

# Introduction



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## Introduction

- This is the second edition of the Streetscape Design Manual, with many additions and changes made to the first edition, published in November 2000.
- The purpose of this manual is to raise the standard of street works consistently throughout the borough of Camden.
- Not only does the manual set standards for the Council's own street works, but it is also intended as a guide for contractors, developers, public utilities and other private agencies working on Camden streets.



Regent's Canal at Camden Lock

# 0.01 Continued

## Principles

- The six key design principles are:
  - 1 Respecting and enhancing the local streetscape.
  - 2 Using a simplified palette of quality materials.
  - 3 Providing a clutter-free environment on our streets.
  - 4 Enabling equal and inclusive access for all road users.
  - 5 Considered, yet innovative complementary design.
  - 6 Making the street environment safer.

## Aims

- The aims of the Manual are to:
  - 1 Identify an overall image for the borough's streets with respect to the appearance of surfacing materials, street furniture and lighting.
  - 2 Provide a reference guide for the use of standard design details, surfacing materials and street furniture to be used in engineering, traffic management and environmental improvement schemes.
  - 3 Use materials and furniture that are attractive, appropriate to the area, durable, low maintenance and practical.



Tavistock Square railings

## Target Audience

- This second edition of the Streetscape Design Manual is primarily aimed at, and written for officers within the Council, particularly those in,
  - Traffic Engineering
  - Highway Engineering
  - Highways Management
  - Boulevard Project
  - Street Policy
  - Forward Planning
  - Conservation & Urban Design
- Council contractors, private developers and other sections of the Council, including Housing and Leisure, will be encouraged to adopt the Manual.
- Other interested parties will include local groups, particularly conservation, transport and disability groups.



Waiting for the bus in Kilburn High Road

# Chapters of the Manual

## Chapter 1: Local Character

### 1.01 to 1.09

This chapter discusses the importance of local character distinctiveness and briefly describes some elements of the streetscape that have a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing this, including historic, listed and modern sympathetic styles, and street trees. Camden's conservation areas are also outlined, including advice on how to refer to and use the Conservation Area Statements in designing new schemes.

## Chapter 2: Carriageway Details

### 2.01 to 2.09

This chapter covers design options for the carriageway, including layouts, traffic calming, crossings and carriageway markings. It also contains information on subjects that need more attention paid to them, such as drainage and materials. This section is intended to complement the Highway Works Contract and TSR&GD 2002, by providing clarity on preferred designs where variation is allowed.



Zebra crossing on Hampstead High Street

## Chapter 3: Footway Details

### 3.01 to 3.10

This chapter gives details on the main paving and kerb options including traditional and modern materials, as well as Boulevard specifications. Footway adaptations for the visually impaired and other mobility impairments are also described in detail, complementing government guidelines on tactile paving and implications of the DDA 1995.

## Chapter 4: Street Furniture

### 4.01 to 4.17

This chapter provides information on major items of street furniture and states preferred designs, colours and positions within the footway and carriageway. With the overarching aim of the manual being to reduce 'visual' street clutter, careful amalgamation, coordination and positioning of street furniture plays a major role in achieving this objective as well as reducing the 'palette' of materials in the street.



Bus shelter neatly positioned at back of footway

# 0.04

## How to 'read' the Manual

- Following extensive consultation with officers and external interest groups, the style of the Manual has fundamentally changed.
- Clearer indexing, extensive cross-referencing and a more direct, instructive style has been adopted to reflect the growing desire for a 'quick reference' manual.
- The Manual is designed to complement other existing guidance and regulatory documents, filling in the 'gaps' where necessary, particularly if Camden has a preferred design within permitted variances.
- As Camden streets vary enormously, 'hard and fast' rules are very difficult to make. The language of the document reflects this and should be read carefully. A brief explanation of the main words of 'positive instruction', are given below. (The reverse statements can also be deduced from the explanations.)



