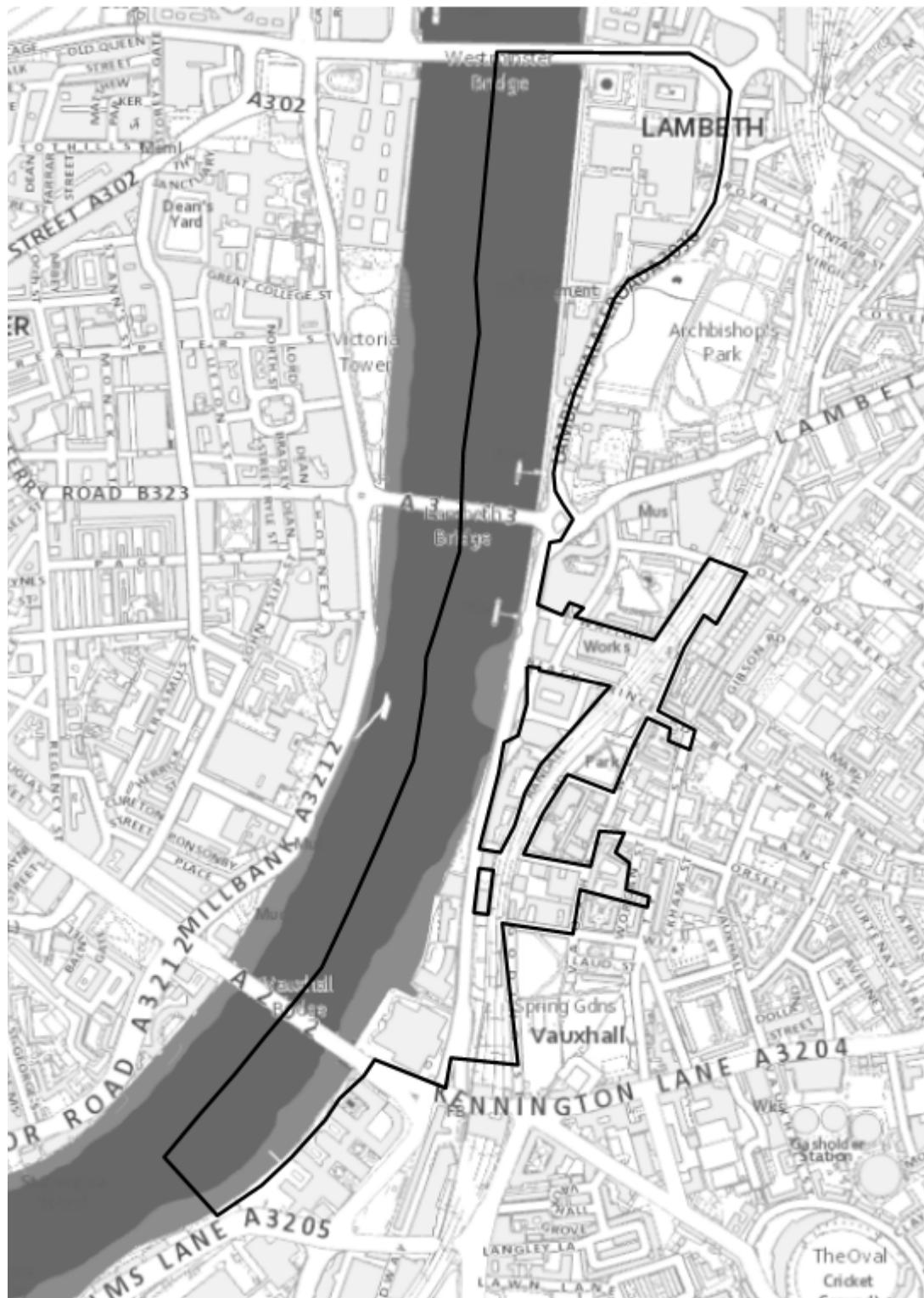
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## CONSERVATION AREA CONTEXT MAP



- 08** – Kennington CA, **10** – Lambeth Palace CA, **32** – Vauxhall CA,  
**38** – South Bank CA, **40** – Lower Marsh CA,  
**50** – Lambeth Walk and China Walk CA, **56** – Vauxhall Gardens Estate CA.

## ALBERT EMBANKMENT CONSERVATION AREA



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## **INTRODUCTION**

This conservation area character appraisal is prepared by the Council to assist with the management and enhancement of the Albert Embankment Conservation Area. It is hoped that it will be useful for residents, property managers and developers alike in understanding the objectives of the conservation area designation.

Lambeth has been designating conservation areas since 1969. The Albert Embankment Conservation Area was first designated on the 26 November 2001; the other parts of the Albert Embankment having already been designated within the South Bank and Lambeth Palace Conservation Areas. These conservation area boundaries were revisited in 2016 and the boundary changed in order to bring the entire length of Albert Embankment into this conservation area.

The western half of the conservation area is occupied by the River Thames itself, including the shingle foreshore and mud-banks, the piers and bridges and Albert Embankment structure. The northern boundary is formed by Westminster Bridge, the eastern boundary is largely formed by the railway viaduct to Waterloo or by building frontages lining the Albert Embankment; and the southernmost point of conservation area is the boundary with the London Borough of Wandsworth.

The corresponding western part of the River Thames and the associated bankside development is also subject to conservation area designation within the City of Westminster. Of particular note is the relationship of this conservation area to the Westminster World Heritage Site (WWHS).

The Council consulted on a draft version of the document so that local residents, property owners / building managers and any other interested parties can comment on its content. The consultation ran in February and March 2016, notices were erected in the area, key stakeholders were consulted and the draft document was available on the Council website.

All comments received were given careful consideration where this final version was prepared.

## 1. PLANNING FRAMEWORK

### Planning Legislation

1.1 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires all local authorities to identify '*areas of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*' and designate them as Conservation Areas.

1.2 Conservation area designation brings with it additional planning controls, control over demolition and the protection of trees. Section 72 of the Act places a duty on the Council and other decision makers to pay special attention in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. This includes exercising control over development proposals that are outside the Conservation Area but would affect its setting, or views into or out of the area.

### Planning Policy

1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) sets out the national planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. There are dedicated policies protecting the historic environment throughout the document in particular section 12. To maintain and manage change to heritage assets in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

1.4 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the Lambeth area is the London Plan adopted in July 2011. This document sets out an integrated social, economic and environmental framework for the future development of London over a time span of the next 15-20 years. It recognises the importance of conservation areas, listed buildings and World Heritage Sites in contributing to the quality of life of local communities and to London's international status as a world class city. The London Plan identifies central Vauxhall, Albert Embankment and Waterloo as an Opportunity Area and states that *The Mayor expects boroughs and others to use appropriate tools to manage the historic environment, including character appraisals and conservation plans*. It recognises the importance of conservation areas, listed buildings and World Heritage Sites in contributing to the quality of life of local communities and to London's international status as a world class city.

1.5 The Lambeth Local Plan 2015 contains general policies relating to all aspects of planning in the borough including urban form, listed buildings, conservation areas and design as well as site-specific policies

### Planning Guidance

1.6 The close proximity of the Westminster World Heritage Site and its historic connections to Lambeth Palace is a significant consideration in planning for the conservation area. A World Heritage Site Management Plan is in place to assist with the preservation of this site. The London World Heritage Sites Guidance on Settings Supplementary Planning Guidance March 2012 sets out guidance on protecting the setting of the Westminster World Heritage Site and the fundamental contribution the setting makes to the appreciation of the site of outstanding universal value.

1.7 The Vauxhall Supplementary Planning Document (2013) builds upon the work carried out in the Mayor's Vauxhall Nine Elms Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF) and helps guide and inform redevelopment in the Vauxhall and Albert Embankment Area. This

document recognises the importance of the historic environment and the opportunities it presents in delivering a new and better Vauxhall.

1.8 The Waterloo Area Supplementary Planning Document (2009) builds upon the work carried out in the Mayor's Waterloo Opportunity Framework (2007) and helps guide and inform redevelopment in the Waterloo Area. This document recognises the importance of the historic environment and the opportunities it presents in delivering a new and better Waterloo.

### **Planning Control**

1.10 Conservation area designation brings with it controls over the demolition of certain buildings and boundaries, limits the size of extensions, controls roof alterations and external cladding and limits the number and siting of satellite dishes. Trees are also protected.

## **2. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**

### **Introduction**

2.1 This appraisal has been undertaken in accordance with established best practice

### **Geology**

2.2 The area is flat, being part of the great low lying plains of clay deposits formed by the River Thames in the London Basin. The flat marshland / flood plain Thames-side area has attracted human activity since ancient times; with river crossing points becoming the focus of activity.

### **Historic Development**

#### Early History

2.4 Before the 18th century the Lambeth bank of the Thames was predominantly marshland below the level of high tide. There is evidence of Neolithic habitation, and the river was the focus of Roman and Anglo Saxon activity with markets and possibly harbours along the riverbank. However, this has had little influence on the current urban form.

#### Development along the Thames Bank

2.5 Parts of the Thames Bank in Lambeth was lined with docks, wharves and warehouses and there has been an established settlement around St Mary's Church since medieval times. As early as 1670 the Vauxhall Plate Glass Works were in operation, and there were established landing stages along the riverbank and potteries producing Delftware, majolica and stoneware. Rocque's map of 1746 indicates a built-up fringe including houses which are likely to have housed boat-builders, fishermen or those employed in industries such as the soap and whiting works (used for whitewashing walls); wharves and warehouses lined the riverbank between Lambeth Palace and Nine Elms.

2.6 A gently sloping sandy beach at Lambeth proved ideal for boat-building and the keeping of boats and barges, soon associated industries such as oar, scull and pump makers grew up too. However, the area developed a reputation for its cramped and unsanitary conditions, exacerbated by sewage discharging directly on to the open beach, and the noxious fumes produced by its industries such as the soap works.

2.7 As early as 1664 a proposal was made for the building of a bridge between Westminster and Lambeth, but it had to be dropped because of the opposition of the watermen who ran the ferries. It was not until 1736 that an Act of Parliament was passed, authorising the building of a bridge. It also provided for the payment of compensation to the Archbishop and his lessees in respect of lost business for a horse ferry running from Lambeth Palace. By this time the area outside Lambeth Palace was a long established community of streets and houses, works and barge houses of a rich vernacular character. The royal barge was kept here during this period.

**18th and 19th Centuries**

2.8 Until the opening of Westminster Bridge in 1750 the only means of access to from London to Lambeth was by boat. Facilitated by the construction of Westminster Bridge the wider area slowly began to develop as an extension of the city and gradually the remaining open land; known as Lambeth Marsh, was drained and developed. The local road names Upper Marsh and Lower Marsh are a reminder of this time.

2.9 The area underwent further rapid development following the opening of the first Vauxhall Bridge in 1816.

2.10 The riverside area was effectively divorced from the hinterland of Kennington and the rest of Vauxhall / Waterloo in 1848 by the extension of the London & South Western Railway from its initial terminus at Nine Elms into Waterloo; on one of the longest viaducts in the country - a series of 290 arches. Over 700 houses were lost to make way for the railway and some 80 million bricks were used to construct the viaduct - the railway company incorporated six bridges to allow local roads to remain open and not to sever the riverside with its hinterland completely. The viaduct arches soon attracted new commercial and industrial uses. The viaduct remains a defining feature of the area today.

2.11 By the 1860's a dense concentration of industries had developed including the soap works and potteries. However, many of these and the old courts, alleys, boat building yards and timber yards were demolished in order to accommodate the construction of Albert Embankment which was named in memory of Prince Albert who had died in 1861.

2.12 The construction of the Albert Embankment between 1866 and 1870 transformed this bank of the Thames. It was designed as a retaining wall to prevent the flooding of low-lying areas of Waterloo, Vauxhall and Kennington which occurred whenever there was an exceptionally high tide. Its construction also assisted the Metropolitan Board of Works in providing a main drainage system for the capital. This massive construction project was led by Sir Joseph Bazalgette, who was also responsible for the creation of London's mid 19th century sewage system.

2.13 Construction of the Albert Embankment essentially facilitated a comprehensive redevelopment of the riverside and thirty-seven acres of riverside marshland were reclaimed for new building. The cleared site between Lambeth Bridge and Westminster Bridge (which has been rebuilt 1862), previously known as Stangate, was chosen for the relocation of St Thomas' Hospital, which had been founded early in the 12<sup>th</sup> century near London Bridge.



Part of the original river frontage of St Thomas' Hospital in 1939.



St Thomas' Hospital original Lambeth Palace Road frontage.

