

# FITZROVIA AREA ACTION PLAN

## ADOPTED MARCH 2014





## Contents

Part 1: Purpose and scope.....	5
Part 2 Character and challenges.....	15
Part 3: Vision and objectives.....	25
Part 4 Land Use Principles.....	29
Part 5 Character areas and urban design principles.....	69
Part 6: Opportunity sites .....	107
Part 7 Delivery and monitoring .....	149



# **PART 1: PURPOSE AND SCOPE**



## Purpose and scope

Fitzrovia and the most westerly part of Bloomsbury form an area where an established residential community lives alongside a rich mix of Central London activities including commercial, university and health uses. An Area Action Plan is needed to deal with the impact of continued development pressure, which is now being further fuelled by nearby growth areas. The growth areas are based around redevelopment of Euston mainline station (outside the Plan area to the north east) and Tottenham Court Road tube station (a new Crossrail interchange, outside the Plan area to the south west).

The purpose of this Area Action Plan is to help to shape the future of Fitzrovia and the western part of Bloomsbury by:

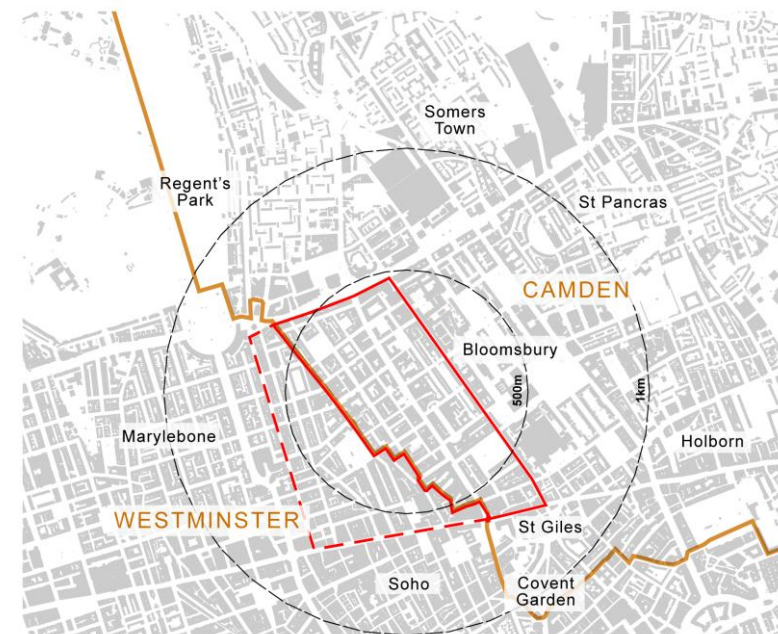
- developing a vision for the area shared by the Council, key community groups and key landowners;
- ensuring that growth takes place in a way that balances the need for residential, institutional and commercial uses whilst supporting the residential community and its facilities and future needs and protecting and enhancing its amenity and quality of life;
- coordinating development proposals across a number of significant sites; and
- ensuring that growth delivers the maximum benefits to the area.




This Plan aims to ensure that development proposals bring real benefits to the area, particularly in terms of public open space and other public spaces, housing, affordable homes, community facilities and locally produced energy. It seeks to support sustainable growth of a realistic level and secure the most efficient and effective use of land, while maintaining what makes the area attractive as a place to live, work and visit.

## Plan Area

Fitzrovia lies between Marylebone and Bloomsbury, straddling the border of the City of Westminster and the London Borough of Camden. This Action Area Plan covers the part of Fitzrovia that lies within Camden and the Plan area merges with Bloomsbury to the east. The area east of Tottenham Court Road is widely considered to form part of Bloomsbury. References to "Fitzrovia" in this document relate to the entire Plan area.

## Area covered by this Area Action Plan



-  Fitzrovia Area Action Plan boundary
-  Area known as Fitzrovia in Westminster
-  Borough boundaries

### Structure of this Area Action Plan

This Area Action Plan considers the *character* that gives Fitzrovia its unique identity and the *challenges* that it faces (Part 2) and uses these as a basis for developing a *Vision and Objectives* for the future of the area (Part 3).

Part 4 of the Plan sets out *Land use principles* which will help us manage the activities in the area to meet these objectives. Part 5 identifies *Character areas* within Fitzrovia and sets out *urban design principles* that will help us meet our objectives for the physical environment by maintaining and reinforcing the elements of the built character that are valued by residents, workers and visitors.

Principles established in Part 4 of the Plan *Land use principles* and Part 5 *Character areas and urban design principles* feed in to Part 6 *Opportunity Sites*. This will inform planning decisions relating to a number of identified sites where we expect development to take place during in the next 15 years, and in some cases in the next 5 years. Masterplanning principles are included to guide development of identified sites that are close together. Key development principles for each site indicate either the preferred use, the preferred range of uses or the possible alternative uses. The *land use* and *urban design principles* will also guide planning decisions where development proposals come forward on other sites within the Plan boundary that have not yet been identified.

The final section sets out our approach to the *delivery and monitoring* of the Plan, including a Delivery Plan (Part 7).

### Status of the Plan

The Fitzrovia Area Action Plan was adopted as a local plan on 3 March 2014.

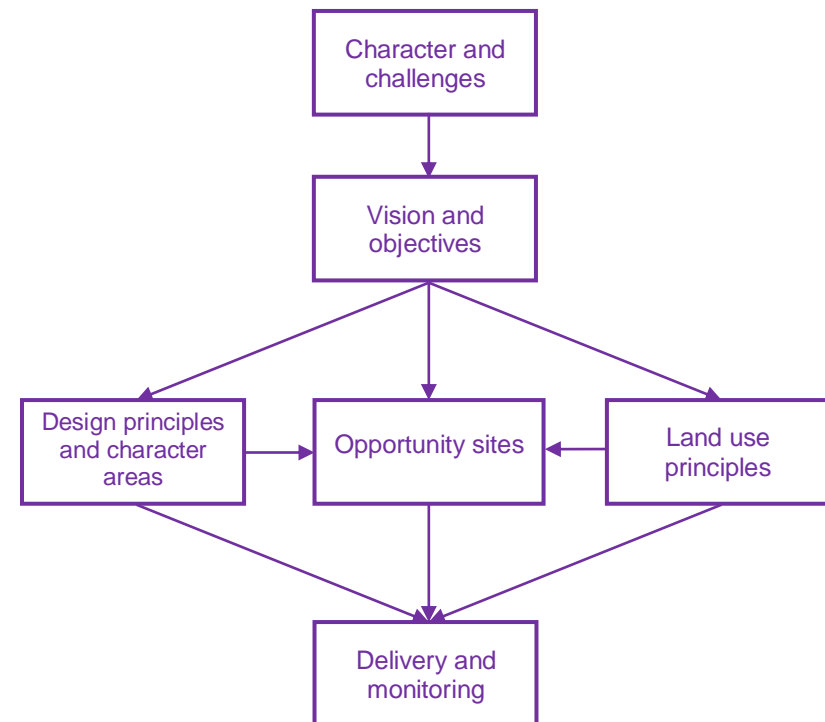
The Plan supersedes the remaining saved policy of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan adopted June 2006,

namely Policy LU1 – Schedule of Land Use Proposals, and all remaining site allocation proposals within that Schedule.

### Plan Period

For consistency with Camden's Core Strategy, this Area Action Plan will run until 2025.

### Fitzrovia Area Action Plan Structure



## Camden's planning framework

The Fitzrovia Area Action Plan will form part of Camden's Local Development Framework (LDF), the set of documents that collectively form the strategy for the future growth and development of Camden and set out the policies we use when the Council makes decisions on planning applications.

The Plan has to:

- be consistent with the Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025;
- be in general conformity with the Mayor of London's London Plan 2011;
- be consistent with national policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and
- take into account Council strategies such as Camden Housing Strategy 2011-2016.

The Plan will help to deliver the strategic objectives of the Core Strategy, interpreting and building upon the objectives that relate to Fitzrovia, and promote sustainable development in line with the NPPF.

A number of documents in the planning framework are formally designated as development plan documents, and together these form part of the statutory basis for planning decisions.

In addition to the London Plan 2011, the Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025, and the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan (when adopted), the development plan documents include:

- *Camden Development Policies 2010* - detailed planning policies to guide our decisions on planning applications – the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan elaborates on these policies where more specific guidance is needed having regard to local circumstances; and

- *Camden Site Allocations Plan 2013* – Camden's proposals for development of significant sites and buildings outside Fitzrovia - this Area Action Plan allocates Opportunity Sites within Fitzrovia; and
- *Euston Area Plan (draft)* - a plan for the area around Euston Station is being prepared by Camden with the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL). Camden Council is opposed to the high speed rail project (HS2) terminating at Euston, but whether or not HS2 proceeds the plan will help us maximise the delivery of new and replacement homes, businesses, shops, and associated education, leisure and open space and improved public realm in the area.





## Planning decisions in Fitzrovia

The National Planning Policy Framework (PPF) indicates that the Council's approach to plan-making and decision-taking should involve a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Proposed development that accords with relevant and up-to-date plans should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

We have devised a number of principles for the use of land and the design and layout of buildings, places and spaces in Fitzrovia. These build on the existing policies in Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies. We have expressed the additional statements in this Plan as principles to indicate that they supplement the existing policies rather than replacing them. However, once adopted the principles will form part of the development plan for Camden.

Proposals for development within the Plan area will always be assessed with regard to relevant principles in the Plan. Proposals which follow the relevant principles in the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan and comply with the relevant policies in Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies are considered to constitute sustainable development.

Policy F1 sets out how the presumption in favour of sustainable development will operate in conjunction with the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan.

### Policy F1 – Planning decisions in Fitzrovia

When considering development proposals within the boundary of the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with up-to-date land use, design and development principles in the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan (and with the up-to-date policies in the Camden Core Strategy, Camden Development Policies 2010 and, where relevant, any neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay and applications that conflict will be refused, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

### Other documents in Camden's planning framework

Our other planning policy documents do not have statutory development plan status, but are taken into account in making planning decisions and have informed the production of this Plan. These include:

- *Camden Planning Guidance* – this is a group of documents initially adopted in 2011 giving guidance for the whole borough on a range of issues including design, housing, town centres, retail and sustainability, and giving specific guidance on the individual shopping areas in Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury; and
- *Conservation Area character appraisals, management strategies and management plans* for the Bloomsbury, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square and Hanway Street Conservation Areas – these have informed this Plan and will continue to be used to guide and assess development proposals within Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury.

### Viability

The NPPF indicates that attention to viability and costs is required during plan-making and decision-taking. Viability should be considered having regard to the cumulative impact of all existing and proposed policy documents and standards, including national requirements.