Wooden bench on the Jubilee Walk

**“...must...” or “...is required...”**

A design principle has to be followed ‘to the letter’. Exceptional circumstances are likely to require specific dispensations from Camden Management or Central Government.

**“...should...”**

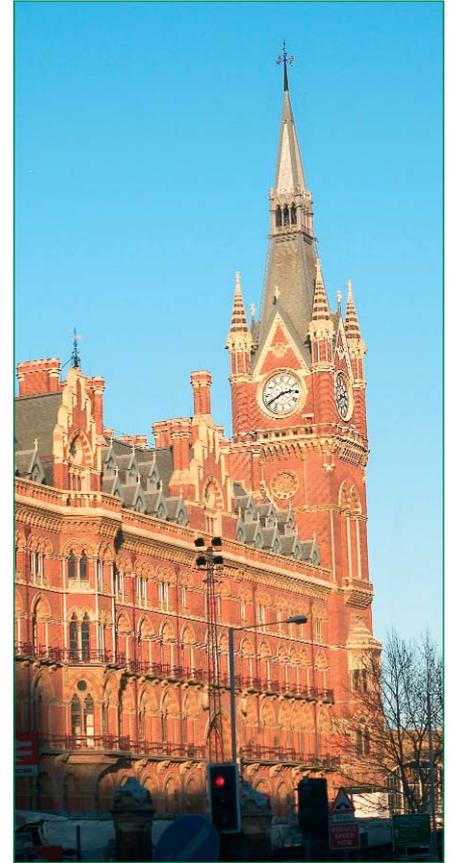
A design principle should be followed, as a matter of course. Variance can be argued, but should only be considered if the design principle conflicts with other requirements or preferences.

**“...is preferred...”**

A preferred design principle has been agreed within Camden and should be followed in most circumstances. Variation is allowed but not generally supported. Advice should be sought from senior management.

**“...encouraged...” or “...can be used...”**

A design principle that should be considered and used wherever possible, but does not have to be followed in every circumstance. This includes principles that may be difficult to implement today, but should be borne in mind for future projects.



St Pancras Station

## Quality through Coordination

- Camden has a rich and varied character. It ranges from the ordered, Georgian town-planning of Bloomsbury's grand squares, to the vibrant street life of Camden Town and the canal, to the intimate scale of Hampstead and Highgate, reflecting their village origins.
- Despite this variety, the basic form and function that streets and pavements must fulfil across the borough is similar.
  - To provide safe, direct and pleasant access for pedestrians, particularly for those with a disability, limited mobility and balance.
  - To provide safe, consistent routes for a variety of road users including cyclists, buses and vehicular traffic.
  - Using durable, cost-effective materials that are easy to clean and maintain.
  - Keeping consistency and compliance with various national highway regulations and standards.
- It is not only the quality of individual components but also their coordinated arrangement that creates a good streetscape.
- Simple designs are usually best, with furniture aligned and positioned consistently, so it not only looks good, but is safe and easy to use and maintain.
- "Bunching" of street furniture, or combining street furniture functions should be considered to maximise 'usable' footway width. For example, place litterbins next to guardrail, or try to combine CCTV cameras with lighting.



High pressure washing of Boulevard footway

- As many different agencies use or control different elements of the highway and street furniture (e.g. Royal Mail post boxes), coordination can be difficult. To overcome these problems, identify and contact the various owners or ‘controllers’ at the earliest possible stage in a project.
- Coordination with other council services is also crucial; for instance consider and design for the cleansing regime of a street when altering footway widths.
- When designing a scheme, consider removing, ‘tidying up’ and fixing any broken or ‘mismatching’ street furniture, road or footway surface in the near vicinity of the project, so that the new scheme blends in well with the surrounding area.



