STREET FURNITURE
Street Furniture

Introduction

Street furniture is an integral part of the public realm and can fulfil a significant role in the development of a consistent and coherent identity for Mayfair and Belgravia. The palette of street furniture proposed recognises that the two estates have a unique identity and history as individual and distinct areas within the City of Westminster.

Building upon this, and the Rule 6, 'Containment' in Westminster Way, the Handbook advocates that a constrained and bespoke range of furniture is adopted within Mayfair and Belgravia. This is supported by Streets for All (English Heritage 2002) which states, "The finest townscapes in London have the minimum amount of street furniture. What is essential is sited carefully to reinforce an underlying sense of visual order". A minimalist approach will be adopted within the estates to ensure that furniture is coordinated and is only used where it is considered to be beneficial and necessary.

Fig 3.4.1
Minimal street furniture and the avoidance of clutter helps to emphasise the striking architecture of this market building - Barcelona, Spain.

Fig 3.4.2
The location of street furniture should promote its use. In Brighton the linear placement of seating around the periphery of this space reduces clutter and promotes social interaction.

Fig 3.4.3
A shared space should not necessitate the extensive use of bollards, guard rails and signs to be safe and functional - Barcelona, Spain.

Fig 3.4.4
The style and location of street furniture should be coordinated to provide a uniform appearance and reduce visual clutter - Kensington High Street, London (© Woodhouse).

Fig 3.4.5- 3.4.6
Street furniture can be combined with public art to enhance the character and appearance of streets and spaces whilst fulfilling a functional role.
Street Furniture

Our approach seeks to:

- Avoid the installation of unnecessary street furniture.
- Coordinate street furniture installations across all responsible agencies and providers.
- Respond contextually to the siting and design of all street furniture, to ensure that street furnishings are viewed as a single coordinated palette.
- Locate furniture intelligently so that each item relates to the function of the buildings and spaces it serves. (e.g. consider the role of seating in enhancing surveillance, its impact on congregation and the likelihood of furniture being misused as goals, stepping stones, etc.)
- Locate furniture so that it may benefit from overlooking from passers by or adjacent buildings.
- Ensure that design considerations are balanced with functionality and future maintenance requirements.
- Retain historic furniture in-situ wherever possible to protect and enhance local distinctiveness.

Fig 3.4.7
Minimising the quantity of street furniture in the public realm helps to create an open attractive place - Moorgate, London.

Fig 3.4.8
Furniture can be designed as elements of art in their own right - Ropewalks, Liverpool.

Fig 3.4.9
Plant containers are used in this courtyard to guide people around a central lawn - V&A Museum, London.

Fig 3.4.10 and 3.4.11
Combining the function of street furniture and art can help to reduce street clutter, e.g. bollards used as seats and sculpture used to bollards.
Street Furniture

Reducing Clutter

Significant improvement to the public realm can often be made through the removal of surplus street furniture. The Handbook encourages the removal of as much unnecessary and redundant street furniture as possible. In addition, new street furniture should only be installed where it is beneficial and necessary.

The following should be considered when reducing clutter within the public realm:

- Rationalise and incorporate items of street furniture where possible into single units (e.g. bollards and lights can be designed to accommodate signs).
- Care must be taken to ensure moderation in the combination of furniture items as this can ultimately contribute to visual clutter. As a general rule, no more than 2 functions should be combined within a single item of furniture.
- Attach signs and street furniture to buildings where possible and appropriate.
- Coordinate the colour and style of posts and columns with other street furniture items to reduce their perceived dominance and enhance identity.
- Consider the scope for multi-functionality of street furniture items (e.g. the positioning of columns can reduce the need for bollards).

Fig 3.4.12
Many items of street furniture may be unnecessary, duplicated, redundant or poorly sited.

Fig 3.4.13
Combining more than two on a post can result in clutter.

Fig 3.4.14
Well sited and grouped street furniture that does not disrupt pedestrian desire lines mitigate visual clutter - La Rocha, Spain.

Fig 3.4.15
Attaching street furniture (here, lights and signage) to the side of a building reduces the need for columns within the public realm and reduces clutter.

Fig 3.4.16
Seating from solid stone or brass can double up as bollards, reducing the utilitarian feel of such items and providing additional interest.
Street Furniture Order and Siting

The creation of a cohesive and legible public realm requires that the location of street furniture is well considered and that the relationship and interface between different furniture elements is logical and ordered. Particular attention must be paid to the location of furniture at street junctions, in areas with high pedestrian flows and along major thoroughfares/routes.

The protection of movement corridors/sightlines and the avoidance of both physical and visual clutter is an imperative. Furniture within the public or private domain (e.g. as private gardens, forecourts and entrances to buildings) should be sited away from desire lines on pedestrian routes and in the least visually intrusive locations. Furniture can also benefit from being sited in groups to reduce the clutter that can be caused by ‘dotting’ items within the public realm.

Mount Street provides a good example of how furniture can be positioned to avoid conflict with pedestrian movement. Businesses along Mount Street accommodate their alfresco dining through the positioning of seating, tables and plant containers to the perimeter of pedestrian routes and through the creation of two distinct ‘zones’ - one for relaxing and the other for movement.

As a general rule clear widths of between 1.2 and 3.0 metres should be maintained for pedestrian movement.

Fig 3.4.17  
A section through a typical pavement illustrating a 1.2-3.0m clear pedestrian zone and appropriate locations for furniture. On wider pavements a kerb clearance zone of 600mm should be sought. Where pavements are narrow and road cambers gentle (risk of conflicts with high sided vehicles minimal) a narrower clearance zone (preferably 450mm) is acceptable.

Fig 3.4.18  
External tables and chairs are clearly defined within a zone delineated within the paving design of Parc Bercy, Paris.

Fig 3.4.19  
Alfresco eating and drinking on streets within the estates can benefit from an organised approach to the siting of furniture - Mount Street, Mayfair.
Street Furniture

Historic Street Furniture

Historic street furniture provides a cultural reference to each estate and Westminster as a whole.