The plan-making process for Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies was informed by viability assessment, and these development plan documents indicate clearly that the Council will take account of viability in decision-taking (particularly around affordable housing, which is commonly the most costly planning obligation arising from development).

The Area Action Plan has been informed by a *Fitzrovia AAP Viability and Deliverability Study*. The study considers that development is deliverable across the Plan period, having

regard to all constraints and requirements arising from the Plan and from the other local, regional and national policies of Camden's planning framework.

The Council considers viability to be a key factor in assessing planning proposals in Fitzrovia and across the borough. In the Plan area, the Council will continue to have full regard to viability as a material consideration in planning decisions, and will also apply the specific viability provisions in the NPPF, the London Plan, Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 and Camden Development Policies 2010.



### Other background documents

Other studies and reports that have been produced to inform this Plan are:



- *Fitzrovia Open Space and Public Realm Study* – this was commissioned to inform this plan by identifying opportunities for publicly accessible open spaces and public realm improvements;
- *Evidence Base* – this presents background information and statistics on the population, economy and activities in Fitzrovia and has formed the basis for our understanding of issues facing the area; and
- *Sustainability Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment* – these have assessed the Plan to ensure that it does not have negative impacts on sustainability or equality.

These documents have been kept under review as the Plan has progressed through each draft and consultation process, and amendments have been made to the background documents where appropriate. The latest versions of the background documents, including the *Fitzrovia AAP Viability and Deliverability Study*, are available on the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan page of our website at [www.camden.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.camden.gov.uk/ldf)

### Relationship with Westminster's Core Strategy

The planning policy framework for the parts of Fitzrovia in Westminster is set by Westminster City Council's adopted Core Strategy. This contains a number of specific policies and designations for areas in, or close to, Fitzrovia. This Plan has taken these designations into account to ensure that compatible policies are being pursued for the Camden and the Westminster parts of Fitzrovia.

### Working with our partners

This draft of the Area Action Plan has been guided by a Steering Group involving community groups, landowners and local councillors. We have also had input from other community groups and individuals, as well as a range of officers from

Camden Council, Westminster Council and the Greater London Authority (GLA).



## What will the Plan deliver?

The Plan identifies a range of principles, opportunities to provide open space and public realm improvements, and potential development sites (*opportunity sites*). These will help to deliver a range of benefits to Fitzrovia and meet a number of the objectives of Camden's Core Strategy, which are itemised in the Delivery Plan in Part 7 *Delivery and Monitoring*. The following paragraphs indicate the potential contribution that could be made by the identified opportunity sites and measures, but do not attempt to quantify the total amount of development and facilities that could be delivered throughout the Plan area. The adopted development plan policies and the principles in this Plan will also be applied to other sites in the area to deliver additional housing, open space, community facilities and commercial space.

### Housing

The Plan aims to deliver additional self-contained homes including affordable housing, and a modest increase in student housing. Subject to complying with the principles in this Plan and the relevant development plan policies, development of the identified opportunity sites could potentially provide over 200 additional self-contained homes while Astor College has potential to provide around 100 additional student rooms. Sites expected to provide self contained housing include among others the Middlesex Hospital Annex (Cleveland Street), 80 Charlotte Street and Asta House (55-65 Whitfield Street). Development plan mixed-use policies will also be applied to other sites in the Plan area to require permanent self-contained housing.

### Open Space

Coordinated development of the opportunity sites could provide a number of new public open spaces, pedestrian links and

widened footways for seating and planting. High priority projects for delivering new and improved public open space include:

- Bedford Passage – a new pedestrian link with public open space within the block between Howland Street, Charlotte Street, Tottenham Street and Cleveland Street;
- Alfred Place – creation of a new public space by reclaiming part of the carriageway space; and
- The Warren – redesign of the existing space to improve facilities.

### Offices

Subject to complying with the principles in this Plan and the relevant development plan policies, development of the identified opportunity sites could potentially provide around 10,000 sq m of new office floorspace including additional floorspace at the Network Building (95 Tottenham Court Road) and 80 Charlotte Street.

### Medical / healthcare

Various medical / healthcare facilities could be provided in Fitzrovia, along with refurbishment and consolidation of existing facilities, particularly at Tottenham Mews Day Hospital, the Rosenheim Building (Grafton Way) and the Odeon site (Grafton Way).

### Retail

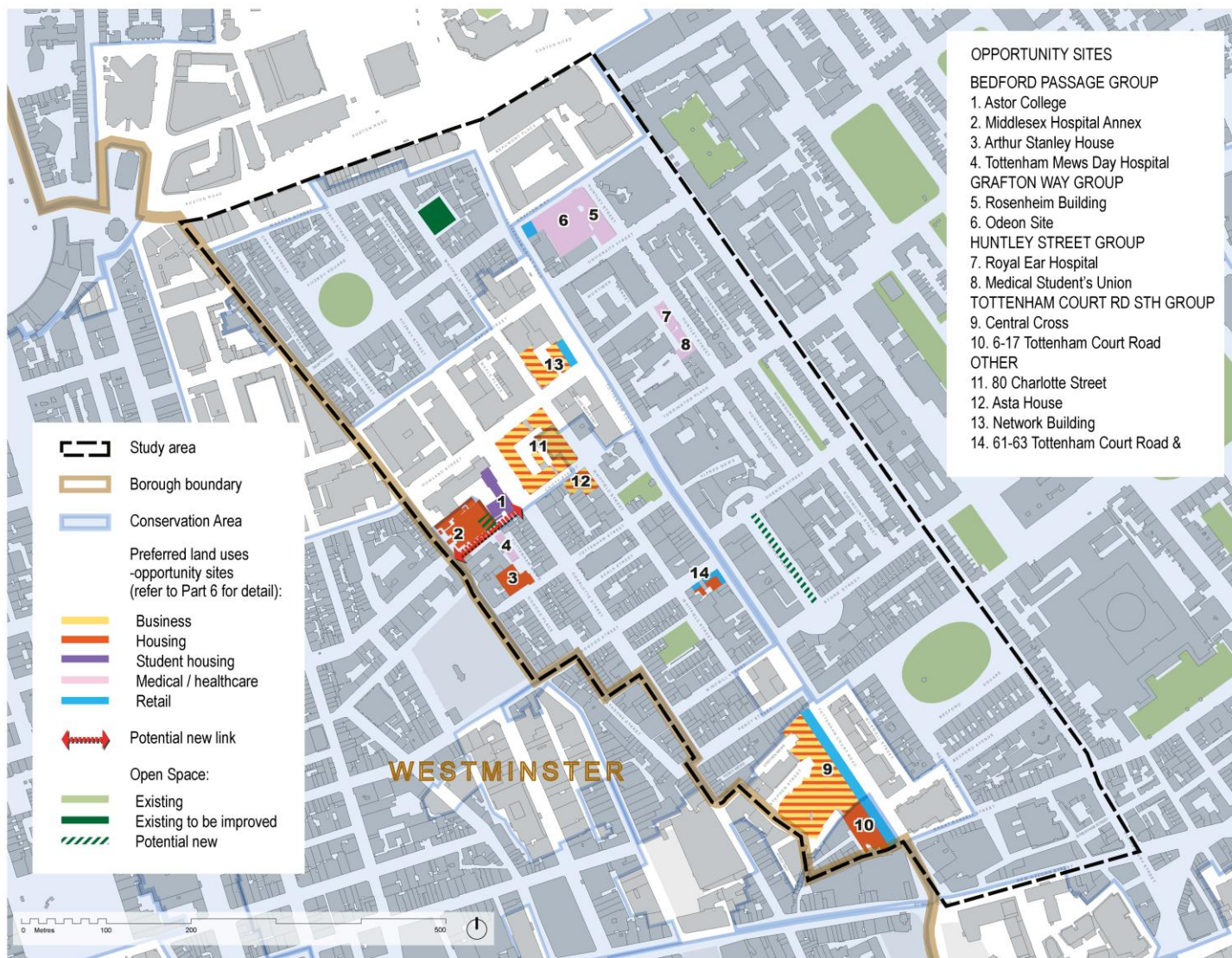
A number of sites could provide additional retail floorspace on the identified retail frontages, such as Central Cross (Tottenham Court Road) and 6-17 Tottenham Court Road.

### Delivery Plan

Our detailed Delivery Plan is set out on page 154 of the Area Action Plan.



## Area Action Plan Key Diagram









## **PART 2**

# **CHARACTER AND CHALLENGES**

## Character and challenges

The Area Action Plan is based on a thorough understanding of the characteristics that make Fitzrovia what it is and an awareness of how it is likely to change. We have produced a separate Evidence Base document setting out the statistics that feed into this understanding. This section of the Plan:

- describes the features that give Fitzrovia its unique character and considers how Fitzrovia's characteristics differ from those of the whole borough, and
- identifies the issues and challenges that the area faces in the future.



## Character

Key aspects of Fitzrovia's character include:

- a mix of residential, commercial and institutional uses; within the area as a whole, within streets and often within individual buildings;
- a significant residential community, a large number of jobs based in the area, a substantial student population and a lack of affordable homes;
- a contrast between busy commercial streets including Tottenham Court Road and quieter, more residential areas;
- a dense urban feel and limited public open space, relieved by some relatively broad tree-lined streets and long views;
- numerous heritage assets, including Georgian terraces with a harmony of height, windows and materials, contrasting with a variety of modern scales and styles;
- formal squares and grid pattern streets intersected by mews passages and walkways; and
- a fine-grain of small buildings interrupted by mansion blocks, institutional buildings, hotels, and office blocks.

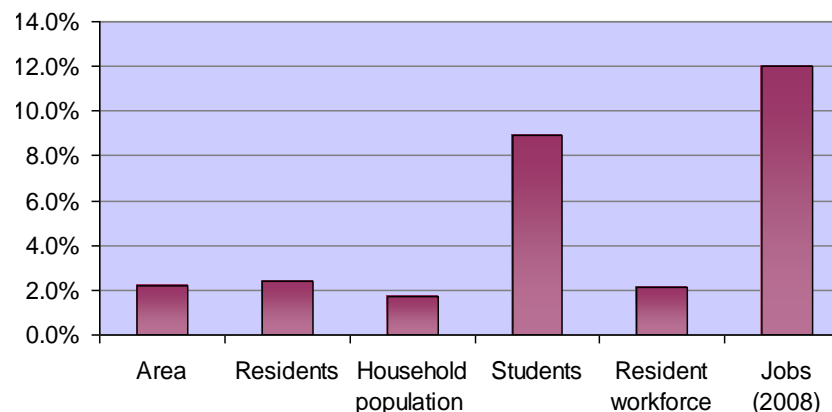
Part 5 of this Plan provides more detail on the built character of Fitzrovia and sets out design principles that take these into account. It also identifies 11 'character areas' within Fitzrovia, describing their individual characteristics and setting out open space, public realm and site-based opportunities to bring benefits to the area.