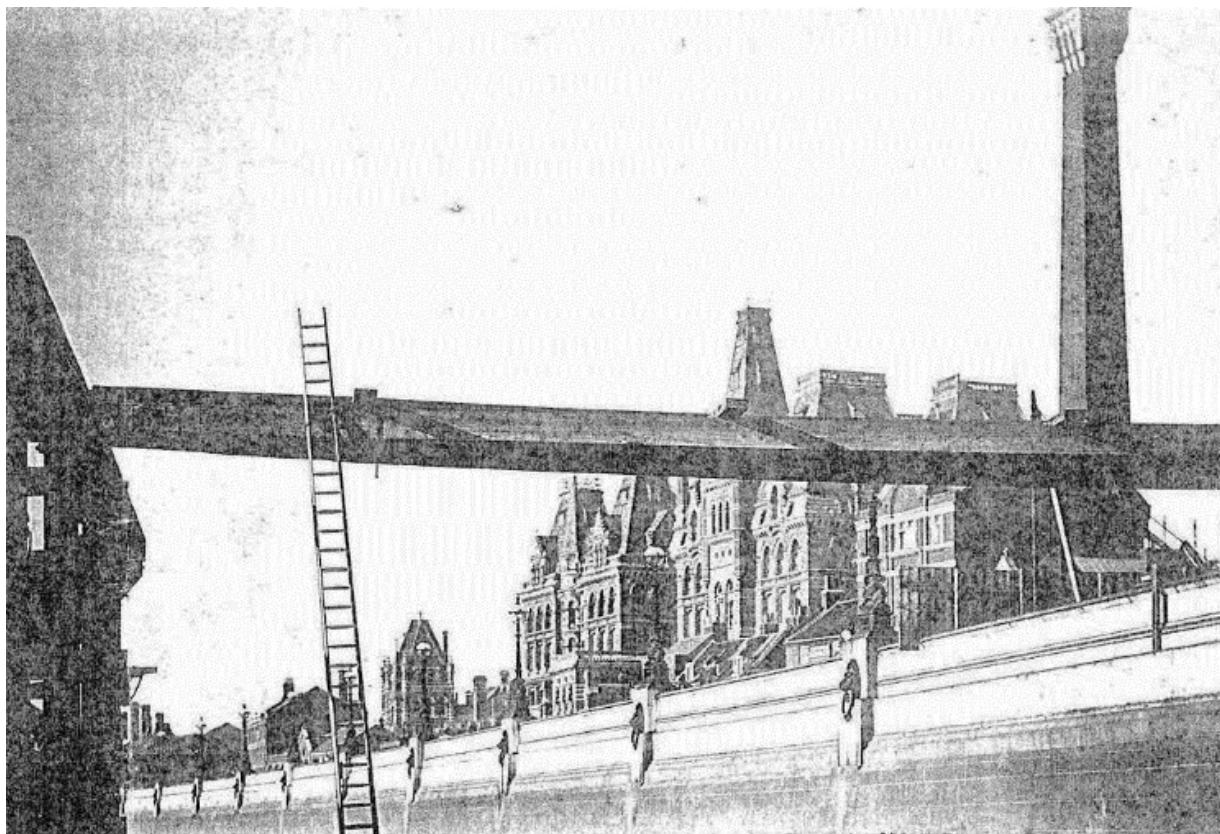
2.14 The stretch of the Albert Embankment between the Lambeth and Westminster bridges was particularly welcomed by MPs who were anxious to improve the view from the recently completed Palace of Westminster, and to eradicate the stinking mud-banks which were a blight on their amenity. The new St Thomas' Hospital was thus designed a dignified architectural response to the Palace of Westminster opposite and a new riverside promenade provided a place from which to enjoy views of Parliament.

2.15 At the same time as the hospital was being built a new road - Lambeth Palace Road - was laid out; running parallel to the Thames from Lambeth Bridge to Westminster Bridge Road.

2.16 The stretch of new embankment between Vauxhall Bridge and Lambeth Bridge attracted industrial uses in purpose-built premises. The Ordnance Survey map of 1875 shows a gin and vinegar distillery, a coal wharf and the potteries. By 1894 there was a flour mill, an india rubber works and a soap works. By the 1890s trams were running the Albert Embankment further improving communications to central London and South West London. The wider residential district was filled with terraced housing.

#### Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century

2.17 The current Vauxhall Bridge opened in 1906. In 1910, the deterioration of the original Lambeth Bridge meant that it had to be closed to vehicular traffic. Rebuilding was delayed by the First World War, but in 1924 the London County Council obtained parliamentary powers to construct a replacement bridge and to widen and raise the approaches at either end. The bridge, flanked with impressive obelisks, was completed and opened in 1932.



Doulton's Pottery from the River Thames, 1896.

2.18 Following the opening of Lambeth Bridge, the 19th century industrial and river-based activities between Vauxhall Bridge and Lambeth Bridge began to be supplanted by new office and commercial development. WH Smith led the way in 1933 with distinctive premises crowned by a clock-tower, followed by the Head Offices of the Doulton pottery in 1938 by TP Bennett, (its coloured ceramic frieze by Giles Bayes is on display in the Victoria & Albert Museum). These buildings were regrettably demolished in 1980 but their neighbour, the former London Fire Bridge HQ buildings of 1937 remains as a riverside landmark.



Albert Embankment in 1951 showing (L—R) - Doulton's HQ, WHS, and LFB



Bomb damage at St Thomas' Hospital.

#### War Damage, Post-war Reconstruction and Redevelopment

2.19 The area suffered heavy bombing raids aimed at the concentration of industry and the mainline railway. Enemy action caused a great deal of damage - much of the northern part of St Thomas' Hospital was destroyed. It was subsequently redeveloped after the war in large white-tiled blocks.

2.20 It was not until the mid 1950s that reconstruction / new development resumed following the lifting of post-war restrictions on building licences. The majority of post-war office buildings set back along Albert Embankment between Vauxhall Bridge and Lambeth Bridge (outside the conservation area) have been redeveloped in recent years. Three surviving post-war blocks are noteworthy in part for their unique siting immediately by the riverside - Peninsula Heights has been re-clad and converted to flats, Tintagel House and Camelford House (by TP Bennett) are perhaps the best surviving examples. The Vauxhall Cross Building (MI6 Headquarters), built between 1989 and 1992, is a landmark at the gateway into the borough from Vauxhall Bridge.

#### Recent Years

2.21 Vauxhall is identified as an Opportunity Area and earmarked for substantial growth. This includes tall building development immediately adjoining the conservation area along Albert Embankment. The heights here are limited to around 90m in order to protect the setting of the WWHS and the materials palette chosen for the majority of the new residential buildings is a light one, of similar effect to Portland Stone - the architecture is generally calm and understated, a sympathetic response to the wider city.

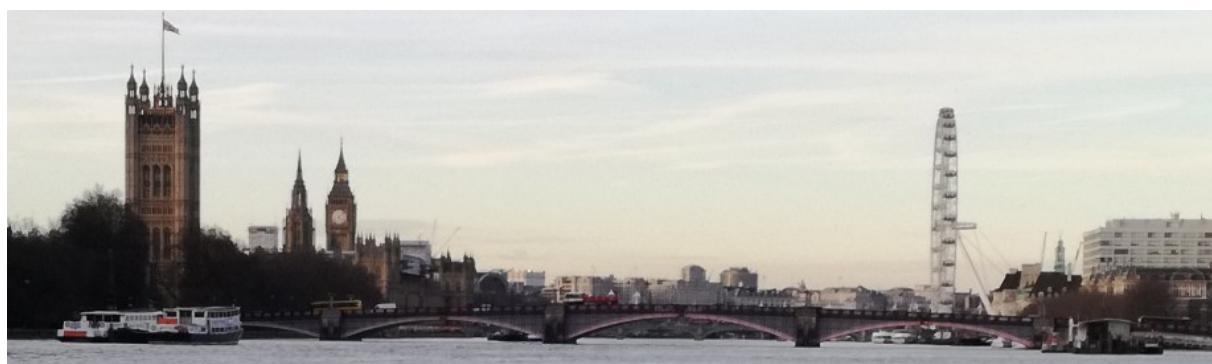
## **City Context**

2.22 The conservation area is a very important part of, and a positive contributor to, the character of the River Thames in central London. It is highly visible from the river, across the river from the north, from the west and south. The South Bank Conservation Area adjoins to the North, Lambeth Palace Conservation adjoins to the east and the Vauxhall Gardens Estate Conservation and Vauxhall Conservation Area adjoin to the South East and South respectively

2.23 The location of the conservation area across the river from the Westminster World Heritage Site (WWHS), the Westminster Abbey and Parliament Square Conservation Area, Smith Square Conservation Area, Millbank Conservation Area allows it to have excellent views of these heritage assets. Indeed the Albert Embankment Conservation Area contains the best location from which appreciate the iconic Palace or Westminster.



The World Heritage Site from the public garden at St Thomas' Hospital



The World Heritage Site from outside Peninsula Heights

## Spatial Analysis

2.24 This section looks at the area in detail; seeking to identify the character of its constituent parts. The first part, looking at the spatial experience on the Riverside Walk from the borough boundary with Wandsworth to Westminster Bridge with a particular emphasis on the appreciation of the WWHS:

### Borough boundary with Wandsworth to Vauxhall Bridge

2.25 Following the completion in 2014 of the St George Wharf tower, the river frontage through Lambeth is fully accessible as a continuous riverside walk linking Wandsworth to Southwark. The riverside walk here is a continuation of Wandsworth's which arrives at the borough boundary in the form of a broad walkway with lawns and seating. The St George Wharf complex and tower are located on the Lambeth side but are not themselves within the conservation area. However, the riverside walk here is an important contributor to the river frontage and has been included for that reason.

2.26 The walkway here is an integral part of the St George Wharf design aesthetic with modern walling and lamps enclosing the river walk's edge. In views to the north the river, St George Pier and Vauxhall bridge form the foreground and large building on the Westminster side are dominant features. Also visible from the southern end is the pinnacled top of the Victoria Tower of the Palace of Westminster with its tall flagpole. Information panels along the river provide a history of the area. The St George Wharf pier serves the Thames Clipper services; adding welcome activity to the river at this point. This is a great location to appreciate the monumental form of Battersea Power Station which lies to the south.

2.27 Restaurants and a bar animate the pedestrian area here and the character is high quality one with good soft landscaping. Proceeding north the Riverside walk dips down



Vauxhall Bridge in the early 1970s (note historic balustrade detail).

through a pedestrian subway leading to the Vauxhall Cross building's section of the walk. This is a good place to appreciate Vauxhall Bridge (rebuilt in 1906) which is comprised of five arches on granite piers with eight monumental bronze figures representing: Pottery, Engineering, Architecture, Agriculture, Science, Fine Arts, Local Government and Education; it is understood to be the only British river crossing to contain sculptures. Unfortunately the original, delicate, balustrade detailing has been lost. However, at this point the bridge itself and Millbank Tower completely screen the Victoria Tower and nothing of the WHS is visible.

#### Vauxhall Bridge to Peninsula Heights

2.28 The Vauxhall Cross Building (M16 Headquarters) is an impressive monumental post-modern building which sits to the north of Vauxhall Bridge. Its imposing symmetrical bulk is broken down with a series of terraces on the river front. The proximity to Vauxhall Bridge makes the building a striking landmark at the gateway into Lambeth from the City of Westminster. The Riverside walk here is an integral part of the building design with walls, lamps, seating another detailing in the same post-modern style. Fountains providing defensive space at the foot of the building itself. The whole site projects forward into the river here and the riverside walk dog-legs back inland towards Lack's Dock. At this northern end has a folly feature from which there are good views north up the river (image 2, page 17). Millbank Tower is the most dominant element in the view here but the towers of the Palace of Westminster are all visible for the first time- silhouetted against the sky to its right. Panning right the River and low-rise distant buildings on the north bank of the Thames separate the WWHS from London Eye and visible development on the south side of the river.

2.29 Lack's Dock originally formed part of a site known as Vauxhall Stairs which was wharfage serving flour mills, gin and vinegar distilleries. The name is now associated with a slipway which is largely now used by amphibious vehicle tours as a means to access to the river and by pedestrians wishing to get close to the water's edge. It is one of the few central Thames slipways and is a particularly noteworthy feature of the riverside because of the access it provides. Vehicular access from Albert Embankment is barrier controlled. The access road area isn't particularly well maintained and a security barrier and kiosk bring visual clutter.

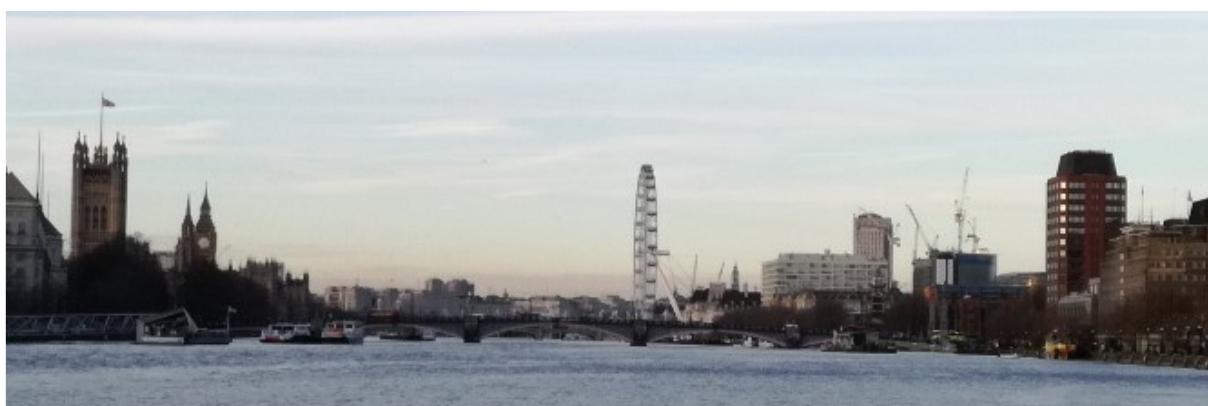
2.30 Immediately north of Lack's dock stand Camelford House and Tintagel House – a complementary pair of post-war offices in brick and Portland stone; large buildings, very carefully detailed to good effect. The end of Camelford House spans the walkway at this point. Unfortunately its river fronting spaces are untidy - unattractive railings, untidy servicing areas, car parking, cycle stores, smoking shelters and cycle parking create visual clutter and detract from the buildings and the riverside walk experience.