Where possible, historic street furniture should be retained in-situ. Consideration should be given to recasting furniture in locations where it is a defining characteristic as this can reinforce character and identity in a way that would be difficult to achieve through the use of standard and off the shelf items. Care must be taken to ensure replications are of high quality, are well detailed and are dated for the year of casting. The use of ‘heritage style’ products is to be avoided.

Some historic items (such as post boxes and K2 and K6 telephone boxes), should be retained from all periods to enhance the character of the locale, whilst other items, such as bollards, will only be of historic interest from specific periods.

Issues of functionality must also be considered and some components will need to be upgraded to meet modern standards. This might include enhancements to historic lighting to better reflect sustainability or security criteria.

Before individual areas are designed and constructed, a careful review of historic and valued street furniture items will need to be undertaken and any need for maintenance or restoration identified.

A conservation specialist and advice from Westminster City Council’s Conservation Department and English Heritage’s Officers may be required to assist with this evaluation.

Fig 3.4.20
Some items of furniture, such as the iconic K2 telephone boxes, may be suitable for reinstatement as opposed to standard contemporary versions which are often unsightly.

Fig 3.4.21
Post boxes from all eras should be retained where possible to enrich the character of the public realm. Pillar box attachments/pouches are being phased out, and should be removed where possible. Where required, they should be sited to the back edge of the pavement and away from existing pillar boxes.

Fig 3.4.22
Some historic furniture which may be redundant or no longer in use, such as water fountains and feeder troughs, should be retained in-situ where possible to enrich identity and to provide a cultural reference to the Estates’ past.
The Mayfair and Belgravia Palette

The proposed Mayfair and Belgravia street furniture palette recognises and enhances the Estates unique character within its City of Westminster context. Elements that are not currently available from the existing Westminster City Council palette of street furniture have been selected or designed to reinforce the distinct character of the two Estates and their individual ‘sense of place’. Care has been taken to ensure that furniture is of its time, will provide the heritage of tomorrow and that it will fulfil all necessary functional requirements.

The palette will:

- Relate to the ‘Westminster Way’ through the use of common components and the adoption of the colour black.
- Provide a simple and elegant design solution that will mature gracefully.
- Be robust and hard wearing.
- Seek to ensure that natural colours and textural qualities are enhanced wherever possible.
- Be easy to maintain, source and install.
- Seek to respond to the needs of people with sensory or mobility impairments.

Items of Street Furniture

The street furniture strategy advocates three groupings of street furniture:

- Items selected from the existing Westminster City Council street furniture palette.
- New items specific to Mayfair and Belgravia.
- One-off items commissioned for specific locations.

Utilising a coordinated palette of street furniture elements that is built upon the existing Westminster City Council range, but augmented to reflect the individual identity of Mayfair and Belgravia, will simplify the process of designing and implementing changes to the public realm. It will help to create a subtle and unique identity for the two estates as individual character areas within a City of Westminster context whilst meeting the aspirations of Westminster Way for containment. The allowance for bespoke items will enable unique responses and solutions to be developed in special circumstances where the standard palette would not be able to meet an identified need, or in strategic locations which could benefit from a unique solution.

All elements of street furniture within the Mayfair and Belgravia palette have been selected or designed to ensure that they complement each other and that they can be readily seen as a single coordinated suite.

The principal street furniture elements within this suite are identified as follows:

- Seating
- Litter Bins and recycling facilities
- Pedestrian guard rails
- Cycle stands
- Bollards
- Traffic signals
- Utilities/Cabinets
- CCTV & Speed Cameras
- Lighting
- Other Items

Seating

The Handbook advocates that Mayfair and Belgravia streets and spaces are promoted as places for people and that people are encouraged to slow down, animate and spend time within each estate. Seating fulfils an important role in the achievement of this aim, although it should only be provided in areas where it is functionally required and where it will not contribute to street clutter.

Seating should be provided in locations that benefit from good levels of natural surveillance, that are adjacent to pedestrian flows, and that are in close proximity to destinations. Seating areas should be illuminated if they are to be used at night.
Street Furniture

As a minimum, seating should be available in all important spaces and approximately every 100 metres along important routes. Consideration should be given in the design and selection of seating to the following:

• The avoidance of surfaces that might encourage the use of seats as beds.
• Maintenance and vulnerability.
• The avoidance of features that might permit the secretion of drugs and litter.
• The avoidance of frame types that may permit the chaining of cycles or climbing.

It is intended that the timber strips will be made from a solid FSC certified hardwood. It is also intended that a 50mm diameter stainless steel Grosvenor logo will be secured flush into a 5mm deep recess at the end of each bench/seat.

An optional ‘Skater Stop’ such as that illustrated in figure 3.4.25 may also be added discreetly to the edges of the steel frame to ensure that these benches are not at risk of damage from skateboarders.

A bench design along the lines of Escofet’s Mayo 220 Bench (illustrated in figure 3.4.26) should be considered for use in areas where an alternative bench design is sought to create or enhance spaces that are intended to be distinct in their appearance. The unit is intended to be free standing and would suit smaller, fully pedestrianised spaces where bench relocation may be required. Its capacity for relocation may make it suited to temporary events spaces such as those identified in Section 3.9 (these include the raised deck within Brown Hart Gardens in Mayfair and Orange Square in Belgravia).

Technical specifications for all benches and seats will be provided on Grosvenor’s web site www.grosvenorpublicrealm.co.uk.

A primary bench design along the lines of the Benkert S20 bench seat illustrated in figure 3.4.23 is proposed as the predominant choice of bench / seat within broad streets and within open spaces. It is proposed that this bench/seat will have a single leg and will be cantilevered to assist pavement cleaning. At a length of c.2000mm and a width of c.600mm it would allow a number of people to sit and face in different directions and would offer reasonable flexibility in its placement.