### Population and homes

- Fitzrovia accommodates a large influx of workers each day of a scale far greater than the size of the resident population. At the 2001 Census the area was home to approx. 4,700 people and 28,600 jobs.
- More than a third of the residents in Fitzrovia live in privately rented accommodation, higher than the Camden average. A quarter of Fitzrovia residents are owner occupiers compared to more than a third of Camden residents who own their own home.
- Over a quarter of Camden residents live in council rented properties, while in Fitzrovia the figure is 17%.
- Fitzrovia has large student population (over 1,500 students over 18 in 2001) giving a large part of the community a transient nature. Close to 9% of all the higher education students living in Camden are Fitzrovia residents.
- Fitzrovia's population (excluding students in halls and hostels) is dominated by young adults, with those aged 16-34 making up over 42% in 2001. Fitzrovia's population also has a significantly lower proportion of children than Camden generally.
- There is a higher proportion of homes with only one or two rooms in Fitzrovia (excluding halls, bathrooms, toilets and storage).
- Residential property prices in Fitzrovia in 2007-08 (including the Westminster part) were approx. 11% higher than the Camden average.

### Plan area characteristics as a percentage of the Camden total (2001)



(Source: 2001 Census, 2008 Annual business inquiry)

### Economy

- Fitzrovia provides a considerable proportion of the jobs in Camden (12% in 2008).
- The profile of business sizes in Fitzrovia is broadly consistent with that of Camden as a whole, with around 60% of jobs in small and medium enterprises having under 200 employees. Fitzrovia has a smaller proportion of jobs in businesses with 1 – 10 employees than Camden and a greater proportion in firms of 50-199 employees.
- Fitzrovia was for many years the home of the British advertising industry and there are still several major advertising agencies in the area, including Saatchi & Saatchi and TBWA.
- The main campus of University College London (UCL) is situated on the eastern flank of Fitzrovia in Gower Street, but

the College also owns a number of sites within Fitzrovia, and attracts students, employees and visitors to the area.

- The Plan area contains numerous medical and institutional facilities including University College Hospital (known as UCH or UCLH), which is a major landowner and brings many employees, patients and visitors to Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury.
- Tottenham Court Road is a significant retail street contributing to the national and international role of the West End. It is recognised for its concentration of consumer electronics shops at the southern end and grouping of furniture shops further north.
- Other retail areas in Fitzrovia include a concentration of restaurants and bars in Charlotte Street serving local workers and West End visitors; three neighbourhood centres serving local and wider functions; and many specialist shops and art galleries.
- Fitzrovia is also known for its fashion industry which is now mainly comprised of wholesalers and headquarters, although some tailor's workshops still exist.

### Open spaces

- There are only three publicly owned and accessible open spaces in Camden's part of Fitzrovia: Crabtree Fields, Whitfield Gardens and the Warren.
- There are also three privately owned open spaces: Bedford Square Gardens, Fitzroy Square Gardens and Ridgmount Gardens.
- Fitzrovia is deficient in public open space and nature conservation sites, with only 0.7 sq m of public open space per resident. The LDF standard for new public open space provision is 9 sq m per resident, while Camden overall has 20 sq m per resident – but this includes the borough's parts

of Regents Park and Hampstead Heath. The need for open space in Fitzrovia is increased by the large numbers of visitors and non-resident workers in the area.

### Community facilities

- A new Fitzrovia Community Centre has opened in John Astor House, Foley Street, Westminster.
- Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association, a charity giving housing and welfare advice and other services to residents intends to open a new Neighbourhood Centre, replacing their old premises in Tottenham Street, Camden.
- There is one nursery in Camden's part of Fitzrovia (in Whitfield Street) and another in the Westminster part (in Carburton Street).
- There are no primary schools in Camden's part of Fitzrovia, but All Souls Primary School (C of E) is immediately to the west of the area in Foley Street, Westminster.
- Fitzrovia is home to the University College Hospital (UCH) and a number of other specialist medical facilities operated by the UCLH NHS Foundation Trust.
- Camden's part of Fitzrovia has one NHS medical centre providing 7 GPs and a mental health resource centre in Tottenham Mews serving the south of Camden.



### Heritage assets

Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury have a rich architectural heritage with many special places and buildings from throughout Camden's history. Four conservation areas recognised for their special architectural or historic interest fall wholly or partly within the Plan area (Bloomsbury, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square and Hanway Street).

The Plan area encompasses many listed buildings spanning several centuries. They include the buildings fronting Fitzroy and Bedford Squares; the former Strand Union Workhouse in Cleveland Street (later incorporated into the Middlesex Hospital Annex); the BT Tower; the Rising Sun public house; the Heal's and Habitat stores; the Burton's headquarters and shop in Tottenham Court Road; and the former University College Hospital General Block (the cruciform building).

Bedford Square and Fitzroy Square are both designated as London Squares giving the gardens statutory protection against development, while Bedford Square Gardens is also included in the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Interest.

### History

- The name Fitzrovia was adopted in the middle years of the 20th Century and is thought to have derived from the Fitzroy Tavern. Fitzroy Square, Fitzroy Street and the Fitzroy Tavern were named after the family that owned the area in the 18th Century.
- The area now known as Fitzrovia was developed in the latter half of the 18th Century as London expanded out from its historic core, with generally spacious streets to the front and mews service streets at the rear, and the townhouse as the prevailing form of development.
- Unlike the larger estates within Bloomsbury where standards of construction were enforced and development formally planned, development in Fitzrovia was more piecemeal, reflecting the various ownerships and individual landowners leasing plots to builders for development.
- By the turn of the 19th Century, the area had become less fashionable and grand houses were subdivided and rented out. The large rooms made good studios and, as a result, the area became home to many artists, attracted by the low rents. Over time, the area became a notable artistic and bohemian centre.
- Early in the 19th Century, the young Charles Dickens lived in Cleveland Street and Fitzroy Street. Arthur Rimbaud was briefly a resident of Howland Street. Later, Fitzroy Square was home to George Bernard Shaw and then Virginia Woolf.
- Shops began to be inserted into the ground floors of the formerly residential townhouses around Charlotte Street during the 19th Century.
- Towards the end of the 19th century leases on the original Georgian terraces began to expire and many plots east of Tottenham Court Road were combined allowing development of characteristic red-brick mansion blocks and medical buildings.
- In the 20th Century Tottenham Court Road became a focus for the development of larger purpose-built shops for furniture and other goods being made in the local area.
- The area suffered from bomb damage during World War II which led to larger scale development in some parts of the area.



## Heritage Assets





## Context and challenges

The Fitzrovia Area Action Plan is being prepared in the context of social, economic and physical changes. Some of the issues and challenges that we need to consider when planning for Fitzrovia's future are set out below.

### Securing residential facilities and amenity and the balance with commercial and institutional activity

Fitzrovia is home to a considerable residential population, including a significant proportion of students. The area also attracts a large influx of workers, students and visitors each day to its offices, academic institutions and shops, and in the evening to the bars, restaurants, cinema and other entertainment establishments. Workers, students and visitors are critical to the vitality and economic success of parts of the area. However, these groups do not necessarily support the shops and services valued by longer term residents. Furthermore, high levels of activity, particularly in the evening, can be damaging to the amenity and quality of life of those living in Fitzrovia. This Plan aims to address the challenges of securing a balance between commercial/ institutional activity and the amenity of local residents, and of providing calmer streets and spaces along with active frontages and interesting streetscapes.

### Adjacent Growth Areas

The London Plan and the Camden Core Strategy recognise potential for significant growth in jobs and homes in two locations at the edge of Fitzrovia – at Euston and Tottenham Court Road (these are known as Growth Areas in the Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 and Opportunity Areas in the London Plan). Growth in these areas is likely to place additional pressure on Fitzrovia by attracting additional visitors and businesses.

### Growth areas



- *Euston.* This Growth Area is focussed on Euston Station, and adjoins the Action Plan Area at the junction of Euston Road and Tottenham Court Road. The Core Strategy indicates that development at Euston could provide around 1,500 homes, around 70,000 sq m of business space and a significant amount of retail floorspace. However, this pre-

dates the high speed rail project (HS2) and if HS2 is constructed it is likely that a greater scale of development will occur. A Euston Area Plan is currently being prepared and will include proposals for the Growth Area – see page 8 of this Plan for more details.

- *Tottenham Court Road.* This Growth Area is focussed around the Tottenham Court Road Underground/ Crossrail Station and overlaps with Fitzrovia at the southern end of Tottenham Court Road. Parts of the Growth Area are in the City of Westminster, including the station sites and two sites adjacent to the Action Plan area (4-48 Oxford Street/ 1-5 Tottenham Court Road and 35-50 Rathbone Place). The London Plan anticipates at least 600 new homes and 5,000 new jobs will be provided in this Growth Area. We expect around 60% of the homes and more than half of the jobs to be provided within the Camden part of the area.

### Responding to development pressures

The coexistence of different uses is a highly valued aspect of Fitzrovia and central to the character of the area. Although growth can bring benefits to the area, some development pressures threaten components of this mix. For example, small retailers are under pressure from high rents and competition from larger stores in cheaper areas. There is also pressure to convert some commercial premises to housing, particularly lower cost premises that accommodate small and medium-sized businesses. Meanwhile, the expansion of a number of institutional sites in the northeast of Fitzrovia has led to the closure of others elsewhere. This Plan seeks to respond to these pressures by identifying uses that should be retained in Fitzrovia and identifying opportunities for growth to deliver better facilities for local residents.

### Crossrail and High Speed 2

The east – west Crossrail link is currently under construction and planned to be operational around 2018. The new station and

ticket halls in Tottenham Court Road and Oxford Street are a major driver of commercial development, will attract additional visitors, businesses and commercial development to Fitzrovia and alter pedestrian movements in the area.

In January 2012, the government announced its decision to proceed with the High Speed Two (HS2) rail link from London to Birmingham (and later to Manchester and Leeds and ultimately Scotland), with a rebuilt London terminus at Euston Station. Camden Council opposes, and has legally challenged, these proposals. Even if HS2 does not proceed, it is expected there will be an increase in passenger numbers to a redeveloped Euston Station which could attract more visitors, businesses and commercial development to Fitzrovia.