2.31 The river retaining wall at this point is utilitarian of concrete and rendered brickwork with nibs projecting into the footway. This is worsened further by a section topped with utilitarian steel guardrail (image 3, page 17) and an obtrusive lifebuoy image 4, page 17) impede the view northwards towards the WWHS.

2.32 Proceeding northward the Palace of Westminster and Lambeth Bridge become more prominent in the view and their detailing is more discernible. So too does the relatively low-rise development along the Millbank and Victoria Embankment which provide its setting. North of the WWHS, on the north bank of the River Thames and the picturesque roofscapes silhouetted against clear sky add much to the experience of the setting of the WWHS. Where the riverside walk meets Peninsula Heights the Riverside Walk is constrained by an unacceptable pinch-point formed by the party-wall boundary with Tintagel House and the riverside retaining wall.



1. In some locations south of Vauxhall Bridge the WWHS is screened from view.



2. The view north from the Vauxhall Cross buildings is particularly impressive.



3. At Camelford House a guardrail restricts views of the WWHS.



4. At Camelford House a lifebuoy restricts views of the WWHS.

2.33 At Peninsula Heights the historic river retaining wall treatment of granite walls and fine Sturgeon iron lamp standards (grade II listed) begins, and runs all the way to Westminster Bridge. This wall with its lamps is a key characteristic of the river frontage, this conservation area and the approaches to the WWHS. Some short sections are in cast iron and 'Albert Embankment' is inscribed on the parapet at the north end (Westminster Bridge) and south end (Peninsula Heights).

2.34 Immediately north of Peninsula Heights, Albert Embankment Gardens West is a triangular open space which is laid to lawn and has trees. Ornamental benches here allow the view to be enjoyed. The Tate Gallery stands directly across the river but its backdrop is harmed by a post-war tower. Further north Millbank Tower is directly opposite and for the first time the long river elevation of the Palace of Westminster is visible as well as its towers. The trees of Victoria Tower Gardens provide a screen to the lower part of the Victoria Tower. The towers of Westminster Abbey are visible here in winter and the roofscape of Whitehall continues to enhance the setting of the WWHS

2.35 Beyond Albert Embankment Gardens West, the riverside walk merges into the footway of Albert Embankment and runs along the roadside as a conventional pavement. A permanently moored 1930's Dutch Barge 'Tamesis Dock' here is run as a bar. Highly decorated with lights and brightly painted, it is a visually chaotic node of activity in an otherwise quiet and dignified length of the Embankment. Whilst it blocks the view out across the river its outdoor seating provides an excellent place to enjoy a drink and views of the Palace of Westminster. Unfortunately its refuse bins and access steps / ramp restrict the footway and cause visual clutter.

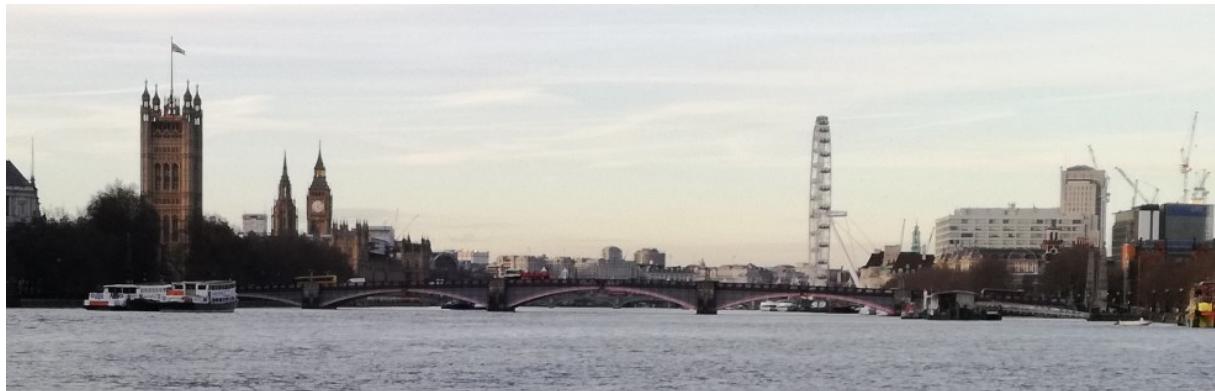
2.36 The footway from Peninsula Heights to Lambeth Bridge is paved in York stone and lined with trees. However, the traffic brings with it bus shelters and some of these carry illuminated advertisements which bring visual clutter and harm amenity.

2.37 Proceeding north the London Fire Brigade Pier comes into view in the foreground of Lambeth Bridge and the Palace of Westminster. It is a floating pier's and its visual presence in the view is thus dependant on the tide. At high tide it partially restricts the view of Palace and Bridge. Moving northward and nearing Lambeth Bridge the graceful form and elegant detailing of the Bridge can be readily appreciated. At this point the Bridge screens the main body of the Palace of Westminster (the towers are visible) whilst its lamp columns enrich the silhouette of the Palace itself. At this point, when the trees are not in leaf, the towers of Westminster Abbey are visible for the first time (image 4, page 19).

2.38 On the approach to Lambeth Bridge from the south, the historic red brick form of Morton's Tower at Lambeth Palace becomes increasingly visible. The roadway begins to rise to meet the Lambeth Bridge approach whilst the riverside walk continues level through an underpass below the bridge. The footway is restricted by access steps leading down into a subway (leading inland beneath the roadway).

2.39 Coming out of the underpass the riverside walk north of Lambeth Bridge remains separate from the roadway. Soft landscaping adds welcome greenery and there is a decommissioned red telephone box (grade II) which brings historic character. Lambeth Pier's pavilion brings a sense of enclosure at this point. The pier itself has a historic, ornamental iron structure topped with a single storey timber pavilion. A gangway on its river side leads down to a floating landing stage. At high tide the gangway, landing stage and moored vessels are elevated and restrict the otherwise excellent views of the Palace of Westminster.

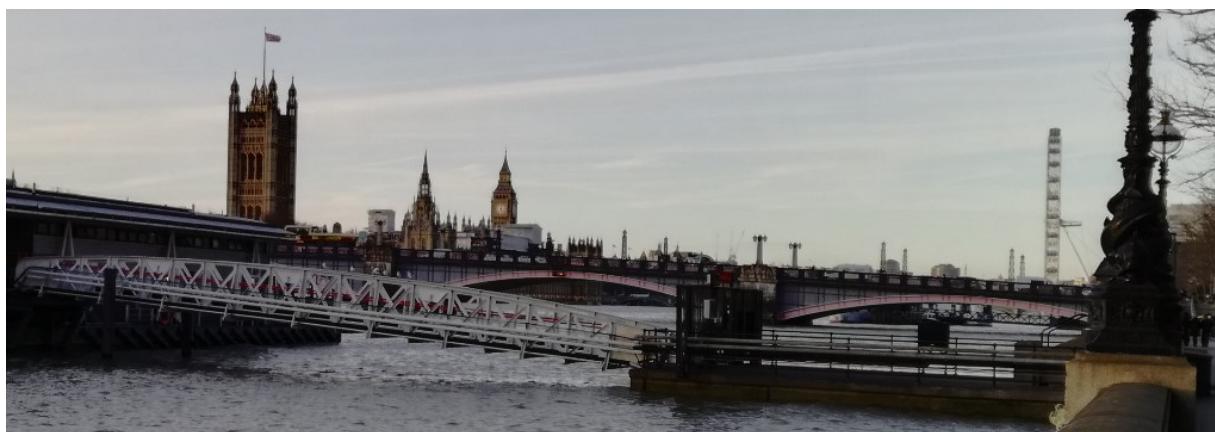
2.40 The paving here is of particular note - the original finish remains; York stone slabs with matching dressed stone gulleys. The small landscaped open space at Lambeth Pier is



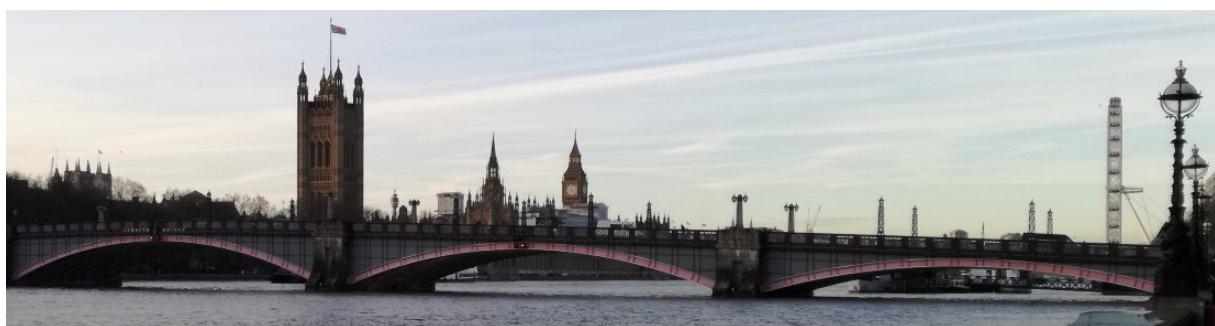
1. The view north from Peninsula Heights.



2. The view north from Albert Embankment Gardens West.



3. The view north from LFB Pier.



4. The view north from LFB Pier.

Albert Embankment Gardens North. It is an area of raised lawn and trees allowing a great appreciation of the Lambeth Palace complex (Lambeth Palace Conservation Area); although bus shelters with illuminated advertisements on Lambeth Palace Road are visually intrusive in the setting. A memorial to war hero Violette Szabo provides a dignified focal point on the lawn itself.

2.41 This area is a popular location with people and television news crews who come to appreciate the excellent view the Palace of Westminster. The Lambeth Pier's Riverside Café and a mobile café serve their needs but the footway here is cluttered with large signage panels, telescopes, seating and sandwich boards to very poor effect.



The Albert Embankment at Lambeth Pier was uncluttered in the past. This image is 1938.

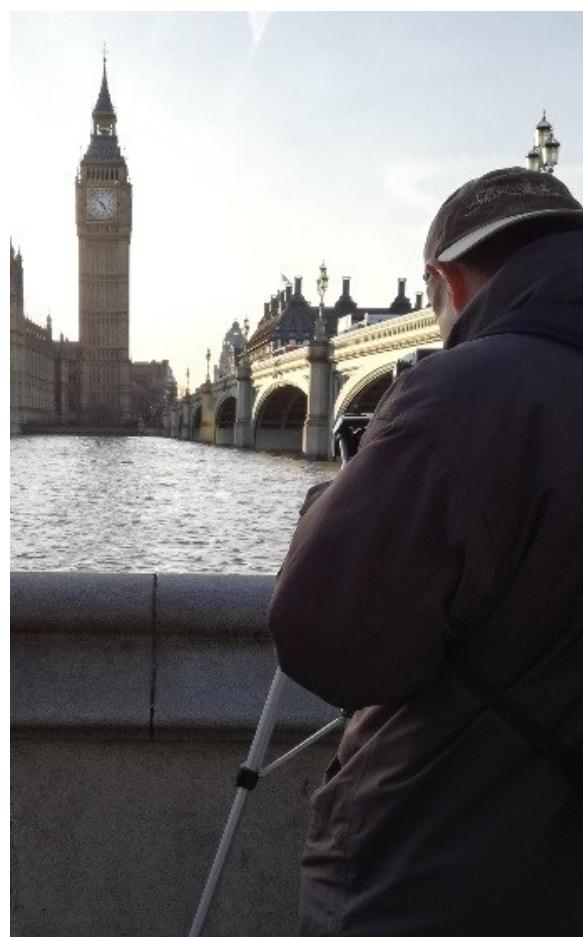
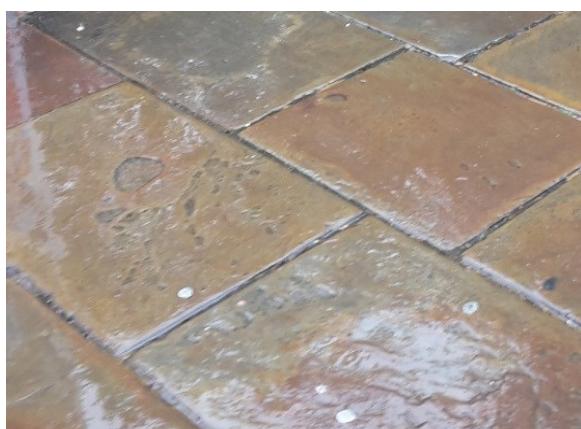


Today the Albert Embankment at Lambeth Pier is greatly harmed by clutter.