Each unit would consist of a steel frame that is hot dip galvanised and painted matt black. Dacrylate Margard paint is to be used to reduce the risk of vandalism and graffiti and assist long term maintenance.

It is intended that the timber strips will be made from a solid FSC certified hardwood. It is also intended that a 50mm diameter stainless steel Grosvenor logo will be secured flush into a 5mm deep recess at the end of each bench/seat.

Fig 3.4.23
Benkert S20 Bench seat is the preferred choice of seat for streets and open spaces within Mayfair and Belgravia (©Benkert).

Fig 3.4.24
The Benkert S20 Seat with a backrest is available where a preference for seating with backrests is required, whilst remaining in the same styling as the bench version (©Benkert).

Fig 3.4.25
To prevent damage from skateboarding, a ‘Skater Stop’ detail such as this from Benkert can be added to edges of the seating (©Benkert).
Each of these units would be constructed from a granite grey coloured reinforced cast stone and would be acid etched and waterproofed. They would measure approximately 2200x600x450mm high above finished floor level and could be arranged side by side to create longer runs of seating if required.

Cube seats should be used in locations where there are spatial constraints, where an alternative aesthetic is warranted, or where a more informal seating opportunity exists. They should be placed in groups of odd numbers, preferably starting with a minimum of three, and should be arranged to avoid the obstruction of pedestrian desire lines. Cubes should be positioned to complement other street components and encourage social interaction.

Each cube seat will consist of an individual cube of black granite measuring 500x500x500mm high above paving level. The cube will sit on the paved surface and will be secured with a steel dowell. Each unit will have a tooled ‘dish profile’ that provides a subtle indication that the unit is offering people an opportunity to dwell.

Cube seats will have a honed finish, to create a darker colour and smooth surface that reduces the risk of clothes becoming snagged.

A 50mm diameter stainless steel Grosvenor logo may be secured flush into a 5mm deep recess on one side of each cube.

A seat along the lines of Urban Elements Timber Slatted UE1011.3 Bench is proposed for use in parks and gardens. This seat has been selected from Westminster Way’s palette to maintain consistency with existing public and private squares and gardens. It is easy to maintain and repair and has mid arms to deter lying down whilst allowing people to lift themselves out of a seating position.

This bench should only be used when an existing unit is in need of replacement and should be limited to parks and gardens. It should not be used in streets or hard spaces within the Estates.

The use of temporary seating (and associated table arrangements) managed by cafes and restaurants, is encouraged to allow activity to spill out into the public realm. This should not dominate or create clutter, and should be sited having regard to principles associated with permanent seating.

Private seating and associated furniture should be of high quality and should reflect the individual character of the premises they support.
Street Furniture

**Litter Bins**

A bespoke oval litter bin and associated variants is being designed for use within Mayfair and Belgravia. These are being designed to meet functional and aesthetic requirements and should be the only bins used within the Estates.

The bin and its variants will be developed along the lines of the illustrations in 3.4.29. Final furniture details and their technical specification will be provided on Grosvenor’s web site www.grosvenorpublicrealm.co.uk.

The main structure of the litter bin will be formed from a plastic or similar and will be painted matt black. A coating of Dacrylate Margard paint is to be used to reduce the risk of vandalism and graffiti and assist long term maintenance.

The bins will be provided with a chamfered rim to limit the visibility of their contents and limit access to vagrants, rats and birds. A variant of the rim will be developed to accommodate cigarette disposal.

Each bin is to be permanently fixed into the ground to prevent them from being moved by maintenance teams or as a result of general day to day activities.
Street Furniture

Litter bins are to be distributed across each estate with a greater focus of provision on well used areas such as seating areas, public transport nodes and key pedestrian routes. Bins should not block pedestrian desire lines but should be accessible and will need to be seen if they are to be used. Wherever possible litter bins should be placed adjacent to other items of street furniture to reduce their visual intrusion within the public realm.

Consideration must also be given to the long term integration of trade waste containers and recycle facilities within the public realm. These should be discretely sited and are often best suited to less prominent locations as they serve less of a ‘convenience’ need, and are principally used by local occupiers. Their location should reflect their use patterns and should be coordinated with private sector facilities. Main roads and pedestrian routes should be avoided, although provision for refuse and HIAB type vehicle access will be required. Wherever possible, trade waste and recycle facilities should be carefully contained/screened or placed below ground.

Whilst below ground storage is preferred, this will require a commitment across a wider area for it to become economically viable.

Figs 3.4.29-3.4.30
Illustration of intended Mayfair and Belgravia Litter Bin.
Figs 3.4.31-3.4.34
There are currently too many different designs of litter bin within the Estates. Whilst specific variants may be required (eg dog bins in parks) these should be developed within a common suite.
Fig 3.4.35
Larger refuse and recycling bins should be located away from main pedestrian areas and should be well maintained.
Fig 3.4.36
Trade bins should not be within sight of the public realm to avoid creating a ‘back of house’ feel.
Street Furniture

3.4

Cycle Stands

Cycling is strongly promoted within the estates and careful consideration should be given to the appropriate provision of cycle stands within public realm schemes. Appropriately located cycle facilities will encourage cycling and will reduce the number of cycles that are parked in inappropriate locations and secured to unsuitable objects such as railings, lights, bollards and street signs.

As a general rule it is preferable that stands are provided in smaller well sited groups in a variety of locations throughout the estates, rather than in sparse larger groupings. Exceptions should be made where large numbers of cyclists may congregate, such as at key destinations and public transport nodes. Care should be taken to ensure that selected locations benefit from good levels of natural surveillance.

Sufficient space between and around stands is required to ensure that cycles can be parked easily on either side of the stand without jutting out into other areas or blocking pedestrian routes. Stands should be positioned in rows of no less than 5 stands with a minimum of 900mm between stands. Where placed near a vertical surface such as a boundary wall, the outer edge of the stand should be a minimum of 700mm from the face of the vertical surface and set at 45 degrees. Alternatively the stands can be placed parallel to a kerbline (refer to figure 3.4.37) at 2000mm centres.