### The pedestrian environment

In contrast to the busy neighbouring Oxford Street and Euston Road, Fitzrovia is regarded as being a desirable place for pedestrians to wander. However, there are some negative aspects to Fitzrovia's pedestrian environment. For example, streets such as Tottenham Court Road, Howland Street and Maple Street are 'traffic canyons', where high volumes of traffic detract from the quality of the surrounding environment. Also, late 20th Century development has led to the closure of some mews and alleyway routes to pedestrians. This Plan aims to address these challenges by identifying opportunities for increased and enhanced space for pedestrians and for more pedestrian routes through street blocks.

### Public open space

Fitzrovia has a severe shortage of public open space. To tackle this challenge we commissioned the Fitzrovia Open Space and Public Realm Study. This Plan incorporates opportunities to create new public open space and improve streets and spaces identified in the Study.





### Historic character

The mix of land uses, the small scale and fine grain of most development, the listed buildings, conservation areas and the history of Fitzrovia create a unique place which is highly prized by residents and visitors. This Plan identifies the things that give Fitzrovia its unique character and seeks to ensure that they are preserved.

### Main roads, junctions and spaces

In conjunction with Transport for London and the City of Westminster, the Council is exploring changes to main roads and junctions between Euston and St Giles. This work is known as the West End Project and aims to create more civilised streets with less traffic, lower traffic speeds and better public spaces on the street. These changes would involve a more attractive Tottenham Court Road with wider footways, and remodelled junctions at Euston Circus (above Euston Underpass), St Giles Circus (the south end of Tottenham Court Road), Cambridge Circus (Shaftesbury Avenue/ Charing Cross Road) and Princes

Circus (Shaftesbury Avenue/ High Holborn). Alterations to traffic flows on these roads and junctions could have a significant influence on traffic and pedestrian movements across Fitzrovia, Bloomsbury and beyond. More information on the potential outcomes within the Plan area are set out in Part 5 Character Areas and Urban Design Principles (see pages 99 and 100).

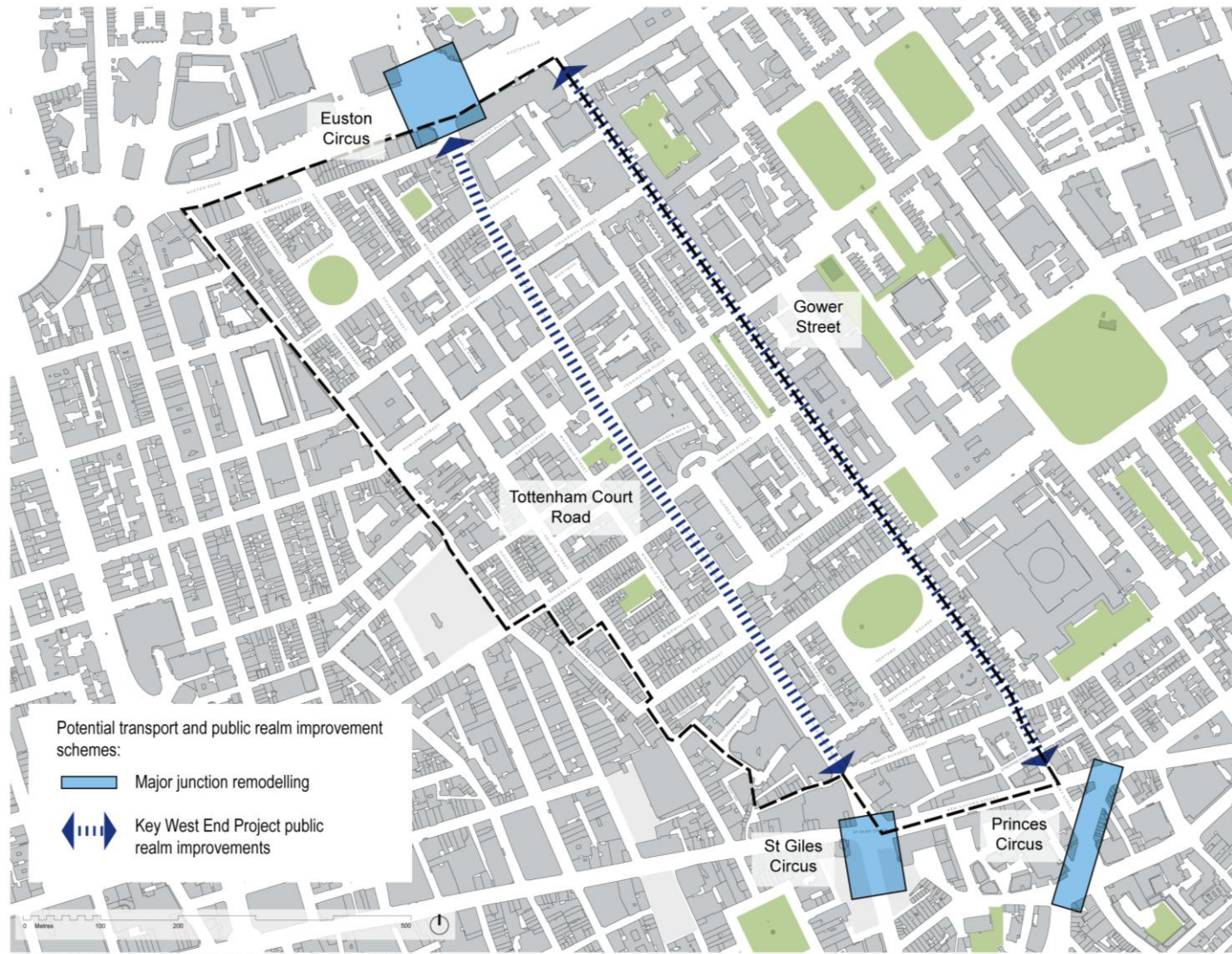
Although funding has been secured for works to some junctions, the wider project (including two-way working) needs fuller exploration and public consultation before formal decisions can be taken. Remodelling of St Giles Circus would be needed for two-way working and cannot take place until the Crossrail construction has been completed and Charing Cross Road released from the construction site. The possible changes and their impacts are an important part of the context for the Area Action Plan, but the Plan cannot make direct provision for them at this stage.

During March 2014 the Council will carry out pre-engagement on proposals for the West End Project with community groups, landowners, businesses and other stakeholders. Wider public consultation will follow in June and July 2014.





## Main roads and junctions





## **PART 3: VISION AND OBJECTIVES**

## Introducing the vision and objectives

Our overall vision and objectives for Fitzrovia are set out below. These address the issues and challenges that are identified in Part 2 and set our aspirations for future development in the area. The objectives are consistent with, and will contribute to the delivery of, the overarching objectives set out in the Camden Core Strategy. They also respond to Fitzrovia's context and identity, seeking to enhance positive characteristics, as well as taking into account the issues raised during consultation and engagement and the meetings of the steering group.

The vision for Fitzrovia is:

### **To optimise the benefits of future growth to create a harmonious co-existence of uses and users**

To achieve this vision, we have developed four objectives:

- ensuring growth takes place in a way that strikes an appropriate balance between residential, institutional and commercial uses and addresses the its impact of growth on residential amenity;
- supporting the residential community by providing a range of facilities, services and places to meet resident's existing and future needs and protecting and enhancing residential amenity and quality of life;
- creating a high quality physical environment; and
- ensuring an environmentally sustainable future.

The objectives are explained in more detail below.

### **Ensuring growth takes place in way that strikes an appropriate balance between residential, institutional and commercial uses and addresses the impact of growth on residential amenity**

Part 2 of this Plan identifies a need to ensure that growth and development in Fitzrovia addresses the challenge of balancing commercial activity and other uses with the amenity of those living in the area. We will address this objective through:

- supporting sustainable development to deliver the aims of Camden's Core Strategy and optimising the benefits for Fitzrovia;
- supporting residential communities by protecting amenity and improving quality of life;
- seeking to enhance the strategic economic role of the area;
- achieving more, well-designed affordable housing (including social rent) that supports a mixed, diverse local population, and delivering high quality market housing;
- promoting small and medium scale businesses and independent and specialist shops;
- managing the area's night time economy in a way that safeguards the amenity of local residents;
- guiding commercial and institutional uses to the most appropriate locations, taking into account the area's residential population;
- enhancing the relationship between the area's residents, major institutions and landowners through their ongoing involvement in the Plan's Steering Group.

Principles 1 and 4 to 9 in Part 4 of this Plan seek to address the impact of growth by promoting housing and affordable housing,

protecting residential amenity, supporting independent shops and small businesses and directing growth to appropriate areas.

Our Delivery Plan is set out in the table on page 154.

**Supporting the residential community by providing a range of facilities, services and places to meet residents' existing and future needs and protecting and enhancing residential amenity and quality of life**

Part 2 of the Plan highlights the deficiency of public open space in Fitzrovia and identifies the importance of providing community facilities in the area. We will address these issues by:

- identifying opportunities to create new publicly accessible open and green spaces, including spaces within streets and public areas, within development sites and on roof-tops; and
- supporting and enhancing community facilities such as play equipment and public toilets.

Principles 2 and 3 in Part 4 of this Plan seek to ensure that new development contributes to provision of open space and community facilities where it increases the need for them.

Our Delivery Plan is set out in the table on page 154.



**Creating a high quality physical environment**

Fitzrovia is characterised by its mix of land uses and its architectural quality. As identified in Part 2, much of the area is recognised for its special architectural or historic interest and its character and appearance. We will address this objective through:

- protecting and enhancing the valued character of Fitzrovia, including maintaining the quiet residential streets which sit alongside busy commercial thoroughfares;
- promoting high quality design that responds to its surroundings and local character;
- enhancing the interaction between streets and the ground floors of buildings by removing visual clutter and encouraging high quality design;

- improving streets and public spaces and making it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to get around the area; including creating routes through developments where appropriate;
- reducing the impact of traffic through improvements to key routes and junctions, while maintaining the quiet character of less busy streets;
- promoting the safety and security of those who live in, work in and visit Fitzrovia;
- preserving and enhancing the area's many heritage assets and their settings (including assets that are not specifically protected by listed building or conservation area status).

Part 5 of this Plan summarises the elements of our adopted Core Strategy and Development Policies documents that seek to achieve high quality environment, for example by expecting development to respect local character and the setting and scale of existing buildings. Part 5 identifies 11 'character areas' in Fitzrovia and sets out principles to ensure that development reflects their characteristics and qualities. Design principles for identified Opportunity Sites are given in Part 6.

Our Delivery Plan is set out in the table on page 154.