2.42 Immediately north of Albert Embankment Gardens North the St Thomas' Hospital complex diverts Lambeth Palace Road inland and encloses the remaining section of the Embankment which north to Westminster Bridge. The northward vista here is an excellent one – ornamental benches, the granite river retailing wall with its ornate lamp columns and the St Thomas' Hospital boundary (an impressive, well-detailed Portland stone wall) and the elevated tree screen behind, combine to excellent effect. The view from this section of the riverside walk is Strategic View no 22 (see LVMF).

2.43 The St Thomas' Hospital complex's river frontage is elevated from the riverside walks and largely takes the form of Victorian hospital wings which are partially screened by mature trees. Some of the visible development is run-down, poor-quality post-war infill between the wings. The south most triangle of the hospital site is single storey where the building is nearest to Lambeth Palace, this is the result of a historic covenant. At the northern end the hospital complex is from the post-war, large, understated, cream tiled buildings which are set back from the river and Westminster Bridge. These buildings have a scale, character and colour appropriate for this sensitive historic area.

2.44 Albert Embankment terminates at Westminster Bridge. This is an excellent location to appreciate the bridge structure itself, the WWHs and, especially, the Elizabeth Tower. Photographers regular congregate here as a result. An under-pass dog-legs under Westminster Bridge northward (into the Southbank Conservation Area) and broad steps lead up to Westminster Bridge itself. These steps and bridge too provide an excellent viewing place for WWHs.



The Albert Embankment at St Thomas' Hospital.

2.45 The following paragraphs look at the other roads within the conservation area:

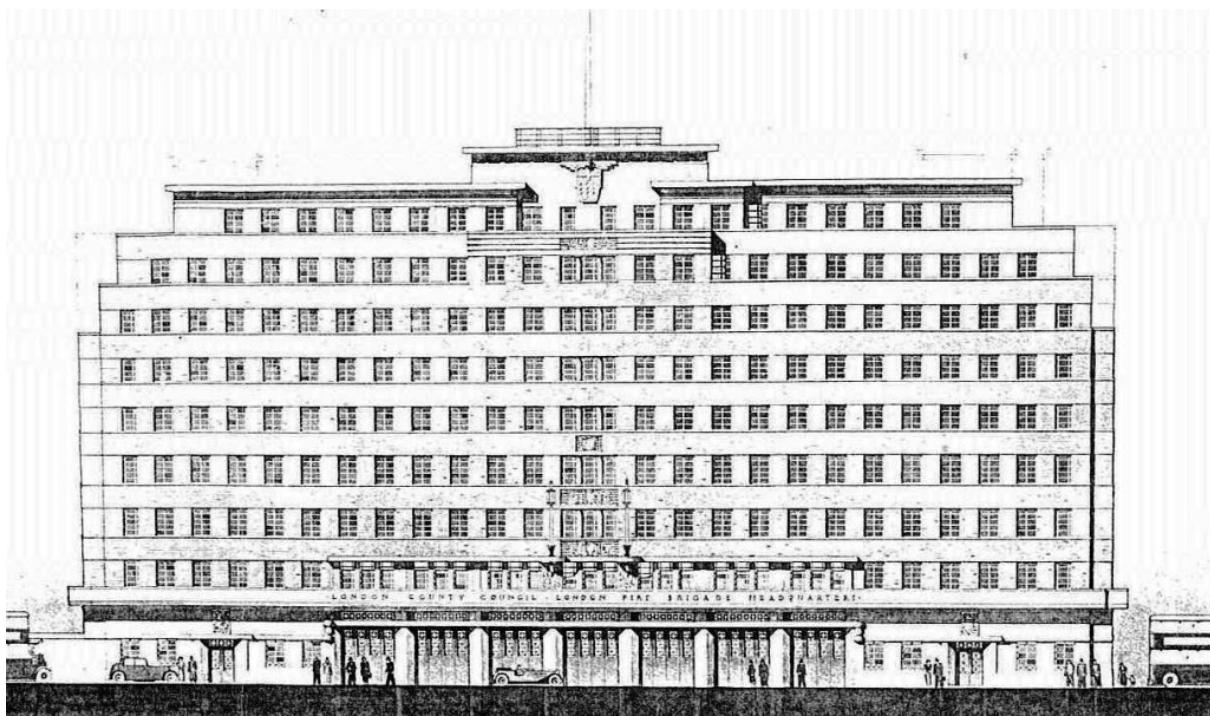
Albert Embankment

2.46 This section relates solely to the roadway; the embankment retaining structure and riverside walk and discussed elsewhere. This road runs north-south from Vauxhall Bridge to Lambeth Bridge. The northern half runs along the river edge and the southern half runs inland this gives each half a very different character.

2.47 The southern (inland) part of Albert Embankment runs from Vauxhall Cross to Peninsula Heights. The eastern side is characterised by the stock brick railway viaduct to Waterloo which is set back behind generous open space. The viaduct arches contain commercial units and the open space is hard to the south and laid to lawn to the north. Mature trees bring welcome greenery. The western side is characterised by four post-war blocks – Vauxhall Cross Building, Camelford House, Tintagel House and Peninsula Heights. The footway here is fairly narrow and unacceptable cluttered in places by street furniture (telephone kiosks, bus shelters and advertisements).

2.48 The northern (riverside) section of Albert Embankment is open on the west to the river. Most of its eastern side is lined with modern development which has been consciously excluded from the conservation area boundary. However, some historic buildings remain and these are included:

2.49 The former London Fire Bridge Headquarters (No. 8) is an imposing inter-war building with a symmetrical façade, a dignified character and fine carved detailing. A gap to its north gives views to a training tower in the drill yard at the rear. Directly opposite no. 8 is a pier which serves as the London Fire Brigade River Station; it has been in place since the 1930s but its single storey structures are modern. Black Prince Road to the immediate south of no. 8 allows a glimpse of the ornate terracotta and brick façade of the former Doulton works offices on the corner with Lambeth High Street.



The former LFB HQ, 8 Albert Embankment.

2.50 Nos. 9-11 Albert Embankment (outside the conservation area) are set back from the building line on the north side of Black Prince Road. In front sits the narrow White Hart Dock which links below the road to the River Thames. It is enclosed by high brick walls and flood gates opening onto Black Prince Road. Here modern ornamental seating in the form of timber boats and a commemorative plaque add interest. Also of note is a surviving painted EWS (Emergency Water Supply) sign from the Second World War on the wall.

2.51 Immediately south of White Hart Dock Albert Embankment Gardens East is a sliver of soft landscaping which, unusually, is straddled by the forward projection of no. 18 (Park Plaza Hotel). The garden and the part of the hotel which straddles it, are within the conservation area.

2.52 At the junction with Tinworth Street are the only surviving 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings fronting the Albert Embankment – The Rose Public House, no. 35, a corner pub and Vintage House, no. 37, a former warehouse; both have good architectural detailing and form an attractive pair.

2.53 Albert Embankment Gardens West adds welcome greenery opposite the junction with Tinworth Street. This is a triangular space of lawns and trees. Its focal point is a bust of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century Hindu philosopher and social reformer Basaveshwara.

2.54 Proceeding southwards along Albert Embankment from Tinworth Street the road is inland of the river. On the west-side Peninsula Heights, Tintagel House and Camelford House and large post-war buildings of strong architectural character. To their immediate south, across the access road to Lack's Dock, is the landmark post-modern Vauxhall Cross Building, (1989-1992). This group of buildings have a particularly important presence when viewed from the river, its bridges and the north bank.



Nos. 35 (The Rose PH) and no.37 (Vintage House), Albert Embankment.

2.55 The east side of Albert Embankment south of Glasshouse Walk is spacious and soft landscaped as a result of post-war demolitions. The railway viaduct carrying trains to Waterloo forms a strong building-line here and contains numerous retail and food and drink uses. Southward towards Vauxhall Cross the soft landscaping gives way to broad footways. The Vauxhall Conservation Area adjoins to the south.

### Black Prince Road

2.56 Only the western end of this road is within the conservation area. Moving east from the Albert Embankment only the northern side is included. Highly visible is the imposing flank of no. 8 Albert Embankment which runs to the junction with Lambeth High Street. Beyond the junction is the impressive corner offices of South Bank House (the former Doulton pottery works) with its exceptionally ornate brick and pottery façade. Its long elevation is plainer but nonetheless impressive and it encloses the north side all the way to the railway viaduct which terminates the view eastward.

2.57 Passing through the viaduct its walls are decorated with tiled panels of the Black Prince - the 14<sup>th</sup> century Prince of Wales who owned the Manor of Kennington.

2.58 On the east side of the viaduct are surviving 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century buildings and a gap site. These include three attractive Victorian public houses (including the Jolly Gardeners, no.49-51), the nearby remnant of the original Ragged School, Newport Street and some interwar shops with flats over. They have an informal urban character, sharing a brick palette and similar building heights. There is a strong visual connection west towards Southbank House (with its ornamental gables) visible over the viaduct.



The Jolly Gardeners PH, Black Prince Road.



The gap site, Black Prince Road / Newport Street.

#### Bridge Foot

2.59 This is the approach road off Vauxhall Bridge to Albert Embankment and Wandsworth Road. It runs along the south side of the Vauxhall Cross building and has a spacious character. Steps on either side of its parapet lead down to the riverside walk. In approaches from Vauxhall Bridge the view is terminated by Vauxhall Station's high level ornamental brick viaduct parapet which is unfortunately disfigured with two large advertisements.

#### Glasshouse Walk / Tinworth Street / Vauxhall Walk / Viaduct

2.60 On the approach from Albert Embankment the south side of Tinworth Street marked by the attractive flank elevation of The Rose Public House with its curved corner. The road then passes through the viaduct which is emblazoned by the polished metal lettering spelling SPRING GARDENS and sculptural birds which add visual interest.

2.61 To the east side of the viaduct the urban block formed by Tinworth Street to the north, Vauxhall Walk to the East, Glasshouse Walk to the South and the viaduct to the West has a strong industrial / 19<sup>th</sup> century character. These important and not unattractive 19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings include the Vauxhall Walk Community Centre adjoining the viaduct on Glasshouse Walk (three storeys, in painted brick with ornamental letters on the flank to the railway), the Black Dog Public House (an attractive corner pub), its mansion block neighbours on Vauxhall Walk and a former retort house by the viaduct on Tinworth Street. New infill development (student housing and a hotel) have been successfully designed in the 'new London vernacular' style to reinforce the established character here.

#### Lambeth High Street / Whitgift Street

2.62 This narrow and quiet historic route runs north to south between and parallel with Albert Embankment and the railway viaduct. Whilst historic there are few buildings of interest. The Old Paradise Gardens (formerly known as Lambeth High Street Recreation Ground) presents a long street frontages with railings and mature soft landscaping. Its historic memorials and walls can be glimpsed from the street. The Windmill Public House is a modest 19<sup>th</sup> century building of note – situated by the Fire Brigade HQ training tower. Towards its southern end, the high street cuts through the middle of the former Fire Brigade HQ site. To

the west is the drill yard, its imposing training tower and the rear of the former HQ building with its modernist tiers of terraces (top image). To the east, and running along the south side of Whitgift Street, is the former Fire Brigade training school and workshops block which are detailed and designed as part of the whole complex (bottom images). The character here is of inter-war modernism; a unified architectural composition of Fire Brigade Buildings focused around the space formed by the roadway and the drill ground.



The former LFB HQ (above) and the former training school (below).





The view south down Lambeth High Street.

2.63 At the south end of Lambeth High Street, where it meets Black Prince Road (above), Southbank House (the surviving part of the former Doulton Ceramic Works) is an attractive complex including the landmark corner tower constructed in red brick with ceramic detailing and clay tiled roof. The picturesque form of complex is highly visible in views south down Lambeth High Street. Its corner frontage at the junction with Black Prince Road is adorned with ornate architectural ceramics to excellent effect.

2.64 From this corner, looking west across the river the view is terminated by the imposing classical façade of Thames House, Millbank (1929).

#### Lambeth Palace Road

2.65 The road links Westminster Bridge Road at the north with Lambeth Road / Lambeth Bridge to the south. It was first laid out with the completed Albert Embankment in the 1870s and originally ran parallel with the River Thames. In the 1960s the road was redirected on its current curved alignment to remove through traffic from the expanding hospital precinct. A small fragment of the original wall can still be found on the St. Thomas' Hospital side by St Thomas' House. Running north to south, this road is enclosed on its east side sweeps by the long the curved brick boundary of Lambeth Palace's garden (within the Lambeth Palace Conservation Area). The mature planting, trees and shrubs of the Lambeth Palace gardens overhang the wall to great effect and provide a pleasant leafy setting.