Fig 3.4.37
Setting out parameters for the proposed cycle stands

Fig 3.4.38
Outside Victoria Coach Station there are no cycle stands, although the abundance of cycles attached to guard rails suggests significant demand. Stands should be located at key destinations, including bus and rail stations.
A bespoke Mayfair and Belgravia cycle stand is being designed to facilitate easy use with a simplicity and elegance that is in keeping with the physical context of Mayfair and Belgravia. A technical specification will be provided on Grosvenor’s web site www.grosvenorpublicrealm.co.uk.

The design is for an ovoid blade along the lines of that illustrated in figures 3.4.41 and 3.4.42, will have a slanted top and will have apertures that provide cyclists with a range of different locking heights. The upper aperture may be developed to include a discrete light. The design seeks to promote a cycle stand that complements other elements of street furniture within the estates and meets specific functional requirements. The use of the standard ‘Sheffield’ type stand should not be encouraged within the Estates as this is visually and physically intrusive and would unnecessarily dilute the selected Mayfair and Belgravia palette.

The Mayfair and Belgravia cycle stand will be painted matt black with a minimum dry film thickness of 75 microns (theoretical build of the paint film once dry) to reduce the risk of paint chipping. Dacrylate Margard paint is to be used to reduce the risk of vandalism and graffiti and to assist long term maintenance.

Stands are to be fixed below the finished paving level via a steel baseplate and concrete foundation.
Street Furniture

Bollards

As a general rule all unnecessary bollards should be removed from the Estates to reduce clutter. Important exceptions include historic items which in most cases should be retained in situ to enhance local distinctiveness.

The installation of new bollards should be minimised wherever possible, and less visually intrusive methods used as an alternative. Measures might include raising kerbs, strengthened footways, or changing levels.

Other items of street furniture could also be utilised to reduce the visual dominance and utilitarian feel of bollards (examples include seating or tree planting) and appear as a positive element within the public realm.

A bespoke Mayfair & Belgravia bollard is being designed for locations where new bollards are required. The design is strongly related to that of the estate cycle stand and other furniture elements to ensure consistency across the Estates.

Bollards will differ in appearance from cycle stands through the omission of apertures. This difference will help to clarify the role of cycle stands and will help to deter cyclists from locking cycles in undesirable locations.

Bollards are to be painted matt black with a minimum dry film thickness of 75 microns (theoretical build of the paint film once dry) to reduce the risk of paint chipping. Dacrylate Margard paint is to be used to reduce the risk of vandalism and graffiti and to assist long term maintenance.

The proposed estate bollard will have an ovoid blade with a slanted top. An optional 50mm diameter Grosvenor logo may be etched into the body of the bollard.

Where bollards are required to provide occasional access, a telescopic option will be developed. These telescopic bollards will have a sleeve that will allow each bollard to be manually pushed into an underground chamber. A flip down cover will finish level with the adjoining paving to reduce any trip risk. The unit will have a gas or spring operated system that will return the bollard to an upright position when the operator presses down on the top of the bollard.

Figs 3.4.43-3.4.48
Whilst the estate contains many attractive historic bollards which should be retained in situ, the majority of standard bollards should be removed and, where necessary, be replaced by the bespoke Mayfair & Belgravia bollard or, in some particularly sensitive locations, by recast historic bollards.

Fig 3.4.49
Illustration of proposed Mayfair and Belgravia bollard.
3.4.51

Although raised pedestrian crossings can reduce speed and improve safety, they can be visually incongruous, increase noise and increase energy use.

3.4.52

Some guard rails perform no function within the Estates.

3.4.53

Large quantities of pedestrian guard rails unnecessarily cage pavements and restrict pedestrian movement.

Fig 3.4.53

3.4.54

Damaged guardrails detract from the visual quality of an Mayfair and Belgravia.

Fig 3.4.54

Many continental schemes (e.g. Barcelona, Spain) illustrate that restrictions through bollards and railings are not always necessary.

Pedestrian Guard Rails

Guard rails present a barrier to free pedestrian movement, are unsightly and significantly contribute to clutter within the public realm.

Most existing guard rails within the estates serve no obvious purpose and should be removed. They should only be installed or retained where safety concerns dictate their use. Streets for All (English Heritage 2002) notes “by segregating people behind barriers they also create a hostile environment for pedestrians and can encourage higher vehicle speeds”.

The presumption should be against guard rails at junctions and crossings in favour of passive, secondary and design led solutions. Well designed street crossings without guard rails act to reinforce pedestrian priority and help to passively manage traffic. Manual for Streets (Department for Transport 2007) suggests that where the flow of pedestrians needs to be controlled, guard rails should be avoided and “consideration should first be given to the use of features such as surface textures, bench seating and planting that can guide pedestrian movement whilst also contributing to the amenity of the street”. Pedestrians on the wrong side of guardrails are very vulnerable to injury. Guardrails can also pose additional risks to cyclists.

Guard rails should not be used to protect pavements. Other less intrusive measures, such as higher kerbs, can adequately address these requirements.
Street Furniture

Traffic Signals

Traffic signals are unattractive and give the perception that the primary role of the street or space in which they are placed is to facilitate vehicles. All unnecessary or duplicate traffic signals should be removed to reduce clutter and increase the perception that Mayfair’s and Belgravia’s streets are places for people. This approach is supported by Streets for All (English Heritage 2002) which notes that the, “over provision or repetition of signs reduces the impact on drivers’ perceptions”, and reduces the effectiveness of traffic signals in directing and informing drivers.

A review of each signal location should be undertaken in collaboration with the signalling authority with the aim of reducing the number of signal heads and secondary signals.

Any new signals should be to the minimum size possible, and coloured backing boards should be avoided. Where possible, traffic signals and signs should be combined onto existing street furniture items or on single posts/columns at the back edge of the pavement to reduce clutter.

Section 3.5, Orientation and Signage provides additional information on regulatory signage, orientation and street naming.