### Ensuring an environmentally sustainable future

A sustainable Camden that adapts to a growing population is one of the four themes with the overall vision of Camden's LDF Core Strategy. We will seek to achieve this aim within Fitzrovia by:

- ensuring all buildings are as environmentally friendly as possible;
- identifying opportunities for local energy generation;
- expecting developments, new and existing, to minimise, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change;

- expecting development to be car-free or car-capped in order to minimise the environmental impact of car use and release land for improvements to streets and public spaces.

Principle 10 in Part 4 seeks to promote sustainability by minimising carbon emissions, particularly through promoting local energy networks.

The vision and objectives set out above have been used as the starting point for the development of the land use principles, character areas and opportunity sites in Parts 4, 5 and 6, which provide further detail on the measures we will take to achieve the aspirations set out in the vision and objectives.

Our Delivery Plan is set out in the table on page 154.





## **PART 4**

# **LAND USE PRINCIPLES**

## Existing land use policies

Part 4 sets out *Land use principles* which will help us manage the activities in the area to achieve our *Vision and Objectives* for Fitzrovia set out in Part 3 of the Plan. Objectives that are particularly relevant to land use principles are:

- ensuring growth takes place in a way that strikes an appropriate balance between residential, institutional and commercial uses and addresses the impact of growth on residential amenity;
- supporting the residential community by providing a range of facilities, services and places; and
- ensuring an environmentally sustainable future.

These *Land use principles* do not seek to guide every activity that takes place in Fitzrovia, but are directed towards those land-uses where a Fitzrovia-specific approach to applying our LDF policies is needed to achieve the Plan's objectives.

Consequently, this section needs to be read alongside the full range of policies in Camden's Core Strategy 2010-2025 and Development Policies 2010.

Camden's Core Strategy policies CS5 and CS9 seek to support strong residential communities and address the balance between development that supports Central London's role as the focus of capital city functions and development that meets the needs of local communities. These aims have particularly informed the land-use principles for Fitzrovia. The issues raised by policies CS5 and CS9 and by related parts of Camden's Development Policies 2010 are summarised in the text box here, but the policies should be referred to in full in relation to prospective developments.

### Achieving a successful Central London and managing the impact of growth

Development in Fitzrovia should help to minimise the impact of growth and development (policy CS5) and achieve a successful Central London (policy CS9) by:

- balancing the needs of development that supports Central London's economic, social and cultural role with the needs and characteristics of the local area and community;
- supporting Central London as a focus for homes, offices, hotels, shops, and medical, educational, cultural and research institutions (see also policies CS1, CS5, CS6, CS7, CS8, DP1, DP10, DP12, DP13, DP14);
- seeking to ensure that development contributes towards strong and successful communities by protecting residential amenity and supporting community facilities (see also policies CS10, DP15, DP26).

Although *Land use principles* are presented separately from the *Character areas and urban design principles* in Part 5 of the Plan, they are heavily inter-related, with fine-grained building patterns favouring independent retailers and/ or housing and larger plots favouring corporate offices and institutions. Considerations of future land use should not be considered against Part 4 of the Plan in isolation. For a summary of policies that relate more closely to urban design, please see page 70.

## Housing and affordable housing

### Principle 1

The Council regards housing as the priority land use of the Local Development Framework.

The Council will promote the development in Fitzrovia of permanent self-contained housing (in Use Class C3) unless there are strong economic reasons why such development would be inappropriate.

In applying mixed-use and affordable housing policies the Council will aim to ensure that:

- additional non-residential floorspace is matched by an equal addition to floorspace for permanent self-contained housing (in Use Class C3), subject to relevant development plan policy criteria for mixed-use development, and
- where housing and affordable housing contributions in Use Class C3 are required, they are provided on the development site or elsewhere in reasonable proximity to the development site, and within the Plan area wherever possible.

Where student housing is proposed in association with the development of additional non-residential floorspace for an educational institution, the Council will positively consider off-site provision, including provision outside the Plan area.

The Council will negotiate to seek the maximum reasonable amount of affordable housing, and to seek types of affordable housing that are appropriate in the context of the high house prices and market rents in Fitzrovia and the incomes of households in need of affordable housing.

When considering the mix of homes of different sizes in development, including the conversion of existing homes, the Council will seek to ensure a supply of large homes available to:

- households who currently suffer from overcrowding, and
- growing families who would otherwise need to seek larger housing elsewhere.

The Council will not attach the highest market dwelling size priority to 2-bedroom homes in Fitzrovia.

The Plan's objectives include supporting residential communities and achieving more housing and affordable housing. These objectives are consistent with the Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025, which states that the Council regards housing as the priority land-use of Camden's Local Development Framework. Camden's Core Strategy also indicates that the Council will seek a variety of housing types suitable for different groups. In pursuing the Area Action Plan's housing objectives, the Council will seek types of housing suitable for the groups identified in the Core Strategy, including families, people with mobility difficulties and older people.

Thirteen of the Plan's Opportunity Sites are potentially able to contribute to the development of additional self-contained homes. However, given the mixed-use character of the area, these sites are not allocated exclusively for housing. Furthermore, up to five of these sites may be developed primarily for medical or healthcare uses. To meet the Plan's objectives the Council will therefore seek to maximise the delivery of housing from unallocated sites within Fitzrovia, including development of underused and vacant properties for housing (taking into account any other uses needed), and inclusion of housing alongside non-residential uses as part of mixed use development.



The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that in areas of housing need, councils should generally approve conversion of commercial buildings (in the B use classes) to housing, unless strong economic reasons would make this inappropriate. Principle 1 is consistent with the national policy. Many of the office premises in the Plan area were originally designed as homes, and residential conversion of some of these properties may be appropriate. In particular, many of the Listed townhouses surrounding Bedford Square are currently in business use. Some residential conversion in Bedford Square could have heritage and community safety benefits by securing the restoration of original features and increasing levels of activity and natural surveillance outside office hours. When considering proposals for conversion from business to residential use, the Council will have regard to relevant development plan policy criteria for retention of business use and Principle 4 of this Plan supporting small and medium enterprises.

Existing Policy DP1 in Camden's Development Policies indicates that where more than 200 sq m of additional floorspace is provided, up to 50% of all additional floorspace in appropriate schemes should be provided as permanent self-contained housing. The housing should be provided on-site wherever practical. Principle 1 sets out the Council's particular approach for Fitzrovia, where we will aim to maximise the floorspace of the residential component so that it matches the non-residential component (i.e. achieves the full 50%).

The NPPF indicates that policies should seek development that creates an appropriate mix of uses. The NPPF also indicates that policies should seek mixed and balanced communities and secure any necessary affordable housing on the development site unless an off-site contribution can be robustly justified. The policies of the Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 and Camden Development Policies 2010 comply with the NPPF by seeking mixed-use development and creation of mixed and inclusive communities, and expecting on-site affordable housing



contributions unless they cannot practically be achieved. To support the existing mixed-use character and mixed residential communities of Fitzrovia, Principle 1 seeks to ensure that permanent self-contained housing and any affordable housing required is delivered on-site or nearby (ideally within 500 metres) within the Plan area. Where no alternative site is available within the Plan area, the development is at the edge of the Plan area, or the developer's land-holdings are predominantly outside the Plan area, the Council may accept provision outside the Plan area provided it is still close to the development site (ideally within 500 metres).

Camden's Development Policies 2010 indicate that housing provided through Policy DP1 should generally be permanent self-contained housing in Use Class C3. However, where additional non-residential floorspace is being provided for a higher educational institution, student housing may be an acceptable alternative.

Part 2 of this Plan *Character and challenges* notes that Fitzrovia has a high proportion of students and private rented accommodation, and consequently a large part of the community is made up of short-term residents. To support retention of a community of longer-term residents, Principle 1 provides greater flexibility in Fitzrovia for off-site provision of any student housing sought through Policy DP1. We will guide proposals for student housing towards existing student housing sites (more details are given in *Principle 7 Student housing* below) or to locations outside the Plan area that are accessible to the institutions it will serve.

The types of affordable homes provided in Fitzrovia will be carefully assessed to ensure that they are affordable to the households that need them. Intermediate housing including shared ownership homes should be affordable to households whose annual income is in the range set out in the London Plan 2011 and subsequent London Plan Annual Monitoring Reports.

Market rents are beyond the reach of many families in housing need. When seeking the maximum reasonable proportion of affordable housing, the Council will encourage the provision of affordable housing that costs no more than 80% of local market rent (including service charges where applicable) and give priority to family homes at or around the level of guideline target rents as resources and development viability permit. Camden Planning Guidance CPG2 Housing provides more details about how the Council will implement development plan policies for affordable housing.

Over 30% of Fitzrovia homes have only 1 or 2 rooms (Census 2001, definition excludes halls, bathrooms, toilets and storage). Overcrowding is the most common element of housing need across the borough, and is also prevalent in Fitzrovia. However, compared with the borough, children are significantly under-represented in the area's households. The lack of large housing, both in the affordable sector and at the cheaper end of the market sector, limits opportunities for overcrowded households and young families to remain in the area. In Fitzrovia the Council will operate its policies on home sizes and conversions to increase the availability of housing for growing and overcrowded families. We will expect all residential development to include large homes, as required by Policy DP5 of Camden Development Policies 2010. The accompanying Dwelling Size Priorities Table will not apply to market homes in Fitzrovia, and the Council will attach a high dwelling size priority to market homes with 3-bedrooms or more, a medium priority to those with 2-bedrooms and a lower priority to those with 1-bedroom.

### Relevant Area Action Plan objectives

Contributes to the key objective *ensuring growth takes place in a way that strikes an appropriate balance between residential, institutional and commercial uses* by supporting residential communities and achieving more, well designed affordable housing





### Relevant parts of Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies

Policy CS1 – Distribution of growth

Policy CS6 – Providing quality homes

Policy CS9 – Achieving a successful Central London

Policy DP1 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

Policy DP2 – Making full-use of Camden's capacity for housing

Policy DP3 – Contributions to the supply of affordable housing

Policy DP5 – Homes of different sizes

### Relevant parts of Westminster's Core Strategy

Policy CS1 – Mixed use in the Central Activities Zone

Policy CS15 – Meeting housing needs

Policy CS16 – Affordable housing

### Relevant parts of the London Plan

Policy 2.11 – CAZ strategic functions

Policy 3.3 - Increasing housing supply

Policy 3.8 - Housing choice

Policy 3.10 - Definition of affordable housing

Policy 3.12 - Negotiating affordable housing on individual private residential and mixed use schemes

Policy 4.3 – Mixed use development and offices



## Public open space

### Principle 2

The Council will expect development in Fitzrovia that increases the use of open space to provide new on-site public open space. Where on-site provision is not practical, public open space should be provided on an identified site in the vicinity.