2.66 The west side of Lambeth Palace Road is lined by the St Thomas' Hospital complex with Block 9 (King's College Medical School) to its southern end. The hospital is set back behind an attractive landscaped frontage at the northern end of the road. The central section's open frontage is dominated by untidy parking areas and an access ramp to the A&E department. The buildings here are orthogonal, understated, and clad in cream tiling. On the bend in the road the secondary elevation of the large and imposing Evelina Hospital and the rear and flank of St Thomas House rise hard off the back of pavement.

2.67 At the south end of Lambeth Palace Road the hospital complex presents more historic buildings. The imposing mass of the Victorian Block 8 is visible here and there a short length of historic cast iron railings (the only survivor from war-time salvage). However, post-war rebuilding and a large tank enclosure detract somewhat.

2.68 Block 9 (former King's College Hospital Medical School) has a landmark campanile and fronts the road with a high brick boundary treatment of strong Victorian industrial character. Its low height at the southern end is dictated by a covenant which, it is understood, is in place to protect views between Lambeth Palace and the Palace of Westminster.

#### Randall Road / Newport Street

2.69 These roads are located on the immediate eastern side of the railway viaduct and run alongside it. It is the coming together of the brick viaduct structure and these roadways that is of notable townscape interest; some of the last remaining places of strong 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial character in the locality. The Salamanca Street railway bridge and the Tinworth Street railway bridge are part of this character.

2.70 On the west side of Newport Street the remnant of the former Ragged School was funded by local philanthropists who name live on locally. The surviving building is evidence of the historic community here and has townscape value. Further north on the east side of Newport Street former industrial building (Nos. 1-7) now house the Damien Hirst Gallery. This group reinforces and continues this 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial character.

#### Vauxhall Walk / Jonathan Street / Worgan Street

2.71 This is an urban block of mostly 19<sup>th</sup> century former commercial / industrial premises which front Vauxhall Walk. The buildings on the Worgan Street and Jonathan Street frontages are of little interest and have been excluded from the conservation area. The buildings fronting Vauxhall Walk have a strong industrial character enhanced by the intimacy created by narrowness of Vauxhall Walk. Here Graphite Square is entered by an archway which contains a War Memorial to employees of the Myer Bed Factory which formerly occupied the premises. The proximity of the Black Dog Public House and adjoining mansion blocks (Shaftesbury House and Cromwell House) opposite reinforce the 19<sup>th</sup> century character of this group. New infill buildings have sought to reinforce this special character. Views south terminate in contrast with the leafy Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens (Vauxhall Conservation Area).



### Westminster Bridge Road

2.72 This marks the northern perimeter of the St Thomas's Hospital campus and only the southern side is within the Albert Embankment Conservation Area; the northern part being in the South Bank Conservation Area. Just east of the Westminster Bridge is a subway (now closed) with steps and ornate Victorian railings; these are part of the historic boundary of St Thomas' Hospital. The character here is spacious (the hospital buildings are pulled back from the road) and the former County Hall building opposite and the Southbank Lion lend dignity to the setting of the conservation area.

2.73 The area bustles with people – in part because it has the main entrance into the St Thomas' complex and also due to the high volumes of tourists and vehicular traffic. The flight of broad steps linking with the Albert Embankment to Westminster Bridge is a node of activity with its busy footfall and garish souvenir kiosk.

2.74 The excellent views out towards the Palace of Westminster are opened up significantly by the presence of St Thomas' landscaped garden with its striking fountain and giant statue of Mary Secole. The view of the Palace of Westminster is a Local View – Landmark Silhouette no. xi. Furthermore, views out of the WWHS, along Westminster Bridge, terminate with the hospital complex, and County Hall (both in pale Portland stone tones) with the more dominant Urban Nest and the Park Plaza Hotel blocks rising up in their backdrop.

### **Character Areas**

2.75 Whilst the defining characteristic is the River Thames and the riverside walk the conservation area has a number of other distinct characteristics:

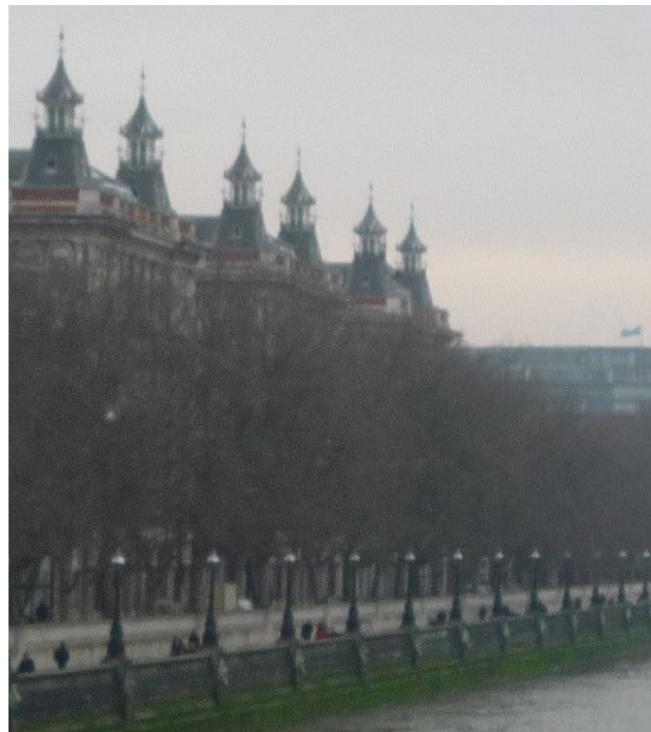
#### A. St Thomas' Hospital Campus

2.76 The original hospital was designed by Henry Currey with advice from Florence Nightingale, who is commemorated by a statue inside. This Victorian complex, with its pavilion wings to maximise the river prospect, has an Italianate character. Originally it had an impressive symmetrical composition with gardens between the wards, but these spaces have been lost to subsequent alterations and the northern section of the hospital was destroyed by enemy action during the Second World War. Only the southern three pavilions, the chapel, Governor's Hall and Medical School survive from this period and are grade II listed. There is much scope for the removal of intrusive 20<sup>th</sup> century infill alterations.

2.77 St Thomas's House for medical students, was erected in 1925 to the east side of Lambeth Palace Road. It is in red brick with Georgian detailing, designed by Harold Wynne Currey, and built as the Students' War Memorial Building - commemorating those from the hospital who gave their lives in the First World War. Road re-alignment in the 1960s means it is now on the west side of Lambeth Palace Road.

2.78 The post-war development to the north end of the campus (fronting Westminster Bridge Road and the north end of Lambeth Palace Road) is characterised by the white tiled blocks of various heights (Gassiot House, Lambeth Wing, North Wing) and a tower block (East Wing). These are successful in architectural and townscape terms (the pale tone resembles Portland stone and their simple forms are calm) but the parking areas and service yards fronting Lambeth Palace Road are generally an eyesore and roof top antenna add visual clutter to the River frontage.

2.79 The Evelina Children's Hospital is a large building on the west side of Lambeth Palace Road. Prideaux Building a single storey red brick structure built in 1976-8 and single storey extensions to the former Medical School are mostly hidden behind the boundary wall.



St Thomas's Hospital - historic buildings.

Clockwise -

Campanile on Block 9 / Medical School,  
The River frontage roofscape,  
A typical ward block; and  
The Governor's Hall.

### C. 19<sup>th</sup> Century Industrial / Commercial Development

2.80 The railway viaduct has had a significant role in defining this part of the borough, severing, as it does, the riverside from the areas inland. In many places the viaduct is screened by buildings but in other places it is open to public view and is a definitive feature (see stretches of Albert Embankment, Randall Street and Newport Street). The stock brick construction, grey and glazed brick detailing, arched spans and associated characteristics give it a robust and industrial character; so too do its uses and the regular rumble of passing trains (one of the busiest rail routes in the country). The viaduct spans a number of historic routes in metal bridges and these too, because of the breadth of the viaduct, have a strong industrial character.

2.81 Albert Embankment - Vintage House (Nos. 36-37) is a mid-late 19th century warehouse; the last remaining reminder of the once bustling industrial and warehousing character of the area. The six-bays of this four-storey edifice are divided by expressed piers. The window bays terminate with pointed segmental arches with painted keystones and a prominent painted cornice and parapet which conceals the roof. A traditional gas lamp is attached to one of the left hand piers at 1st floor level.

2.82 Black Prince Road –Southbank House (former Doulton pottery, 1878), is in red brick with decorative terracotta detailing and regular openings. Its west corner offices are of particular note for their striking detailing; especially the blue glazed ceramics and a tympanum relief of craftsmen.

2.83 Glasshouse Walk – the former industrial building at No. 5 (now a community centre) is of note. It has a doorcase to the front, an oriel window to the east flank side and lettering in ornamental brickwork at high level facing the railway.

2.84 Vauxhall Walk - retains a group of characterful commercial / industrial buildings of the "Surrey Ironworks Horatio Myer & Co. Ltd. Bedstead Manufacturers" at nos. 83-97. Its unusual mosaic fascia is of particular note. The Walker's Books premises is a part of the same group – brickwork with banding, repetitive regular detailing and cornice line. The 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings to the north and east are of no interest.

2.85 Newport Street – Newport Street Gallery, nos. 1- 7 (former Mara's Scene Painting Shop Carpentry workshop and scenery shop), built in 1913. Its sympathetic new extensions and the railway viaduct opposite have group value.



#### D. 19<sup>th</sup> Century Public Houses and miscellaneous buildings

2.86 These mostly corner pubs erected to serve the terraces of housing and factories that once densely packed the neighbourhood. Whilst much of the housing has been redeveloped many of the pubs remain and often share common characteristic of age, form and siting yet all have their own unique architectural character and bring architectural and historic richness to the conservation area.

2.87 The Rose Public House, no. 35 Albert Embankment is a mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century purpose-built corner public house in an Italianate style. It comprises of four-storeys, three-bays to Albert Embankment and six-bays to Tinworth Street. The pub frontage has glazed tiles, original joinery and ornamental capitals. Ornamental ironwork decorates the shop fascia and the window ledges on the 2nd and 3rd floors. Rusticated quoins. Inappropriate uPVC windows on upper floors degrade its appearance.

2.88 Two pubs on Black Prince Road have special interest / group value for their close proximity reflecting the unusual clustering of public houses in the locality in the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

The Queen's Head PH, no. 71, is a late 19<sup>th</sup> century corner pub in the Queen Anne style. The original ground floor pub front survives with brick elevations over. Gabled dormers, large chimneys and oriel window give it a strong character.

The Jolly Gardeners PH, nos. 49 – 51, is a late 19<sup>th</sup> century corner pub. The ground floor pub front has seven fluted Corinthian pilasters, the brickwork is banded and decorated and the window arches are decorated. There is a fine plaque over the corner entrance corner.

2.89 The Windmill PH, 44 Lambeth High Street dates from 1886 has an unusually canted façade to accommodate an historic kink in the street alignment. It is five bays with a faience pub front. The upper floors are of stock brick with 1/1 timber sash windows. The render walls within the modern mansard addition have not been successful.

2.90 Black Dog, Vauxhall Walk was rebuilt in the 1860's but on the site of an earlier public house. This red brick four storey corner pub on the corner of Glasshouse Street has Dutch style Edwardian gables, stone mullions, banding, stone ball finials, and decorated window arches.



The Black Dog PH



The Queen's Head PH



The Windmill PH

### Miscellaneous Buildings

2.91 Shaftesbury House and Cromwell House are walk-up Victorian flats on Vauxhall Walk are attractively detailed in brickwork and decorative ironwork and represent relatively early examples of their type in Lambeth. They have group value with the Black Dog public house and the adjoining hotel.

2.92 The Beaconsfield Art Gallery, no. 22 Newport Street (former Ragged School) was once a larger, more formal architectural composition before it was substantially demolished in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to accommodate the widening of the railway viaduct; only 1/3 of the original remains. It is of both architectural and historic interest.

#### E. Landmark 20<sup>th</sup> Century buildings

2.93 The river facing building plots along Albert Embankment attracted a number of office developments in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The majority were of limited architectural interest and have subsequently been redeveloped but a number of best examples survive and are included in the conservation area. They have a group value for their architectural quality and townscape contribution they make to the banks of the River Thames.

2.94 The former London Fire Brigade HQ at No. 8 Albert Embankment was the first truly high-status HQ building erected on this section of the river frontage; like County Hall (further to the north) it positively addresses the river and has a strongly articulated silhouette. It comprises a HQ buildings (incorporating a fire station) to Albert Embankment, a drill ground to the rear, (containing a training tower), a training school and workshops to the rear (on east side of Lambeth High Street). The main elements are listed, in part for their little altered character (see 2009 list description).

2.95 It is only at the rear of the building, that the true fire station use of the site is exhibited - the appliance bay openings, the covered wash-down area, the balcony access to the upper-floor accommodation and the training tower. The design also exhibits a number of unique features which were incorporated into the design to meet the Brigade's ceremonial requirements including tiered spectator terraces overlooking the drill yard. A band stand was demolished in the 1980s. Architecturally and stylistically the streamlined forms and crisp detailing of the rear is a clear reference to the rise of the international modern influences; a practical aesthetic for such a functional building type.