Utilities/Cabinets

Wherever possible utilities and street cabinets should be located within buildings, out of sight, or in underground chambers. If they need to be in streets or spaces they should be positioned at the back of the footway to avoid pedestrian desire lines and reduce their visual intrusion.

Those involved in the design and/or selection of cabinets should give due consideration to ways in which opportunities for graffiti and the disposal of litter can be reduced.

All cabinets should be painted matt black or strongly related to the building they front, and finished in an attractive manner.

Heavily textured paint to deter flyposting should be avoided. A coating of Dacrylate Margard Anti-Fly Poster System paint is preferred as a means of reducing the risk of vandalism and graffiti and assisting long term maintenance.

The use of grit/salt should be minimised given the damage it can cause to roads, trees and vegetation. Any necessary grit/salt bins should be located discreetly in the public realm and should only be put out when they are required.

Fig 3.4.55
Directional beacons should be rationalised and only used where passive traffic measures are not viable.

Fig 3.4.56
Utility boxes are unsightly and can disrupt pedestrian movement.

Fig 3.4.57
This CCTV camera installation on Victoria Coach Station is too large and should have its cabling integrated and concealed.
CCTV & Speed Cameras

Where possible, and subject to Grosvenor approval, CCTV cameras should be combined with other elements of street furniture or mounted on buildings to reduce street clutter.

CCTV camera locations will need to be determined in conjunction with Grosvenor, a security consultant and Westminster City Council. Particular care is required where cameras are to be located close to, or on, listed buildings. Ideally the maximum dimension of any CCTV camera should be 100mm in any direction.

Traffic speeds should be reduced through the design and layout of the streets in preference to the use of speed cameras. Speed deterrent and congestion charge cameras clutter the public realm and should not be installed within the Estates. Existing cameras should be removed as opportunities arise.

Lighting

This handbook seeks to ensure that the design and selection of lighting is consistent and coordinated with other elements within the Mayfair and Belgravia street furniture palette.

Lighting is considered in more detail in Section 3.6. Proposals seek to create an environment that is conducive to pedestrian activity during evening hours and will:

- Encourage innovative and creative solutions in strategic places.
- Complement and highlight the architectural quality of buildings and spaces.
- Enhance locally important and listed buildings.
- Achieve levels of lighting that are appropriate for safety, security, traffic management and pedestrian flow.
- Avoid light pollution.
- Preserve and enhance locations characterised by heritage fittings.

Whilst a variety of historic street lights can add character, unattractive and out dated forms can dilute the image and identity of the Estates.

Modern lighting, including feature and background lighting can add to the character of the public realm - Corinmill Gardens, Lewisham.

Street furniture within the Estates should not be used for advertising.
Street Furniture

‘One-off’ Items

Items that are not within the Mayfair and Belgravia palette should be used sparingly to ensure that the estate’s streets and spaces are unified in their character and appearance, and to ensure that components are not difficult to source, maintain and install. There will, however, be locations when the function or design of a furniture item or the space it will occupy would greatly benefit from a unique approach. This may relate to the intended function of the item (e.g. storage facilities for events or markets), or where the design of the public realm requires a unique character or artistic response.

Locations where a bespoke or one-off response may be appropriate are identified as follows:

- Strategic streets or spaces.
- Special character areas or areas associated with important buildings or features (e.g. public gardens, churches or important listed buildings).
- Areas that fulfill multiple functions including events spaces or locations appropriate to external trading.

Other Items

There are a number of other street furniture elements that exist or will be required within the public realm. These include, but are not limited to, lavatories and urinals, bus shelters, telephone kiosks, post boxes and café/restaurant umbrellas, tables and chairs.

These items should be rationalised wherever possible. Consultation with service providers, such as TfL, Royal Mail, British Telecom and Westminster City Council should be carried out prior to any removal, relocation or modification.

Some of these potential products have been selected with a view to which will relate most comfortably with the main furniture palette. These products are illustrated and described on Grosvenor’s web site www.grosvenorpublicrealm.co.uk.

Fig 3.4.67
Traditional phone boxes like the K6 should be retained wherever possible.

Fig 3.4.68
Bespoke treatments to furniture may be appropriate in strategic locations.

Fig 3.4.69
Non standard items like this drinking fountain can add character to a space.
Public conveniences should be sited discreetly and away from strategic sight lines. The location of these facilities should be identified on nearby ‘Legible London’ signage.

Furniture requirements will continue to evolve. The design of items like electronic car charging points should be developed in parallel with other elements of street furniture to ensure coordination and consistency.

Parking meters are being gradually removed as they are replaced by ‘pay by phone’.

Change from parking meters to pay by phone has caused untidy signage within the street scene. Information should be rationalised to minimise intrusion and assist its coordination with other street furniture.

Street furniture requirements have and will continue to evolve with some products needing to be added to the estates palette (eg electric charging points for cars and the introduction of digital technologies) and others becoming surplus to requirement. Examples include the ongoing change from parking meters to ‘pay by phone’ and the gradual loss of telephone boxes and post boxes as technology evolves. Future changes may include the rationalisation of central recycling facilities as home sorting and collection becomes more effective.

As a general rule, any redundant items that are not of historic, cultural, or character value (valued items include K2 and K6 telephone boxes) should be removed at the earliest opportunity.

Whilst the handbook advocates the retention of historic furniture in-situ, careful consideration will need to be given as to whether they might adversely impact on any strategic public realm solutions. Future additions are difficult to predict but where possible and as opportunities arise, capacity, which may include laying underground ducts when resurfacing footways and carriageways, should be built in to accommodate these items.

The general principles of design and siting outlined within this section should be applied to any new items of furniture.
Orientation & Signage

Introduction

For the purpose of this Handbook, orientation and signage encompasses all means of guiding navigation and conveying information. It is the means by which people are able to identify where they are, the relative position of potential destinations, how they are able to get to those destinations and it is also the means by which people are provided with other necessary information.