The Council will implement a range of proposals set out in this Plan to increase and enhance the availability of public open space in Fitzrovia, with particular priority given to green spaces and recreation space for older children.

Public open space has a wide range of functions, including providing for sport, informal play, exercise, less formal recreation, experience of the natural environment, support of biodiversity, sustainable urban drainage, improving microclimates in urban areas, giving focus and structure to the surrounding area and contributing to the heritage value of the area.

There are 3 publicly owned and accessible areas of off-street public open space in Fitzrovia, each covering approximately 1,000 sq m, amounting to less than 0.7 sq m per resident. There are no designated sites of nature conservation interest within the Plan area. More substantial public open spaces are available at

Russell Square and at Regent's Park (which is also a site of nature conservation interest), but these are more than 500 metres from most of Fitzrovia. There are impressive formal squares in the area at Fitzroy Square and Bedford Square. The streets around these squares provide significant paved areas for relaxation, but the central gardens are privately owned and are not generally open to the public.

Fitzrovia is considered to be severely lacking in public open space and access to nature conservation interest. There has been a steady growth in the number of residents and employees in Fitzrovia in the last 20 years. However, no addition to green public open space has been provided in the area since Crabtree Fields was laid out in 1985.

The Plan's objectives include identifying opportunities to create new publicly accessible open and green spaces. The Plan's Steering Group commissioned a Fitzrovia Open Space and Public Realm Study to identify opportunities to add to publicly accessible open spaces. Many of the study's suggestions have been incorporated into the Plan and details of the proposals appear primarily in Part 5 Character areas and urban design principles. Part 7 Delivery and Monitoring includes a Delivery Plan, which brings together the proposed measures relating to open space together with indicative information about the priorities attached to them.

Public open spaces



Suggestions incorporated in the Plan will be used to inform how we negotiate with developers to seek open space in association with development, negotiate with landowners for public access to private land, how we negotiate with other bodies such as the GLA for funding to support provision, and how the Council spends financial contributions from development.

Fitzrovia currently has only one public grassed area (Crabtree Fields) and one games court available for older children (The Warren). Green spaces and recreation space for older children will be particular priorities where an opportunity to provide additional open space arises. We will also seek opportunities throughout the area to provide green features and add to biodiversity and sustainable urban drainage through measures such as tree planting, soft landscaping, roof gardens and green and brown roofs.

### Providing for occupiers of new development

Camden Development Policies 2010 indicates that developments that increase the resident, worker and visitor populations of the borough will add to demand for public open space, specifically schemes for 5-or-more additional dwellings, student accommodation for 10-or-more occupiers, or other developments of 500 sq m or more. The public open space needs of new occupiers are assessed as 9 sq m per resident and 0.74 sq m per worker in Central London. Camden Planning Guidance *CPG6 – Amenity* indicates how requirements will be calculated for individual developments to take account of dwelling size, workplace occupancy and occupancy of student halls. CPG6 also sets out the distance threshold for different types of public open space. These distance thresholds should be used to guide the location of any off-site public open space provision.

Noting the severe local shortage of public open space and access to natural features, the Council will use every possible opportunity to seek direct provision of public open space on or close to the site that generates the demand. To achieve larger public open spaces we will strongly encourage developers to pool their open space contributions in a single location where they are generated by adjacent or nearby sites. For example, Part 6 of the Plan *Opportunity Sites* identifies the potential for a pooled space between Site 1 *Astor College*, Site 2 *Middlesex Hospital Annex*.

Where a development is unable meet the public open space needs of its occupiers by direct provision on or near the site, the Council will consider the use of financial contributions from development to improve existing open spaces in ways that increase their capacity where practical. If there are no opportunities to improve existing open space in a location reasonably related to the development, we will consider the use of financial contributions to create usable spaces within the street environment through works to highway space and private forecourts.

The scale of financial contributions included in Camden Planning Guidance CPG6 Amenity (adopted 2011) can make financial contributions a more attractive option for developers than making direct provision on or near the site. The Council is currently progressing towards introduction of a Camden Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and is also commencing a review of the Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 and Camden Development Policies 2010. As part of this work we will review the appropriateness of the range and scale of infrastructure contributions secured through s106 planning obligations, including contributions to public open space.

To encourage direct provision and pooling of open space in a single location, the Council will consider formally acknowledging *public open space credits* where a developer directly provides





public open space in Fitzrovia in advance of any policy requirement arising from a development. The Council will then have the discretion to agree the use of 'banked' credits to offset policy requirements when development comes forward elsewhere in Fitzrovia. This arrangement will apply wholly within the Plan area, the scale of the credits must be formally agreed by the Council at the time they are created, and they will only be considered to offset requirements at a site elsewhere in the area where the needs of that development cannot be better served by on-site provision. Public open space credits will be specific to an applicant, developer or landowner, and will only be transferable where all parties formally agree the transfer.

### Opportunities to increase and enhance the availability of public open space

On the basis of the Fitzrovia Open Space and Public Realm Study, we have identified three broad groups of opportunities to add to the supply of space, the availability of space and the usefulness of space. These are:

- new open spaces – spaces that are provided separately from the street environment, such as parks, gardens, play areas and sports courts;
- existing open spaces – similar spaces that could be made more useful through actions such as improving the layout, adding to facilities, or seeking greater public access; and
- highway space and private forecourts – spaces within the street environment that can make a contribution to informal recreation through new layouts, pedestrianisation, additional trees and planting, seating etc.

Specific types of open space and the treatment of the space will be selected taking into account their impact on nature conservation, biodiversity and heritage (including designated and undesignated heritage assets, and including the treatment of open spaces that are themselves heritage assets). In some cases, paved spaces rather than green spaces will be appropriate as the setting to a heritage asset. In some cases

limited or partial public access is better able to foster biodiversity than full public access (e.g. green roofs).

The following sections give more detail about these opportunities.

### New open space

Given the densely built up nature of Fitzrovia, in negotiations concerning development proposals, the Council will seek direct provision of wholly new open space by developer, within the

development site where possible or on a site nearby.  
Opportunities we will consider include:

- creation of public open space at street-level within a development – ideally located where each one complements or adds to public open space created by other developments;
- creation of roof-top open spaces, gardens or amenity areas – where practical these should be accessible to the general public, but we will also consider whether additional pressures on public open space can be reduced by spaces dedicated to the occupiers of the development. We will also consider the biodiversity and sustainability benefits of roof features that limit roof access, such as solar panels and green or brown roofs designed to promote biodiversity or slow down water run-off;
- purchase of private property for the creation of public open space – this could be considered for parking spaces, forecourts and private gardens where there is potential for direct access from the street; and
- temporary use of cleared sites for public open space – sites awaiting development can make short term contributions at low costs using materials that can be put in place and removed quickly, for example grow-bag allotments – landowners will need to be satisfied that the use will cease when development is scheduled to start, and may wish to restrict access to certain times and groups.

Part 6 *Opportunity Sites* gives details of sites we have identified with development potential, and indicates where they also have potential to provide public open space. A high priority of the Plan is to seek a new public open space in the block between Howland Street, Charlotte Street, Tottenham Street and Cleveland Street, associated with Site 1 *Astor College*, Site 2

*Middlesex Hospital Annex*, and Site 4 *Tottenham Mews Day Hospital*.

### Existing open spaces

The Open Space and Public Realm Study considered potential and priorities for spending on existing open space in Fitzrovia. As suggested by the study, the Plan gives priority to redesign of The Warren to improve facilities and create a park/ garden character. The Council will also negotiate with landowners to increase public access to private open spaces such as Bedford Square Gardens and Fitzroy Square Gardens.

The study's individual proposals for existing open spaces are considered in more detail in Part 5 *Character areas and urban design principles* and the Delivery Plan in Part 7 *Delivery and Monitoring*.

### Highway space and private forecourts

The Council will seek to make more effective use of highway space to augment public open space in the area through:

- widening and extending footways;
- use of shared surfaces where appropriate;
- designing streets for use by pedestrians and cyclists;
- enhancing amenity through provision of street trees, planters and seating; and
- reducing other street clutter.



The Council will encourage measures on privately owned land such as forecourts and other underused fragments of land that can add to the amenity value of the public realm, such as the introduction of planters and seats.

The Open Space and Public Realm study made a wide range of suggestions for more effective use of open space within the street environment. High priority schemes supported by this Plan include creation of a public open space in Alfred Place by reclaiming part of the carriageway space and moving car parking. Details of all the study suggestions that the Council will take forward for further investigation are identified in Part 5 *Character areas and urban design principles* and the Delivery Plan in Part 7 *Delivery and Monitoring*.

The study did not include detailed examination of the feasibility of these schemes. Before specific schemes can be agreed for implementation, their feasibility will have to be considered in depth, consultation with key stakeholders and wider public consultation will be needed on potential designs, a source of

funding will need to be identified and the priority of these schemes will need to be weighed against other priorities in Fitzrovia and further afield. Where works to the public realm are involved, feasibility will include their impact on traffic movements, parking and services. Where possible the Council will seek funding from Transport for London to examine the feasibility of the schemes, and implement those schemes which are feasible, supported by the public, and prioritised by the Council.

### Relevant Area Action Plan objectives

Contributes to the key objective *supporting the residential community by providing a range of facilities, services and places* through supporting and enhancing community facilities and identifying opportunities to create new publicly accessible open spaces and green spaces

### Relevant parts of Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies

Policy CS15 – Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces and encouraging biodiversity

Policy DP31 – Provision of and improvements to open space and outdoor sport and recreation

Policy DP31 Thresholds - developments should contribute to public open space provision where they add 5 or more homes, 10 or more student bedspaces, or 500 sq m floorspace or more

### Relevant parts of Westminster's Core Strategy

Policy CS34 – Open space

### Relevant parts of the London Plan

Policy 2.18 – Green infrastructure: The network of open and green spaces



## Policy 7.19 – Biodiversity and access to nature



## Providing community facilities

### Principle 3

The Council will support the development of community facilities throughout Fitzrovia provided the proposal is at an appropriate scale and character for the area in which it is situated.

The Council will expect development to meet any additional need it creates for community facilities by providing new facilities or providing support for existing facilities to serve more users. New facilities should be provided on-site wherever possible.

Camden Development Policies 2010 defines community facilities to include a wide range of activities such as childcare, education and training, healthcare, meeting spaces, places of worship and public conveniences. They will generally be facilities that provide services directly to local residents. As detailed in Part 2 *Character and challenges*, Fitzrovia includes a variety of provision within Camden and Westminster including a community centre, hospitals, GP surgeries, nurseries and a primary school.