2.96 The multifunctional drill yard space was designed to serve both the day-to-day needs of the fire station and the public role for weekly public drill events and formal Brigade ceremonies. It has direct access to the balconies via an external staircase with ornamental iron-work. It contains an unusual obelisk structure which ventilates basement control room bunker accommodation which is considered to be of interest.

2.97 The drill tower is part of the original design and has materials and detailing consistent with the main building. Nine storeys tall, it is angled at 45 degrees to face the main building (making it highly visible to the spectators on the viewing balconies). It is visible (in silhouette against the sky) from across the river at Millbank and from Albert Embankment because of a gap in the building.

2.98 The Training School and Workshop building shares the same architectural language as the main building with the materials, window detailing, brickwork and stone banding; there are also elements of decorative ironwork set into the roof garden parapet. This was a conscious design response to provide a dignified backdrop to the public drills and ceremonies when seen from the viewing balconies on the main building. This building is not statu-

tory listed but is considered to have historic and architectural significance and is a positive contributor to the conservation area.

2.99 The 1980s control building on the corner of Black Prince Road and Lambeth High Street was designed by the GLC Department of Architecture and Civic Design in 1980. This bulky structure obscures views of the original rear elevation.

2.100 Peninsula Heights, No. 93 Albert Embankment (formerly Alembic House) is a post-war former office designed by Oscar Garry & Partners and built for the United Nations Association in 1960-62. Pevsner and Cherry in the *Buildings of England – London: South* rated it the best of the post-war buildings on the embankment. However, it was re-clad and converted to flats in 1996.

2.101 Camelford House and Tintagel House, nos. 87 – 91 Albert Embankment were both designed by T.P.Bennett which was a leading architectural practice, designing large blocks of offices and flats for nearly a century. They are fine examples of early 1960's office architecture and have a particularly impressive in views across the River Thames. Tintagel House is 12 storeys and was first occupied by the Metropolitan Police. It has elevations of Portland Stone and brick and a square roof top pavilion topped by an elegant copper needle and ball finial. Camelford House (1962) is a 16 storey tower with a 12 storey curving wing. It was first occupied by the GPO's London Telecommunications regional head office.

2.102 Vauxhall Cross Building, no. 85 Albert Embankment (1989-1992) is a large post-modern HQ building designed by Sir Terry Farrell. Architecturally it has strong Art-Deco influences creating a dramatic stepped form. Its monumental form makes it a key landmark on the River Thames.



Tintagel House

Camelford House

## Major Open Spaces

### River Thames

2.103 This north to south section of the River Thames is straight, broad and defined at each end by a listed bridge (Grade II\* listed Westminster Bridge to the north and Grade II\* listed Vauxhall bridge to the South) and crossed in the middle by Lambeth Bridge (Grade II listed). All three bridges are beautifully detailed and constructed to be ornaments on the river. The River Thames and its riverside walk are a significant element of the conservation area's special interest and provide the best public viewpoints from which to appreciate the Westminster World Heritage Site.

2.104 At low tide there are substantial areas of exposed mud flats or shingle bank (up to 80 meters in length and 40 meters wide). These banks support important ecology, contain archaeology and are accessible on foot from Lacks Dock. The tidal character of the Thames, its piers and moorings are important elements and the river itself, with greater river bus services, is now becoming a place from which to view the embankment retaining walls, landmark buildings and heritage lining its banks. Views from the river, bridges and embankments are equally important. A key characteristic of the River is its undeveloped nature; with the exception of the working piers there is no built development on the river. This uninterrupted characteristic is a key aspect of the character of this conservation area.

### St Thomas' Hospital Grounds

2.105 The 19<sup>th</sup> Century hospital design included a number of garden spaces laid out between the ward blocks which were considered of benefit to convalescence. Regrettably these have all, been lost or built upon. However, on the post-war part of the hospital the landscaping is spacious and generous. The western boundary (much of which is publicly accessible) is tree lined and elevated above the riverside walk affording excellent views west of the Houses of Parliament (Palace of Westminster) World Heritage Site. Mature trees and soft landscaping To Westminster Bridge Road and Lambeth Palace Road is also of note.



Amphibious vehicles access the river at Lack's Dock

## Trees

2.106 Trees contribute significantly to the amenity and character of the Albert Embankment Conservation Area and add much to its character in views from the river and the north bank. The roadway along the embankment from Peninsular Heights to Lambeth Bridge is tree lined to create an attractive boulevard character. An Evergreen Holm Oak, planted to mark the passing of the Millennium, stands on Albert Embankment Gardens North.

## Building Character and Materials

2.107 The vast majority of buildings in the conservation area are constructed in brick; a key aspect of local distinctiveness. Portland Stone is used on the high status buildings to provide detailing and refinement. Carving, decoration and ornamentation is characteristic of virtually all the buildings; even some of the industrial buildings. Architectural ceramics were manufactured here. The Doulton Offices showcase examples of their products and the presence of glazed bricks and tiles on many of the pubs reinforce this locally important character. White/cream tiles (successfully used to mimic Portland Stone) are a key feature of the St Thomas' post-war buildings.

2.108 Irrespective of their age or style the buildings often have interesting and decorative roofscapes; pitches, parapets, chimney stacks, campaniles, towers cupolas, finials, flag poles and other features enrich the roofscape.



2.109 In the 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings windows are typically timber with traditional typical pub front joinery at ground floor and sliding sashes above. The frames are of the traditional slender type with single glazing. The large 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings typically have metal windows. The former London Fire Brigade HQ has steel casements of a moderne style, Camelford House and Tintagel House have natural finish aluminium sliding sashes and Vauxhall Cross Building has powder coated aluminium units.

2.110 The railway arches typically have modern infills. The standard Network Rail commercial infills are robust and in keeping with the industrial character. The retail / bar and restaurant infills are typically glazed and inset.

### **Signs**

2.111 Business and property signage is generally discrete. However, signage is most problematic on the railway arches in retail and restaurant use – the ad-hoc application of signs and adverts to the brickwork of the viaduct generally having an adverse effect on the unified character of the viaduct itself. High level signs are not characteristic of the conservation area or of the new tall building development immediately adjoining it.

### **Advertisements**

2.112 Large billboards are not characteristic of the conservation area. Illuminated bus shelter advertisements and free standing advert panels harm visual amenity on Albert embankment – resulting in harm to the approaches to the WWHs.

### **Activity and Uses**

2.113 The Riverside Walk is an important route for pedestrians and cyclists and forms part of the Thames Path Way National Path. The section between Lambeth Bridge and Westminster Bridge is particularly popular with tourists and television crews. The primary land uses in the area are healthcare and office / commercial with some residential uses.

### **Boundary treatments**

2.114 The conservation area is largely devoid of traditional boundary treatments. Where historic / ornamental boundary treatments survive, they add to the richness of the street scene. Tall brick boundary walls can be found on some of the industrial units in Newport Street and Randall Row. The ornamental cast iron railings in place at St. Thomas's Hospital (some to Lambeth Palace Road and a section to Westminster Bridge Road) are particularly rare survivors. The Vauxhall Cross Building has good quality Art Deco style railings which, regrettably have been marred by additions.

2.115 The application of memorial plaques to the Portland stone west boundary of the hospital has added visual clutter diminished its design integrity and its appearance.

## **Public Realm**

2.116 The close proximity to the WWHS means that the conservation area sits within its ‘approaches’ – the public realm leading to the World Heritage Site. A map of these approaches is contained within Appendix 1. In accordance with the World Heritage Site Management Plan Lambeth Council is committed to managing these approaches to ensure they present a high quality, clutter-free public realm. This has benefits both for the World Heritage Site and the conservation area.

2.117 There are a variety of paving materials, kerbs, cross-over and highways details present within the conservation area; they form a reasonably harmonious streetscape. However, the prevailing paving material along Albert Embankment itself is York stone. Of particular note is the surviving historic paving on the Riverside Walk between Westminster Bridge and Lambeth Bridge – a largely intact survivor it has been undermined slightly by the insertion of modern contrasting slabs promoting walking routes along its length.

2.118 In the more industrial back-streets granite setts can be found – an attractive rarity which add much to local character.

### Street Furniture

2.119 The age and consistency of street furniture throughout the area is varied but there are a range of elements of particular note include:

#### Ornamental lamp columns

2.120 There are a number of excellent historic examples within the conservation area. Their night time appearance is of particular appearance. Examples include:

The Sturgeon lamps examples lining the Albert Embankment retaining wall at regular intervals - these iconic globe-topped cast iron lamps are one of the River most defining features.

The recently restored Tudor lamps on Westminster Bridge.

The lattice lamp columns on Lambeth Bridge.

- The Lambeth Parish lamp column located on the north approach to Lambeth Bridge (one of only a handful of surviving in the borough).

- Ornamental Lamp on Vintage House, Albert Embankment.

Post-modern style lamps at Vauxhall Cross Building.

#### Seating

2.121 Noteworthy examples include:

Cast iron benches on granite plinths lining the Riverside Walk from Peninsula Heights to Westminster Bridge. Ornate open-work panels and arms fashioned in the shape of swans with timber slats for seating.

Art Deco style benches at Vauxhall Cross Building

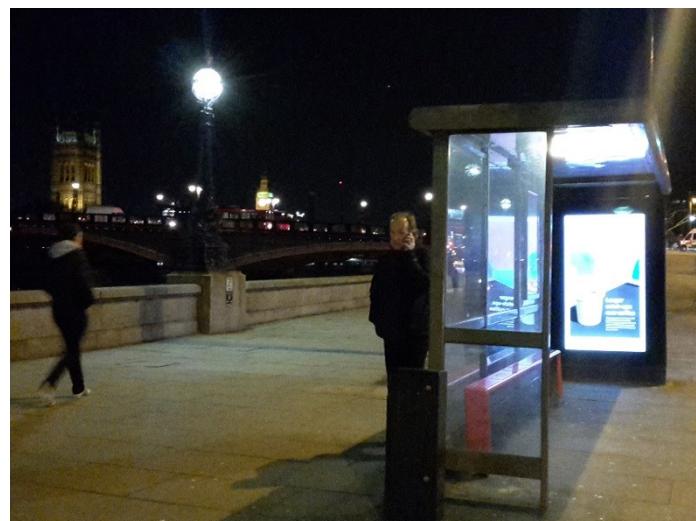
The modern timber boat benches and associated ornamental timbers at White Hart Dock.

2.122 Other examples of note include the K6 kiosk (grade II listed) at Lambeth Pier - an attractive historic survivor and a popular photo stop for tourists who have come to view the Palace of Westminster and the drinking fountain built into the south boundary of the Medical School (red brick and polished stone trefoil gothic niche with pet trough).

2.123 In places street furniture is problematic, causing visual clutter and harm to amenity in an otherwise high quality public realm:

The Riverside Walk around Lambeth Pier is a particularly important place for people to congregate to view the Palace of Westminster. Unfortunately a great deal of street clutter has crept in over the last few decades due to a lack of effective management. Measures are being taken to address this and prevent more.

Bus shelter advertisements – large illuminated or digital panels are distracting elements in the townscape approaches along Albert Embankment and Lambeth palace Road. Harming the approaches and immediate setting of the Westminster World Heritage Site. Action is required to address this.

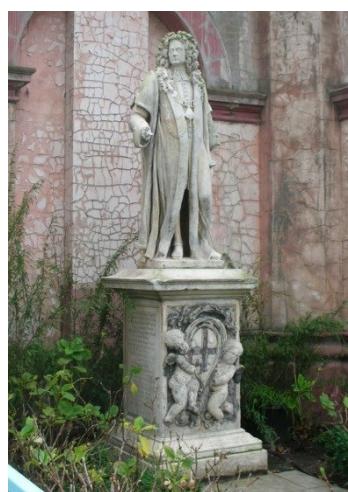


## **Public Art / Memorials**

2.124 There is a wide range of historic and modern public art within the area. It has a positive role to play in enriching the historic built environment. However, it has reached saturation point and there is real risk that further installations could bring visual clutter and harm to this sensitive historic area.

### St. Thomas's Hospital

2.125 The Hospital has a long tradition of public sculpture including two statues of King Edward VI and the statue of Thomas Clayton by Grinling Gibbons. An elegant urn stands in the central garden at Gassiot House. Other, more modern examples include the torsion fountain by Naum Gabo, 'Across the Divide' by Rick Kirby, 'Children of the World;' by Frédéric Lanovsky and the 'Tree of Life' by Chris Plowman. The most recent addition is the Mary Secole memorial by Martin Jennings. These all enrich the hospital campus.



**Albert Embankment Gardens**

2.126A bust of Violette Szabo by Karen Newman and memorials to the Special Operations Executive, the Heroes of Telemark and the Marquis French Resistance Fighters forms the focal point of Albert Embankment Gardens (North). A cast bronze bust on a granite plinth with cast bronze panels depicting the 12<sup>th</sup> century philosopher, statesman and poet Basaveshwara is the focal point within Albert Embankment Gardens (West).