Our premise is that orientation starts with the creation of a legible environment in which people are able to develop recognition (e.g. through distinct districts, landmarks, views, vistas, spaces and routes) and intuitively organise what they see into a coherent pattern. This is then supported through the introduction of coordinated and well designed signage that is sensitively placed within, and does not add unnecessary clutter to, the public realm. Signage is to be provided on the basis of having as few signs as possible and only as many as are necessary.

This is supported in Manual for Streets (DfT 2007) which states that “street layouts, geometries and networks should aim to make the environment self-explanatory to all users. Features such as public art, planting and architectural style can assist navigation while possibly reducing the need for signs.”

Environmental Cognition

The design of the public realm must seek a sensitive balance between consistency and contrast. On one hand, the selection and use of paving, furniture, lighting, planting, etc. must seek to augment the cohesive characteristics that define Mayfair and Belgravia as distinctive character areas in their own right and, on the other, there is an opportunity to introduce elements of contrast to assist the orientation of people moving through the streets and spaces of each estate.

Examples of how environmental cognition can be assisted through design intervention within each estate are described as follows:

- The Handbook recognises the need for a geographically distinct, co-ordinated and limited palette of high quality materials. It recognises that there is scope to improve identity through the enhancement of materials and the application of increased design input in strategic locations (refer to figures 2.2.1 and 2.2.2).
The ground surfacing section (3.3) describes and advocates the consistent use of high quality materials that are sympathetic to each estate’s buildings and history. The Handbook identifies how the application of surfacing materials should seek to unify the aesthetic of each estate as a whole whilst reinforcing the distinction between different types of space (e.g. streets and mews).

The combination of high quality materials and high standards of implementation will help to ensure that there is a clear sense of arrival and departure from each estate.

The street furniture section (3.4) describes how the consistent use of furniture elements will help to identify Mayfair and Belgravia as being distinct from their surroundings. It also describes how innovation can give distinction to individual streets and spaces.

The adoption of the City of Westminster’s distinctive black livery for all street furniture items will help to reinforce people’s understanding that both Mayfair and Belgravia are part of Westminster.

The lighting section (3.6) identifies how lighting can be used to assist orientation by showing Mayfair and Belgravia to their best ‘night-time’ advantage.

The planting section (3.7) identifies how planting can be used to highlight and give identity to individual streets and spaces. It also identifies how private planting (hanging baskets, window boxes, planting on terraces and planting in private gardens) can help to make individual buildings, streets and places more attractive and memorable.

The public art section (3.8) identifies how works of art can reinforce a sense of local distinctiveness and can instrumental to both interpretation and orientation.

Distinctive land uses and activities within each estate (e.g. retail in Motcomb Street, Elizabeth Street and Mount Street) help people to orientate. These benefits can be reinforced through the creation of more space for people and better views to the activity that makes these streets so distinctive.

Integral design measures are identified as a means of assisting people with impairments to navigate with confidence. Measures will include the use of black furniture as a contrast to the buff colour of the surfacing materials, the retention of kerb lines in shared spaces and the sensitive differentiation of pedestrian and vehicular surfacing at pedestrian cross-overs.
Orientation & Signage

Signage

Well designed and sympathetically positioned signage, traffic signals and lining can convey important information and guide navigation. However, these measures should be used sparingly as too many signs and lines can confuse, disorientate, and create visual and physical clutter. When assessing the need for signage, the presumption should be against signage when other means of conveying information exist.

This approach is supported in Manual for Streets (DfT 2007) which notes that “signs are most effective when not used to excess. Designers should ensure that each sign is necessary... to ensure that signs are provided as required, but do not dominate the visual appearance of streets”. The document further states that “Designers should start from a position of having no signs, and introduce them only where they serve a clear function”. This is applied to both traffic and other signs within the public realm.

For the purposes of this Handbook signage is broadly differentiated into that that relates to pedestrians and that which relates to vehicles. These are discussed on the following pages.

Fig 3.5.7
Signage can be an integral part of the public realm and add to the rich character and heritage of Mayfair and Belgravia.

Fig 3.5.8
The quantity and location of road signs needs to be carefully assessed. Here an excessive number of road signs (nine in total) convey information regarding traffic and parking arrangements.

Fig 3.5.9
Historic signage should be retained wherever possible.
Pedestrian Mapping and Signage

Work commissioned by Central London Partnership (CLP), and developed by AIG in combination with the central London local authorities and TfL, has identified that a principal barrier to getting more people to build walking into their regular routine is attitudinal. The study identifies that many people avoid walking if it requires them to navigate through unfamiliar territory, and that one of the fundamentals to giving people the confidence to explore is the provision of an integrated, consistent and user friendly wayfinding system.

The wayfinding solution that has been identified through this work has been called ‘Legible London’. The system aims to improve information, reduce street clutter, reduce vandalism and create economies of scale in both purchasing and maintenance. It is seen by the GLA as supporting the aim of making London the most walking friendly city by 2015 and, as such, attention is firmly focused on the introduction of Legible London and complete implementation within the congestion charge zone by 2012.

Key features of the Legible London wayfinding system are summarised within AIG’s March 2006 Wayfinding Study as follows:

- The system utilises what is described as a ‘Living Map’. This is a central and constantly updated data base that can be used as the basis for maps, signage, websites, GPRS and other technologies.
- The system communicates distances through walking maps and an illustration of journey length. Distances are augmented by a combination of information on buildings, street features, landmarks, districts and connecting routes.
- The maps are based on a ‘heads up’ approach with maps orientated to the viewer rather than having north to the top.
- The system supports these walking maps through local area maps and en route signage.
- The system is coherent, designed to maximise inclusivity and has conventions with respect to naming, placement and graphics (type face, styles, size, colours, forms, etc).
- The system aims to be effective and of high quality. The use of quality materials will reinforce the systems authority and give confidence in the information provided.
- There is a commitment for the system to receive a high standard of maintenance. It is recognised that any deterioration of the system would undermine the confidence it needs to instil.