The Plan's objectives include providing a range of facilities that support local resident needs. Seven of the Plan's opportunity sites are identified for possible medical and healthcare development, including:

- the Tottenham Mews Day Hospital, which the Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust intends to develop for a Community Mental Health Resource Centre;

- several in the area close to University College Hospital that are likely to be developed for further hospital uses.

More details are provided in Principle 6 and Part 6 *Opportunity Sites*.

There are limited opportunities to develop further community facilities in Fitzrovia due to the high value of land and the limited funding available to service providers. Given the mixed-use character of Fitzrovia and the shortage of available sites, the Council will encourage inclusion of space for community facilities in all large-scale developments. Where a development generates a need for an additional community facility, the best prospect of delivery is within the development site. However, Camden Development Policies 2010 also seeks retention of existing community facilities, and the Council will consider the potential for new development to support existing facilities so they can serve more users.



All new development should be at an appropriate scale and character for the area in which it is situated. Many parts of Fitzrovia have a dense urban grain and human scale which will not always be compatible with larger community facilities. Given these constraints, medical and research institutions should also be guided by Principle 6 below, particularly where they are large in scale (generally over 2,500 sq m).

There is not currently any public toilet provision in Fitzrovia, and this contributes to anti-social behaviour, particularly late at night when bars and restaurants close. The need for public toilets is particularly acute towards the southern end of Tottenham Court Road, which is a busy waiting and bus-boarding area for visitors to Fitzrovia and the West End (including night-time visitors to Covent Garden and Soho).

The community is also concerned that local primary school places may not be sufficient to meet future pupil needs. Camden's Central London primaries have spare capacity at present, but the Council will continue to monitor this situation, having regard to population change, fertility rates and new development coming forward.

In supporting community facilities in Camden, the Council will prioritise:

- provision of public toilets (possibly through agreed access to private facilities or temporary urinals);
- ensuring that the community centre and the groups operating there are able to accommodate the demands created by additional development; and
- ensuring that adequate places are available in local primary schools and nurseries.

### Relevant Area Action Plan objectives

Contributes to the key objective *supporting the residential community by providing a range of facilities, services and places* through supporting and enhancing community facilities.

### Relevant parts of Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies

Policy CS1 – Distribution of growth

Policy CS10 – Supporting community facilities and services

Policy DP1 - Mixed-use development

Policy DP15 – Community and leisure uses

### Relevant parts of Westminster's Core Strategy

Policy CS33 – Social and community infrastructure

### Relevant parts of the London Plan

Policy 3.16 – Protection and enhancement of social infrastructure

Policy 3.17 – Health and social care facilities

Policy 3.18 – Education facilities



## Small and medium enterprises

### Principle 4

The Council will support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) by seeking to ensure that where appropriate:

- existing business premises suitable for SME use are retained;
- new business development is designed flexibly to allow parts of the property to be occupied SMEs.

The Plan's objectives include promoting small and medium scale businesses. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are commonly regarded as firms that employ fewer than 250 employees. The multitude of small and medium enterprises are a valued part of the character of Fitzrovia. Firms with fewer than 200 employees provide jobs for around 60% of the people who work in the area, while around three quarters of Fitzrovia-based businesses have 10 or fewer employees (Annual Business Inquiry 2003 - 2008). For such businesses to establish themselves and flourish, the area needs to retain and add to the range of small and medium-sized premises. The Council will particularly seek to maintain a supply of premises that can provide lettings of less than 100 sq m.

Across Bloomsbury in the last five years, schemes involving redevelopment or conversion of business premises for housing have produced significant floorspace losses, and the pipeline of schemes awaiting the start or completion of work indicates that this activity will continue. Conversion of business space for housing has been particularly marked in Fitzrovia. Relatively un-modernised premises are often the most attractive to small business due to their character, low cost and ease of subdivision, but are often the most vulnerable to residential development.

Increases in housing stock in Fitzrovia are welcome, and the Council will be flexible in its consideration of residential proposals, particularly in the case of vacant premises originally designed as housing. However, we will seek to ensure that stock of business premises is not reduced in a way that would harm business growth in general, and particularly the birth and growth of SMEs.



### Relevant Area Action Plan objectives

Contributes to the key objective *ensuring growth takes place in a way that strikes an appropriate balance between residential, institutional and commercial uses* by promoting small and medium scale businesses

### Relevant parts of Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies

Policy CS1 – Distribution of growth

Policy CS8 – Promoting a successful and inclusive Camden economy

Policy CS9 - Achieving a successful Central London

Policy DP1 - Mixed-use development

Policy DP13 – Employment premises and sites

### Relevant parts of Westminster's Core Strategy

Policy CS19 – Offices and other B1 floorspace

### Relevant parts of the London Plan

Policy 4.1 – Developing London's economy

Policy 4.2 – Offices



## Retail provision

Fitzrovia contains a wide range of shops, cafes and other retail premises. Some are concentrated on shopping streets or parades, but there are also small retail groups and individual shops scattered across the area. Camden's *Planning Guidance for Central London* describes the retail character and function of shopping provision in Fitzrovia and nearby parts of the borough, and gives specific guidance on how we will consider proposals that involve food, drink and entertainment and specialist and retail uses. The Council expects to publish an updated version of the guidance in 2013.

The following paragraphs of this Plan provide a brief overview of the shopping areas and streets in Fitzrovia. Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies 2010 guide the distribution of new retail floorspace and seek to promote and protect independent shops at a borough-wide level. Broad principles are included here to indicate how these policies will be interpreted within Fitzrovia. Planning Guidance for Central London gives more detailed guidance for individual frontages to help maintain their shopping character and minimise the negative impact of food, drink and entertainment uses.

Designated shopping areas and streets in the Plan's area are set out below:

### Tottenham Court Road/ Charing Cross Road Central London Frontage

Tottenham Court Road operates as an extension to the West End and is well-known for its concentration of furniture and electrical goods. The frontage is designated in Camden's Core Strategy, which also describes its character and function and the Council's specific planning objectives for it. Within Fitzrovia the frontage includes almost all of Tottenham Court Road and part of the north side of New Oxford Street.







### Store Street, Goodge Street and Cleveland Street Neighbourhood Centres

Camden's Core Strategy designates neighbourhood centres and generally characterises them as catering for the day-to-day shopping needs of the local population, however neighbourhood centres in the Plan area have a more distinctive role. Store Street provides primarily specialist uses geared to West End shoppers and Bloomsbury visitors, while Goodge Street has a supermarket, food and drink uses, and specialist and independent shops. The east side of Cleveland Street is characterised by a number of small independent restaurants. The west side of Cleveland Street is designated as a local shopping centre in Westminster's Core Strategy.

### Other parades, groups and individual shops

Camden's *Planning Guidance for Central London* identifies two other types of shopping provision that are characteristic of Fitzrovia. Specialist shops such as art dealers and bookshops can be found throughout the Plan area, but are focussed particularly on Percy Street, Warren Street and Windmill Street (as well as in the neighbourhood centres). In the southern part of Charlotte Street there is a concentration of food and drink uses aimed at West End visitors and the Central London workforce, although food and drink uses are present throughout Fitzrovia (including particularly Cleveland Street Neighbourhood Centre).



### Principle 5

The Council will guide development of large A1 shops to the Central London Frontage on Tottenham Court Road and New Oxford Street.

The Council will seek to support independent and specialist shops as an element of Fitzrovia's character and function, and will resist the loss of A1 shops and floorspace that would harm the area's mixed-use character and vitality.

The Council will guide development of food, drink and entertainment uses to the Central London Frontage on Tottenham Court Road and New Oxford Street, except those the Council considers to be small scale and low impact.

Camden's Core Strategy indicates that we will protect and enhance the role and unique character of Camden's shopping areas and ensure new development is at an appropriate scale and character for the area in which it is situated. Existing provision for larger and medium-sized retailers in Fitzrovia is in the Central London Frontage on Tottenham Court Road and New Oxford Street, and development of larger shops (generally over 100 sq m) can most appropriately be located in the Central London Frontage. In the remainder of Fitzrovia (including the Neighbourhood Centres) most retail units are small in scale (typically not more than 100 sq m).

The Plan's objectives include providing a range of services that support local resident needs and guiding commercial uses to the most appropriate locations. Five of the Plan's opportunity sites include part of the Central London Frontage on Tottenham Court Road and have potential to provide for A1 shops.

### Independent and specialist shops

The Plan's objectives also include promoting independent and specialist shops. Specialist and independent retailers are a valued part of Fitzrovia's character which complements and enhances the West End's retail function. The loss of these traders from Fitzrovia would diminish the area's character and vitality.



Specialist and independent traders commonly rely on the availability of premises away from the main shopping streets (particularly shops that are on their own or in small groups) where rents are relatively low. These premises are in danger of being displaced by higher value retail and non-retail uses. The high value of housing in Fitzrovia has prompted the conversion of many commercial premises for housing, and the more isolated shops are particularly vulnerable.



The Council will therefore seek to retain existing retail units and maintain the overall stock of retail premises (whether or not they are occupied by a specialist shop). The Council will also promote the provision of new premises suitable for specialist and independent shops in appropriate locations. In accordance with policy DP10 of Camden's Development Policies 2010, the Council will expect the provision of small shop units as part of large retail developments.

### Food, drink and entertainment uses

Food, drink and entertainment uses refer to cafes, restaurants, bars, pubs, clubs and performance venues. In appropriate locations these uses contribute to the mixed use character of Fitzrovia, to the vitality and viability of the area's retailing, and to street activity in the evenings and at weekends.

One of the Plan's objectives is to manage the area's night time economy in a way that safeguards the amenity of local residents. Fitzrovia faces particular risks from the expansion of food, drink and entertainment uses (particularly in areas of concentration such as the southern end of Charlotte Street and the Cleveland Street Neighbourhood Centre) through:

- individual and cumulative harm to residential amenity (also see Principle 9), particularly in the context of the fine urban grain and intricate mix of uses in the area; and
- displacement of independent and specialist shops and retailers serving long-term local residents.

There is considerable pressure in Fitzrovia for the creation of new food, drink and entertainment uses and extension of existing premises, associated with:

- the emergence of Charlotte Street and the surrounding area as a destination for food, drink and entertainment with a London-wide reputation;



- growth in the reputation of Fitzrovia as an attractive location for visits to coffee shops and sandwich bars;
- the growth of chains of coffee shops and sandwich bars, many of which have opened branches in Tottenham Court Road;
- the anticipated increase in visitor numbers associated with developments at Tottenham Court Road and Euston stations; and
- the impact of restrictive licensing policies for adjacent areas in Soho and Covent Garden (through Westminster City Council's designation of a West End Stress Area and Camden Council's designation of a Seven Dials Special Policy Area).