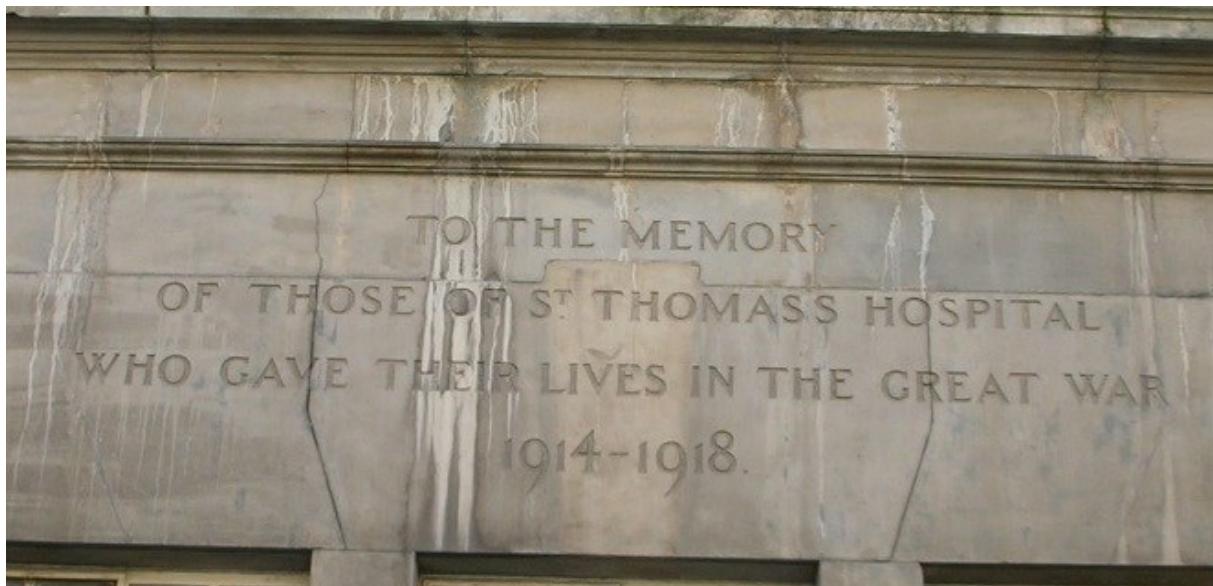
**Black Prince Road**

2.127 Mosaics within the railway arches at Black Prince Road, Salamanca Street and in the Pedlars Park are all by Southbank Mosaics and depict scenes of local significance including: examples of the work of Doulton's Lambeth Wares, the Black Prince Edward III's eldest son the Duke of Cornwall whom the road is named , mosaics and ceramics depicting views of the city of Salamanca; the street is named after a decisive Napoleonic battle won by the Duke of Wellington and ceramics referencing North Lambeth's role as a major ceramics manufacturing centre with over 70 potteries producing a variety of goods. A Pedlar whose image can be found in a stained glass window in St Mary's Church.

**Other Memorials**

2.128 Two plaques (one commemorating victims of the Human Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, the other a memorial to Lieutenant Colonel John By) are fixed to the grade II listed Albert Embankment boundary wall of St. Thomas's Hospital. These two detract somewhat from the impressive unbroken line of the Portland stone wall. For that reason further installations on this wall will not be supported. Graphite Square has a modest war memorial in the form of a sculptural wreath which is deemed noteworthy.

2.129 The former Fire Brigade HQ at 8 Albert Embankment contains a very significant Memorial Hall to fire fighters who died in public service. The hall itself and the monuments within it are statutory listed. St. Thomas House, Lambeth Palace Road is itself a War Memorial in its own right, commissioned by St. Thomas's Hospital War Memorial Fund Committee as a facility for students.



Commemorative inscription on the façade of St Thomas House

## **Designated Heritage Assets**

### Westminster World Heritage Site

2.130 The conservation area provides some of the most important locations to appreciate the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of this internationally recognised site. The conservation area is also a key area of immediate setting and public realm approaches. This means great care must be taken to ensure that change does not harm the OUV.

### Statutory Listed Buildings

2.131 Statutory Listing means that the building is protected by law. This protection extends to the whole building including its interior. It also extends to any object or structure fixed to the building as well as to any freestanding objects or structures, which lie within the curtilage of the building and which were erected before 1 July 1948. Listed Building Consent is required for any works that might affect the special interest of the listed building. The impact of development on the setting of a statutory listed building is a material planning consideration. A list of the statutory listed buildings within the conservation area can be found in Appendix 2.

### Conservation Area

2.132 This conservation area is a designated heritage asset in its own right. The preservation or enhancement of the areas special architectural or historic interest is the objective of conservation area designation.

## **Non Designated Heritage Assets**

2.133 These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. In Lambeth these are collectively known as the Local Heritage List which includes designed spaces, locally listed buildings and archaeological priority areas.

### Locally Listed Buildings

2.134 The Council maintains a list of designed spaces and buildings of local architectural or historic interest, which it believes are worthy of conservation. Local listing brings with it no additional planning controls but is a material consideration when the planning applications are considered. The selection criteria for local listing are:

#### **A - Architecture**

The architectural style, decoration and detailing, materials, craftsmanship and plan form may give it special interest if these features are of particular note - above the ordinary in their design and execution, and reasonably intact. This criterion can include the best works of architects who were active locally. In some cases altered buildings may still be worthy of inclusion, especially if by an architect of importance.

#### **B - History**

Buildings and structures that reflect the diverse aspects of the social, economic, and physical development of Lambeth may be of interest. If the building type is reasonably common – houses, pubs, churches - only the best examples will be added to the list.

#### **C - Close historical association**

Connections with people or events that are acknowledged as of being of borough wide / national importance may make some buildings worthy of inclusion. Building materials of clear local interest (such as Doulton's architectural ceramics) may be considered in this category.

#### **D - Townscape**

Some buildings and structures contribute to the richness of our street scene, individually or in groups they may contribute greatly to the quality of local townscape or landscape. Similarly, they may contribute positively to the setting or group value of statutory listed buildings.

#### **E - Age and rarity**

The older a building or structure is and/or the fewer the surviving examples of its type the more historically important it is.

2.135 At the time of writing the following assets were on the local heritage list:

<b>Number</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Date listed</b>
The Rose PH, 35	Albert Embankment	A, B,D	18.07.2016
Paving between Lambeth Bridge and Westminster Bridge	Albert Embankment	B, E	18.07.2016
Lambeth Pier	Albert Embankment	A, B, D, E	18.07.2016
Vauxhall Cross Building	Albert Embankment	A, D	18.07.2016
Former Jolly Gardeners PH, 49 – 51	Black Prince Road	A, B	18.07.2016
Former Queen's Head PH, 71	Black Prince Road	A, B	18.07.16
Lambeth Parish Lamp Standard	Lambeth Bridge Approach, Lambeth Palace Road		26.03.2012
The windmill PH, 44	Lambeth High Street	A, B, D	18.07.2016
War Memorial, Graphite Square	Vauxhall Walk	A, D, E	18.07.2016
The Black Dog PH, 112	Vauxhall Walk	A, B, D	18.07.2016

Further information, including descriptions, is available online.

#### Archaeology Priority Area No.2

2.136 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments or protected wrecks within the conservation area. However, due to the strong likelihood of significant archaeological remains surviving below ground level much of the conservation area is designated as an Archaeological Priority Area No.2 - North Lambeth Prehistoric settlement, Roman settlement and boat, medieval riverside zone village centres and important houses, post-medieval settlement and early industrial development). The Thames foreshore has been recognised as having great archaeological potential due to the presence of waterlogged deposits surviving from all periods and the possibility of recovering and interpreting archaeo-environmental data contained within the sediments. A map of APA No. 2 can be seen in Appendix

## **Positive Contributors**

2.137 Features that make a positive contribution are key elements of the special interest of the conservation area. There is a presumption in favour of their sympathetic retention. Demolition or unsympathetic alteration will generally be resisted. All designated and non-designated heritage assets are deemed to make a positive contribution. The conservation area boundary has been carefully drawn to ensure that the vast majority of buildings and open spaces included make a positive contribution. Should queries arise clarification should be sought from the Council's Conservation and Design team.

## **Views**

2.138 The views and panoramas from within the conservation area form a key part of its character. The conservation area is uniquely placed in central London on the banks of the River Thames opposite the WWHS. There is historic significance here too in the fact one represents the heart of 'the state' and the Lambeth side (the adjoining Lambeth Palace Conservation Area) represents the home of the established church – The Church of England. This exceptional context creates numerous views and vistas of importance, international, national, city wide, borough and local importance.

### London Plan Views

2.139 Views given protection by the London Plan include:

LVMF 18A - Westminster Bridge – Upstream (south) views towards Lambeth Bridge and beyond to Vauxhall. St Thomas's Hospital is in the foreground of this view and Albert Embankment features prominently.

LVMF 19 - Lambeth Bridge – views north towards WWHS and Westminster Bridge including Albert Embankment, St Thomas's Hospital and Lambeth Palace.

LVMF 22A – Albert Embankment towards WWHS and Westminster Bridge.

The LVMF provides detailed guidance on these views.

### Lambeth Local Plan View

2.140 Views of local importance identified in Policy Q25 of the Lambeth Local Plan and relating to this conservation area include the following views:

#### **Landmark Silhouette**

(viii) View NW from Lambeth Palace terrace to the Houses of Parliament (Victoria Tower)

(ix) View from Lambeth Palace garden to Victoria Tower to the Houses of Parliament (Victoria Tower) as viewed through the gap between St Thomas Hospital building and the Guy's and St Thomas' Medical School Building.

(xi) View from St Thomas' Hospital garden to Palace of Westminster

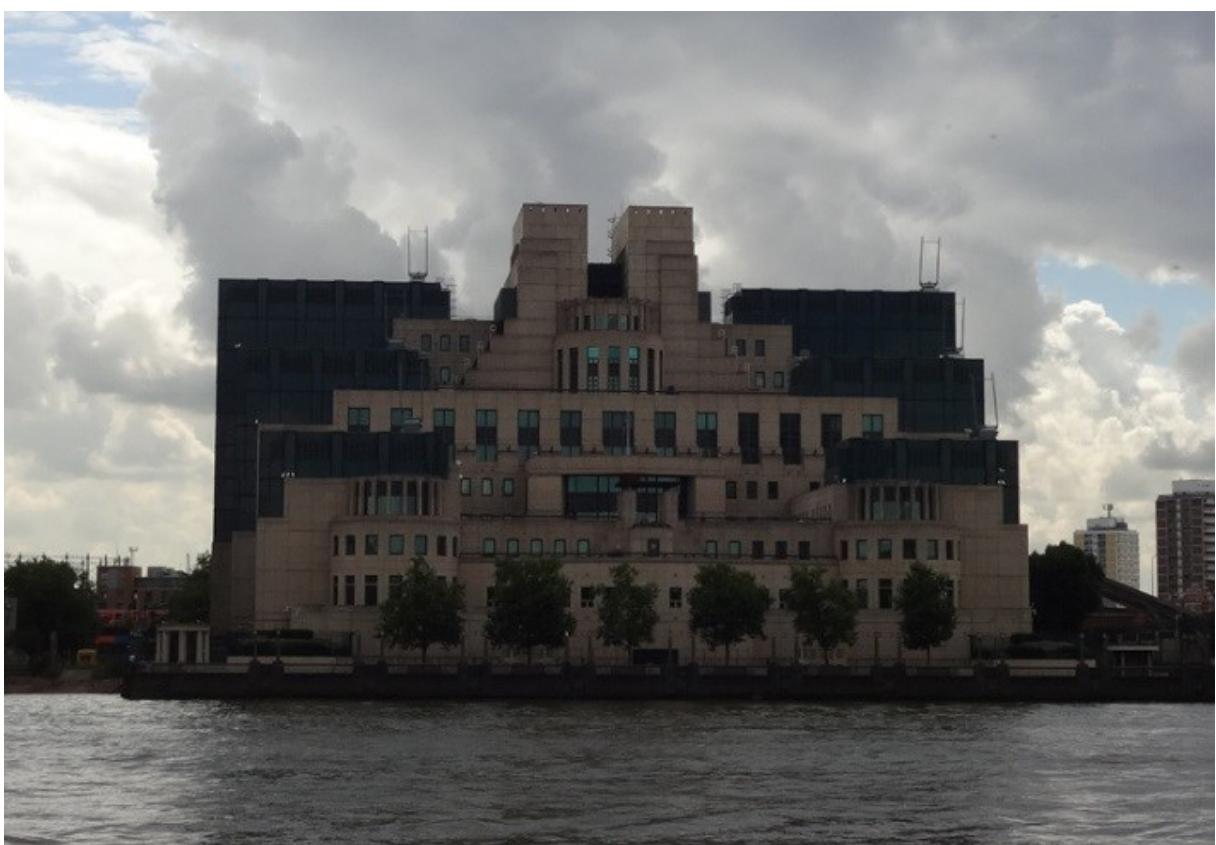
(xiii) View SW from St George Wharf Pier to Battersea Power Station

(xvi) View of 8 Albert Embankment from Millbank

(xvii) View from Millbank to Vauxhall Cross Building (MI6)



View of 8 Albert Embankment from Millbank



View from Millbank to Vauxhall Cross Building (MI6)

**Metropolitan Views (City of Westminster)**

2.141 City of Westminster identifies a number of important views:

V14 Palace of Westminster from Lambeth Bridge

V15B Palace of Westminster from Albert Embankment

V25 Lambeth Palace from Lambeth Bridge

These largely duplicate views protected by the London Plan.