Fig 3.5.10
Large quantities of information may not be suitable for display within the public realm.

Fig 3.5.11
Historic signage that is discretely designed and located can add to an area’s sense of place and provide important cultural information (eg the Round Foundry, Holbeck, Leeds).

Fig 3.5.12
‘Blue Plaques’ celebrate great figures of the past and the buildings they inhabited. These add to the identity and understanding of a place and should continue to feature within the estate.
Orientation & Signage

The Legible London system is composed of four different sign types:

1. Megaliths are very wide fixed signs containing wayfinding information. These will usually contain more planning information than other signs and will often be located to guide pedestrians from stations, visitor attractions and other entry points (e.g. bus stops, landmarks, major public facilities and tourist attractions).

2. Monoliths are wide fixed signs containing wayfinding information. These are located at more spacious decision points to provide simplified street maps showing the relative position of surrounding areas and information about key destinations and places of public importance.

3. Miniliths are narrow fixed signs containing wayfinding information. Miniliths are positioned in tighter spaces than Monoliths and may be positioned along a route to confirm directions and to identify side routes into adjacent neighbourhoods.

4. Homing Beacons are posts that are positioned close to major destinations to show average walking time from that point. They are considered to be effective where major destinations are hidden from view.

Fig 3.5.13
Minilith manufactured from vitreous enamel panels and shot peened stainless steel to ensure that signs are durable and easy to clean. Solar powered accent lighting is incorporated to reinforce recognition at night. (© AIG)

Fig 3.5.14
Monolith positioned on Oxford Street, London.

Fig 3.5.15
Homing Beacons are positioned to identify hidden destinations (©AIG).
Whilst Grosvenor fully supports the intentions of the Legible London system we are conscious that the system’s success within the context of Mayfair and Belgravia will be significantly influenced by its detail. Issues that need to be addressed in the development of the system within Mayfair and Belgravia are identified as follows:

- The mapped information and the precise location of each sign type needs to be carefully developed in conjunction with landowners and stakeholder within each estate (e.g. what features are to be identified, how are these features to be named or illustrated and how signs are to be integrated within the public realm).

- Wayfinding signage should only be used where it is absolutely necessary. Its use within Mayfair and Belgravia is to be kept to a minimum to avoid unnecessary clutter. The use of Megaliths and Monoliths is discouraged. Miniliths should not obstruct pedestrian movement along narrow pavements (e.g. Davies Street in Mayfair).

- Where signage is used it should be carefully integrated into its surroundings. This may include the use of private land and wall fixings in preference to potentially more straightforward and prominent locations within pavements.

- The introduction of the Legible London system will be supported by the removal of all superfluous pedestrian signage. Exceptions will include signs that are considered to support local distinctiveness or have heritage value.

Fig 3.5.16
Mapping will allow people to better understand where destinations are located and how convenient it is to walk. Wall mounted arrival information in underground stations, on bus shelters, etc. will assist initial orientation and journey planning.

Fig 3.5.17
Signs should be located to ensure that they do not obstruct pedestrian movement along narrow pavements - here outside Claridges on Davies Street.

Fig 3.5.18
The system’s stainless steel base and north indicator supports the ‘heads up’ approach to mapping whilst being minimalist in design. The north point can be adjusted to suit different locations (©AIG).
Orientation & Signage

- The use of solar powered accent lighting is promoted to reinforce recognition at night. A similar lighting feature is encouraged within homing beacons.
- Consideration is to be given to the incorporation of Grosvenor’s logo and the identification of significant locations within each estate (eg Eaton Square, Belgrave Square, Elizabeth Street, Motcomb Street, Mount Street, Brown Hart Gardens and Grosvenor Square). This might be contained within the steel base plate and sized to accord with the north point.
- Should homing beacons be required, their posts and fingers should be finished in a matt black to relate to the estate palette and Westminster Way.

In addition to the use of Legible London as a wayfinding system the use of street names signs, signs for private mews, signs for private gardens and signage on buildings also fulfil an important role in guiding pedestrians, cyclists and those using vehicles.

Street name signs make a significant contribution to local character. Where older signs survive these should be retained and restored rather than replaced. New street name signs should be based on the enamelled steel red and black lettered Sir Misha Black city wide street name sign (©WCC).

Guidance on placement

Grosvenor is confident that the sensitive application of the Legible London wayfinding system within Mayfair and Belgravia can help to reduce visual and physical clutter and reduce the overall quantity of signage within the estates. The following guidance is provided on the placement of signs within Mayfair and Belgravia:

- Signs must be located where they are expected and needed. Figures 3.5.22 and 3.5.23 illustrate strategic locations for the incorporation of Legible London’s wayfinding signage within each estate.
- The requirement for individual wayfinding signs must be dropped where detailed design identifies that they can’t be sensitively integrated within the built fabric of their proposed context.
- Where conflict with pedestrian movement can be avoided, signs should be orientated in response to their optimum wayfinding performance.
- Where located within pavements, signs should usually be positioned to the back edge of footways and adjacent to buildings.

Fig 3.5.19
Sir Misha Black city wide street name sign (©WCC).
Fig 3.5.20
There should be minimal use of unsightly temporary signs.
Fig 3.5.21
Signage can be repetitive and unnecessary. Here, four painted markings advise pedestrians to watch for traffic when crossing what is obviously a road.
Fig 3.5.22. Legible London signage locations within Mayfair

Fig 3.5.23. Legible London signage locations within Belgravia
Orientation & Signage

- Consideration should be given to the positioning of wayfinding signs, on or within, walls, buildings and structures where this does not unduly compromise their effectiveness.
- Street name signs should be fixed to boundary walls, railings or buildings at the back edge of the footway.
- The mounting heights of signage must maximise the convenience of pedestrians and those using wheelchairs.