Boulevard improvements in England's Lane

## Recording Decisions

- There are always conflicting demands when designing the streetscape. Some are obvious, while others are not. Laws and regulations support some considerations, while others rely solely on published guidelines or clear (or potential) user demand.
- When designing a scheme, the designer (e.g. engineer, planner, or architect) will have to make difficult decisions, weighing each demand against another. The designer will *never* satisfy all demands, though the result must be professionally sound and safe for all.
- It is crucial that a 'paper trail' or electronic record is kept of the decision-making process, so that it can be shown that the various conflicts have been considered as part of the design process, and *why* the final design was chosen.
- Some of the major demands to consider are:
  - Volume of users
  - Different modes of transport
  - Disability access
  - Ease of use
  - Safety and relative vulnerability
  - Aesthetics
  - Space allocation
- This list is not exhaustive but should provide a basis for the design records of a project.
- A safety audit should be carried out for engineering schemes. If there are elements of a scheme design that do not pass the safety audit but are considered important to keep, the reasons for doing so should be carefully recorded.
- In the worst case, the paper trail may be needed in a court of law, but can also help officers make difficult decisions, e.g. When 'ease of use' and improving aesthetics challenge traditional safety considerations, in the use of guardrail at a new crossing.



The British Library

## Boulevard Project

- The Boulevard Project is aimed at delivering a key target in the Council's Community Strategy:
- “By 2005, the Council will make streets in Camden more attractive through better **cleaning, design, enforcement and lighting**. It will upgrade roads and pavements and keep them in a good state of repair”.
- The Streetscape Design Manual and the Boulevard Project are integrally linked, with the manual describing all *physical alterations* to a street when it is ‘boulevarded’. However, operational changes within the Boulevard Project are not detailed.
- The Boulevard Project operates on a *street-by-street* basis, tackling paving specifications, street furniture, lighting and signs and lines.
- The Streetscape Design Manual outlines this work and encourages the same high standards to be achieved as part of *all other highway works* within the borough, notwithstanding financial constraints in doing so.
- Although there are many common aims of the Boulevard Project and the Streetscape Design Manual (such as reducing street clutter), the most important step-change within Boulevard is the introduction of new paving and sub-base that can withstand a *continental-style cleansing regime*, i.e. high-pressure washing using purpose-built machines.
- As it is intended that, eventually, this street-cleansing regime will be used across the borough, new street works should be completed with Boulevard standard paving, wherever possible.



Boulevard standard concrete paving

## Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995

- The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) came into partial operation in 1995, and became fully operational in October 2004.
- The implications of the Act are far reaching for every aspect of our lives, not least in our street environment.
- In essence, the Act intends to make the street environment *consistently accessible to all* – it will benefit many people (not just the disabled), including people with children, the elderly, etc.
- Every endeavour must be made to ensure that the street environment complies with the Act; failure to do so will amount to exclusion and discrimination, putting some users' safety at a greater risk and thereby possibly making the Council open to prosecution under the terms of the Act.
- In summary, the Council's main duties under the DDA 1995 are to provide access for all, by:
  - Changing policies, practices and procedures.
  - Overcoming physical features by either *removing* the feature, *altering* it or *avoiding* it.
  - Or to *provide services by alternative means*.
- The Act affects all street works, not just present and future construction, but also all existing features of the street.
- This manual cannot provide definitive information on how the DDA affects every aspect of the street environment; further advice may need to be taken in certain circumstances.
- However, significant changes in working practices, attributable to the operation of the Act, are noted throughout the manual.

- In some situations, there will be financial difficulties in providing full accessibility within generally accepted 'aesthetic parameters'.
- However, it is fully recognised that there will be situations where no 'compromise' can be reasonably reached, regardless of cost. In these cases, officers must consider the *possible* legal implications of the Act, which may overrule all other considerations.
- All types of disability should be considered, though bear in mind that improving accessibility for one person may adversely affect another person(s) with a different disability – one type of disability should not be considered more important than another.
- However, difficult decisions will have to be made by officers as to how to provide the greatest *overall* access while not excluding some people altogether.
- In these situations, as with all conflicting demands, the decision-making process must be carefully recorded. See section 0.06.



A wheelchair user in Camden

# Notes and Amendments