**Views into the conservation area**

2.142 The river, the riverside parapet of Victoria Tower Gardens, Lambeth Bridge (south side), make excellent view locations from which to appreciate the heritage assets and general character of the Albert Embankment, St Thomas' Hospital and the Lambeth Palace complex (Lambeth Palace Conservation Area). The view from Victoria Tower Gardens with river the foreground and canopy of mature trees pierced by the roofline of the historic buildings is the only place where the composition of the historic St Lambeth Palace complex can be fully appreciated.

2.143 The river, Millbank and Lambeth Bridge and Vauxhall Bridge afford good views of the significant buildings along Albert Embankment including 8 Albert embankment. Peninsula Heights, Tintagel House and Camelford House read as a group with the Vauxhall Cross building. The Rose Public House and Vintage House are clearly visible from Millbank.

2.144 When viewed from the River itself or from the opposite river bank two buildings on Albert Embankment can be considered to have landmark status – No. 8 Albert Embankment and the Vauxhall Cross Building. Their landmark status comes from their form, treatment and architecture but particularly from their silhouettes against open sky. In both instances it is clear from the compositions that their designers intended them to be appreciated in this way. Both are symmetrical, imposing and richly modelled to create defined and interesting silhouettes against the sky. No. 8 Albert Embankment is visible in true silhouette from the footway and south entrance gates to the little public garden which serves the south steps up onto Lambeth Bridge. This viewing place is within the Smith Square Conservation Area, Westminster.

2.145 Views from all of the bridges give impressive appreciation of the River Thames as it flows north. A striking gateway to the conservation area in terms of sheer scale is the impressive vista from Westminster at Vauxhall Bridge looking east to Vauxhall Station with the grandiose mass of the Vauxhall Cross Building and St George Wharf flanking the view.

**Views out of the conservation area**

2.146 The riverscape of the north bank (Pimlico, Millbank and the Palace of Westminster) form the entire backdrop on the western side of the River Thames creating an unfolding panorama for the whole length of the Albert Embankment riverside walk.

2.147 The views towards the Palace of Westminster are all noteworthy given its designation as a World Heritage Site. See detailed assessment elsewhere in this document.

2.148 The Millbank Tower is prominent in views from the bridges. The Tate Gallery is a par-

ticularly noteworthy landmark in views out; its significance is enhanced because it was the gift of Henry Tate, a long-term Lambeth resident and local philanthropist. Its backdrop is marred by a post-war tower block.

2.149 The two imposing blocks flanking the Westminster approach to Lambeth Bridge are particularly impressive from Lambeth Bridge and the Embankment on either side.

#### Views within the Conservation Area

2.150 Some noteworthy townscape views include:

At Black Prince Road the building line sets back behind White Hart Dock. This reveals the south flank of no. 8 Albert Embankment in views from the south – making the building the more prominent than any other along this section of the Embankment.

The view of the Fire HQ drill tower with the Windmill pub as its backdrop from the junction of Black Prince Road and Lambeth High Street is noteworthy and so too is the view of these buildings west along Whitgift Street.

There is an vista from beneath the railway bridge on Black Prince Road towards west across the river where the view is terminated by the Neo-Classical Thames House (1929).



The content and backdrop of some of the best views lie beyond Lambeth's boundary.

## **Capacity for Change**

2.151 The key objective of conservation area designation is to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the area. The boundary has been drawn carefully to only include assets of value. Where opportunities may arise to enhance or redevelop neutral contributor buildings. All redevelopment proposals will be expected to preserve or enhance the character of appearance of the conservation area.

## **Enhancement Opportunities**

2.152 Proposals that would lead to the enhancement of the conservation area will generally be supported.

2.153 There is scope for the enhancement of the public realm to benefit both the conservation area and the approaches to the Westminster world Heritage Site. This should include the removal of street clutter (superfluous signage etc.); and the removal of bus shelter advertisement panels.

2.154 Proposals to address the dominant presence of traffic on Westminster Bridge Road would be welcome. The subway access adjacent to St Thomas' Hospital could potentially provide much needed level access onto the Queen's Walk. The railings surrounding the subway should be retained.

2.155 The refuse stored on the pavement of Tinworth Street, fronting the Crown Public House, creates visual clutter. Refuse should be stored out of sight or be appropriately screened.

2.1656 The old flank boundary wall at Shaftsbury House / Cromwell House, Vauxhall Walk would benefit from being reduced in height to 1.5m to improve sightlines.

### Albert Embankment between Lambeth Bridge and Westminster Bridge

2.157 The removal of the Jubilee Greenway pavement plaques which has introduced a discordant element on the historic paving between Westminster Bridge and Lambeth Bridge. Replacement of badly patched historic paving here would also be an enhancement.

2.158 On Albert Embankment near the Lambeth Pier a three-armed South Bank Employer's Group poster hoarding and a Legible London totem both obstruct the Riverside Walk, restricting views; they have also damaged the historic York stone paving. The telescopes here are having a similar adverse impact too. Removal of these should be a priority.

### St Thomas' Hospital

2.159 The hospital complex would benefit from:

1. Removal or screening of the numerous antenna on the roof of the north block.
2. The removal of intrusive 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations to the Victorian buildings and the poor quality structures built on the remaining garden courtyards between the wards.
3. Improvements to the parking areas fronting Lambeth Palace Road.
4. Relocation of the memorial plaque to victims of CJD on the boundary wall of St Thomas – facing the Riverside Walk. It is visually disrupting the otherwise unaltered listed wall. A more appropriate location within the hospital site would be preferable.

**Albert Embankment Conservation Area Character Appraisal, 2017**





### Albert Embankment between Vauxhall Bridge to Lambeth Bridge

2.160 A range of enhancements might include:

1. The repair of the timber benches at White Hart Dock
2. The repair of stone slabs at Vauxhall Cross building's riverside
3. The removal of refuse bins and associated clutter on footway at Tamesis Dock.
4. The ad hoc platforms and restaurant paraphilia add considerable clutter to the grassed area in front of the railway arches. There is significant scope for enhancement.
5. The shop fronts and signage within the railway arches have in places a shabby appearance caused by overly large and inconsistent shop fronts and signage. Opportunities exist here to improve the situation.
6. The improvement of the retaining wall and pathway along the river path from Peninsula Heights to Vauxhall Cross Building.
7. The removal of skips and large wheelie bins located in the car park to the rear of Camelford House, fronting the river walk. Refuse should be stored out of sight or be appropriately screened.
8. The improvement of the unattractive railings, untidy servicing areas, car parking, cycle stores and bike parking areas fronting riverside at Camelford House.
9. Restoration of the historic parapet balustrade on Vauxhall Bridge.

### **Appraisal Conclusion**

2.161 Albert Embankment has a significance well beyond Lambeth. It contributes to the character of the wider city across the River Thames and makes a significant contribution to the setting Westminster World Heritage Site. It warrants every commitment to secure the ongoing preservation and enhancement of its special interest.

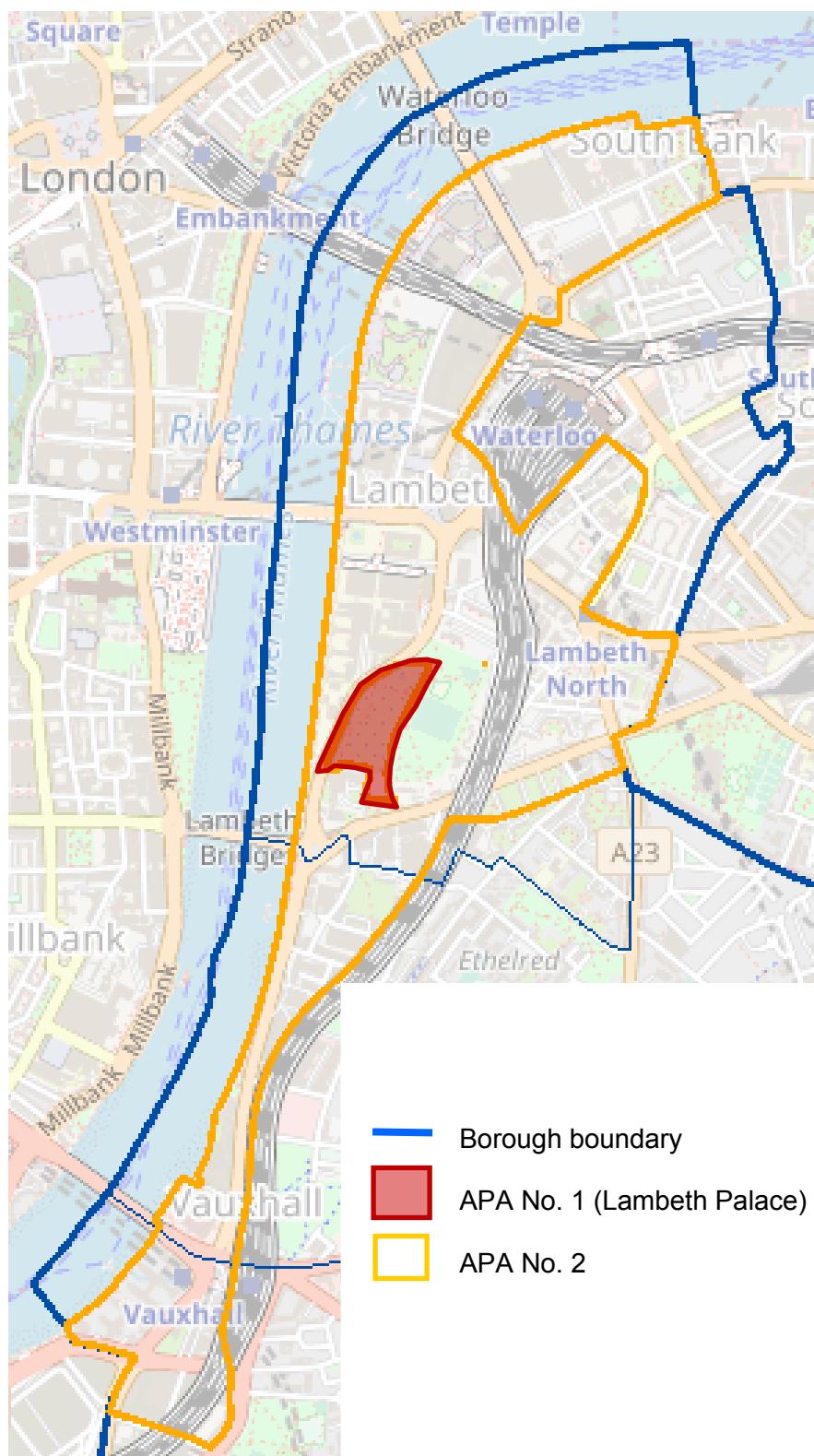
## APPENDIX 1 - WWHS Approaches Map



## APPENDIX 2 - Statutory Listed Buildings

Name/Number	Road	Grade
River Wall with 28 Lamp Standards from Lambeth Bridge to west of Alembic House	Albert Embankment	II
Four Public Benches on Embankment Footpath immediately north of Alembic House	Albert Embankment	II
No. 8, London Fire Brigade Headquarters	Albert Embankment	II
Drill Tower to the East of No. 8 Albert Embankment	Albert Embankment	II
Southbank House	Black Prince Road	II
No.s 1 – 7	Newport Street	II
St Thomas Hospital South Wing	Lambeth Palace Road	II
Wall Along Western Boundary of St Thomas' Hospital River facing boundary Wall	Albert Embankment (East Side)	II
Lambeth bridge and attached parapets, light standards	Lambeth Road	II
K6 telephone kiosk by Lambeth Pier	Albert Embankment	II
Statue of Robert Clayton at North entrance to ward block of North Wing	St Thomas' Hospital	Grade I
Stone statue of Edward VI at North Entrance	St Thomas' Hospital	Grade II*
Bronze statue of Edward VI in corridor of North Block	St Thomas' Hospital	Grade II*
Fifteen Public Benches on Embankment footpath between Lambeth Bridge and Westminster Bridge	Albert Embankment (West Side)	II
River Wall with 36 Lamp Standards between Lambeth Bridge and Westminster Bridge	Albert Embankment (West Side)	II
Block 5 (including chapel) and Governor's Hall of St Thomas' Hospital	Lambeth Palace Road	II
Block 9 of St Thomas' Hospital Medical School	Lambeth Palace Road (West Side)	II

## APPENDIX 3 - Archaeology Priority Area No. 2



This document was prepared by

Lambeth Planning's  
Conservation and Design Team

May 2017