Vehicular Signage and Road Markings

Manual for Streets states that there is no absolute requirement for traffic signs and that they are only needed to “warn or inform, or to give effect to TROs”. The Department for Transport Traffic Signs Manual (TSO 2004) advises that “signs are used to control and guide traffic and to promote road safety” and that “they should only be used where they can usefully serve these functions”. Signs and markings should only be provided when it is deemed necessary (e.g. in the case of hazards), or where experience shows they should be applied retrospectively.

The aim within Mayfair and Belgravia is to reduce the quantity of signs & markings used to the minimum necessary. A particular emphasis is placed on those required to control parking and two approaches are to be considered for application within the estates:

1. The introduction of Restricted Parking Zones (RPZs).
2. A more traditional approach.

RPZ’s

Waiting & loading restrictions would be indicated by Zone Entry Signs. No yellow lines would be required and parking bays would be identified by the use of physical features and the use of accompanying signs showing the type of parking/restrictions. Signs would be required to show pay parking areas, residential parking areas, white badge spaces, diplomatic spaces and loading areas. These should be fixed to lighting columns, totem bollards and walls and should be made as small as possible.

The Department of Transport (DfT) are to trial the introduction of an RPZ that avoids the use of repeater signs and will need to give special authorisation on specific details including the size, location and wording of signs.
Traditional Approach

This approach will see the retention of yellow/white lines and signs but will be interpreted to reduce their visual impact. Measures will include the use of narrower yellow lines (50mm), the avoidance of markings for individual parking spaces, keeping the number and size of parking restriction signs to the minimum necessary to enforce restrictions and mounting any signs on lighting columns and walls. It is an approach that is within current rules and that would not require any special authorisations from the DfT.

There are a number of other important design considerations that apply to signage and road markings outside of any RPZ. Those that relate to signage issues include:

- Consideration should be given to positioning lighting columns and other furniture in locations where they may be able to facilitate the co-location of signs and the avoidance of additional poles.
- Consideration should be given to the incorporation of multiple signs onto single mounts. The combination of signs should be carefully assessed and, as a general rule, proposals should ensure that no more than 2 items are placed on any one mount. Pole mounted signs should be discretely sited and, where possible, located to the back edge of footpaths.
- Consideration should also be given to the sensitive mounting of signage on buildings (particular care will be required in the context of listed buildings), although traffic signs should not be more than 2 metres from the carriageway. Where signs are mounted on buildings they should be sympathetic to their particular context and should not obstruct views or detract from historic buildings or features.
- Vehicular signage should be designed to the minimum size necessary for complying with traffic regulations and performing their intended function. Consideration should be given to people with visual impairments and associated viewing distances.
- Signs are to be weatherproof and durable.
- Posts, other supports and the back of signs are to be finished in a matt black and coordinated with other street furniture.
- Where signs require lighting, it should be designed and installed as an integral part of the sign, and not as an additional item. Careful consideration should be given to the reduction of energy use and the use of solar power. Illumination should be avoided wherever possible.
- Backing panels, lights and fluorescent backgrounds are intrusive and their use should be reserved for exceptional circumstances. No adverts are to be incorporated within signage.
Orientation & Signage

The use of illuminated bollards is to be avoided. Where keep left signs are required they should be reflective and fixed to black metal hoops.

Proposals should seek to avoid the use of fixed give way signs.

Parking information should be provided on a totem bollard adjacent to each run of parking bays. No parking meters are to be provided.

Loading restrictions are to be identified through the use of a single totem bollard adjacent to each loading area. Associated signage will identify allocated times and restrictions and may also incorporate information required for parking.

The need for road markings should be assessed in accordance with legislation and traffic signage guidance to minimise their impact on ground surfacing. As there is no statutory requirement, the presumption should be against the general use of centre lines, junction lines and parking bay delineation. Markings should only be provided when they are deemed necessary, or where experience shows they should be applied retrospectively. Care must be taken in the application of road markings and the design of ground surfacing to ensure that surface finishes are not unduly compromised by any future addition of road markings.

Important design considerations relating to road markings outside RPZs are identified as follows:

- White centre line markings are to be avoided. The only exception to this is in the case of junctions with a disparity of function (e.g. when local routes meet connector routes or distributor routes meet strategic routes), where white centre lines are to be provided for the last 15 metres on the approach to a junction. Centre lines are to be reduced to a width of 100mm and will consist of 5000mm long lines with 1000mm intervals.
- White paint triangles are to be avoided at give way junctions.
- Junction lines (stop or give way) are to be avoided wherever possible.
- Parking bays are to be laid out in granite setts and will be defined on their carriageway side by the use of a 50mm wide white line that is set out within a defined granite channel. Painted lines will be set out at a distance of 150mm from the prevailing kerb face. Return lines will not be provided.
- Any necessary yellow lines will also be sensibly integrated within a granite channel. Yellow lines will be in a muted primrose colour and will be restricted to a width of 50mm.
- Yellow flashings on pavements are to be avoided wherever possible.
- Disabled spaces and spaces reserved for the use of electric cars and diplomatic cars will be identified through the use of a tooled stone logo within each bay and a discrete marking plate within the adjacent kerb. The use of painted text is to be avoided wherever possible.

Traffic Signals

Traffic signals are to be avoided wherever possible. Where signals are required, consideration should be given to:

- Co-locating signals with lighting columns.
- Care will be required to ensure that the effectiveness of both street lights and traffic lights is not compromised.
- Reducing the number of signal heads, particularly discretionary ‘advance’ signals.
- Introducing pedestrian countdown facilities.
- Integrating traffic direction signs with signals in a standard modular form.
- Ensuring that traffic signal control boxes are as small as possible and that they are located within buildings or below ground wherever possible. Where street locations are unavoidable they should be located unobtrusively to the back of pavements and should have raised relief panels to deter fly posting.
- Finishing posts, signal heads and control boxes in a matt black.

All work on traffic signals should have regard to Statutory Instrument 2002 No. 3113 and The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002. London: TSO, which outlines mandatory standards. Further advice can be found in Department for Transport (various) and The Traffic Signs Manual. London: TSO and HMSO.