Proposals for food, drink and entertainment development anywhere in Fitzrovia will need to be considered under the full range of criteria in the Council's Development Policies, including cumulative impact on residential amenity (see Principle 9). Given the existing concentrations of food, drink and entertainment uses and the high residential density the potential for further development of this type in the Plan area is relatively limited. However, the Central London Frontage on Tottenham Court



Road and New Oxford Street is considered to offer some potential for new food, drink and entertainment uses, subject to compliance with all relevant development plan policy criteria and Principle 9 of this Plan. This frontage has direct access to the tube, bus and night bus networks and many parts remain predominantly in A1 shop use. Although there are concentrations of housing above the frontage, particularly at the northern end of Tottenham Court Road, large parts of the frontage are occupied by commercial premises with non-residential uses above.

In many cases new premises will also require a licence under the Licensing Act 2003 (e.g. for sale of alcohol, for sale of hot food and drink after 23.00 hours and for provision of many entertainments). In August 2012, there were 159 licensed premises in Camden's part of Fitzrovia, over 40% of which were restaurants. Less than 20% of all licensed premises in Camden's part of Fitzrovia are licensed for the sale of alcohol after midnight.

Licensing decisions are guided by public safety, the protection of children and the prevention of public nuisance, crime and disorder. Licensing cannot be guided by planning policy, but planning policy and decisions can reflect the consequences of licensing decisions and the evidence that informs them.

Camden and Westminster both operate restrictive licensing policies that severely limit the creation of additional licensed premises in areas immediately adjoining the Plan area. The boundary of Camden's Seven Dials Special Policy Area runs along the Plan boundary at New Oxford Street and Bloomsbury Street. The boundary of Westminster's West End Stress Area runs along the Plan boundary at Tottenham Court Road, Hanway Place and Gresse Street. In the Stress Area, Westminster's Core Strategy limits new food, drink and entertainment uses to those considered to be small scale and low impact. Camden Council will continue to monitor the impact of these policies, and consider

whether there is a need for a more restrictive approach to licensing or planning within the Plan area.



When making planning decisions, the Council will have regard to all relevant development plan policy criteria, Principle 9 of this Plan, and the detailed guidance provided by Camden Planning Guidance CPG5 Town Centres, Retail and Employment. We will also take account of the impact of the Seven Dials Special Policy Area and the West End Stress Area, particularly in connection with proposals for locations close to their boundaries, such as New Oxford Street and Charlotte Street.

### Relevant Area Action Plan objectives

Contributes to the key objectives *ensuring growth takes place in a way that strikes an appropriate balance between residential, institutional and commercial uses and supporting the residential community by providing a range of facilities, services and places* through guiding commercial uses to the most appropriate locations and promoting independent and specialist shops.

### Relevant parts of Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies

Policy CS1 – Distribution of growth

Policy CS5 – Managing the impact of growth and development

Policy CS7 – Promoting Camden's town centres and shops

Policy CS9 - Achieving a successful Central London

Policy CS17 - Making Camden a safer place

Policy DP1 - Mixed-use development

Policy DP10 – Helping and promoting small and independent shops

Policy DP12 – Supporting strong centres and managing the impact of food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses

### Relevant parts of Westminster's Core Strategy

Policy CS5 – Tottenham Court Road Opportunity Area

Policy CS6 – Core Central Activities Zone

Policy CS7 – West End Special Retail Policy Area

Policy CS20 – Retail

Policy CS23 – Entertainment uses

### Relevant parts of the London Plan

Policy 2.10 – CAZ strategic priorities

Policy 2.11 – CAZ strategic functions

### Other relevant policies

Camden's Statement of Licensing Policy 2011

Westminster's Statement of Licensing Policy 2011

## Educational, medical and research institutions

### Principle 6

Large scale institutional uses should be located and designed to contribute to meeting the Plan's objectives and comply with relevant development plan policies. In particular they should maintain the mixed-use character of the area, support the residential community and its facilities and protect and enhance residential amenity and quality of life.

Subject to relevant development plan policies, the Council will guide development of large scale institutions as follows:

- medical and healthcare uses to the vicinity of the University College Hospital building in Euston Road and to Opportunity Sites identified for medical or healthcare use;
- education and research uses to the area east of Tottenham Court Road and to the Howland Street Character Area.

Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury have a history of medical and educational uses stretching back 200 years. The University of London and University College London (UCL) are based in Bloomsbury just to the east of Fitzrovia. The main University College Hospital building (part of the UCLH NHS Foundation Trust) is in the north-east of Fitzrovia on Euston Road. Together, these form part of a campus of educational, medical and research facilities which is partly in the Plan area. The London Plan recognises the whole area east of Tottenham Court Road (and across the Plan boundary to Woburn Place) as a mixed use area with a strong academic character.

However, institutional properties are not confined to the north-east of Fitzrovia. UCL and the NHS Trust also have properties in other parts of the area including the Sainsbury Wellcome Centre for Neural Circuits and Behaviour being developed at the corner

of Cleveland Street and Howland Street, existing student accommodation in Maple Street and Charlotte Street (see Principle 7 Student Housing) and the vacant Middlesex Hospital Annex in Cleveland Street (formerly the Strand Union Workhouse). Other educational and medical institutions with facilities within or close to the area include the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), the University of Westminster and the Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust.

Camden's Core Strategy supports the concentration of medical, educational and research institutions within Central London, recognises the services they provide to residents and visitors and acknowledges their contribution to London's national and international role. However, the Core Strategy also indicates that development in Central London should contribute to strong and successful communities and support their facilities and future needs while protecting their amenity and the characteristics of local areas. The Council notes that where institutions already have an extensive presence their expansion can involve the loss of services and land uses needed to support the community and have a harmful impact on the balance and mix of uses in the area. Any development of new and expanded institutions in Fitzrovia will therefore need to be located and designed so that it is sensitive to its surroundings and addresses the concerns set out in the Core Strategy.

This Plan's objectives include providing a range of facilities that support local resident needs and guiding institutional uses to the most appropriate locations. The Plan identifies five vacant and underused properties as Opportunity Sites for possible medical and healthcare development. Four of the sites are close to the main University College Hospital building (within the UCH and University Street Character Area identified in Part 5 of the Plan), including the Rosenheim Building and Royal Ear Hospital, both in Huntley Street. The UCLH NHS Trust owns these sites, and aspires to further focus its activities in this part of Fitzrovia.



Taking into account the large grain and scale in the vicinity of the University College Hospital, and the London Plan's recognition of a broader area with a strong academic character east of Tottenham Court Road, these areas are considered the most appropriate locations for medical/ healthcare uses and educational/ research uses respectively.

The area in the north east of the Plan area provides significant capacity for development of medical and academic facilities, however it is likely that the University College Hospital and the institutions related to University of London will continue to look for opportunities elsewhere in Central London, including Fitzrovia. These highly regarded institutions are also likely to generate opportunities for academic and medical collaboration and attract other medical and research related development.

There is one Opportunity Site to the west of Tottenham Court Road that is identified for possible medical and healthcare development, and which could also provide for a relatively large scale institution. There are also two nearby sites with an established medical/ healthcare use. Taken together with the four Opportunity Sites close to University College Hospital, these are considered to provide sufficient capacity within the Plan area for large scale medical/ healthcare uses.

The Plan's Part 5 *Character areas and urban design principles* designates the area around these western Opportunity Sites as the Howland Street Character Area. Most properties in this area have been developed since the Second World War to a larger scale and grain than other parts of Fitzrovia. The Character Area also includes the Sainsbury Wellcome Centre. Given the nature of the area and the clustering of existing and proposed institutions, the Howland Street Character Area is considered to be the most appropriate area west of Tottenham Court Road for any additional education and research uses.



For the purposes of Principle 6, large scale development will generally be considered to be development with floorspace of over 2,500 sq m.

Institutional development may be acceptable in other parts of Fitzrovia, but any proposal should be at an appropriate scale and character for the area in which it is situated, and will be assessed having regard to the full range of its impacts and the concerns identified by Camden's Core Strategy, including impact on residential amenity (see Principle 9 below).

### Relevant Area Action Plan objectives

Contributes to the key objective *ensuring growth takes place in a way that strikes an appropriate balance between residential, institutional and commercial uses* by supporting residential communities, guiding institutional uses to the most appropriate locations and enhancing the relationship with the area's major institutions

### Relevant parts of Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies

Policy CS5 – Managing the impact of growth and development

Policy CS9 - Achieving a successful Central London

Policy CS10 – Supporting community facilities and services

### Relevant parts of Westminster's Core Strategy

Policy CS33 – Social and community infrastructure

### Relevant parts of the London Plan

Policy 3.17 – Health and social care facilities

Policy 3.18 – Education facilities

Policy 4.10 – New and emerging economic sectors





## Student housing

### Principle 7

The Council will guide development of student housing in Fitzrovia to existing student housing sites.

The University of London is based in Bloomsbury just to the east of Fitzrovia, together with 8 of its constituent schools and colleges. There are also a number of higher education institutions nearby in Westminster. The proximity to teaching facilities makes Fitzrovia an attractive location for students to live.

Due to the high cost of local housing in the open market, the vast majority of students living in Fitzrovia occupy dedicated housing designed and built for occupation by students. Dedicated student accommodation is provided in Fitzrovia by UCL, LSE and the Indian YMCA, with its main focus in Maple Street between Fitzroy Street and Whitfield Street. These existing sites have operated for some years without evidence of serious disruption to longer-term residents. Existing sites are shown on the map of Student halls in Fitzrovia.

The Plan's objectives include supporting residential communities and achieving more housing and affordable housing. One of the Plan's Opportunity Sites (Astor College) is an existing student hall of residence which has potential for development to provide improved accommodation and expansion of approximately 1,600 sq m (or around 100 rooms). The Council's preferred use of this site is student housing. There is also potential for modest expansion to other student halls in Fitzrovia.

Camden Development Policies 2010 indicates that student housing schemes creating 10 or more units/ rooms or occupiers are considered to increase the demand for public open space. The Council will seek contributions to public open space from

such developments in Fitzrovia, taking into account local public open space deficiencies, the pressure on existing spaces and any alternative facilities available to students.

Individual students are generally residents in the area for a single academic year and their accommodation is generally also let to short-term visitors during summer holidays. These short-term residents are likely to benefit local businesses, but will not necessarily support the shops and services valued by longer-term residents.

In 2001, almost a third of Fitzrovia's population were students. Across the whole Bloomsbury ward, of which Fitzrovia is part, students aged 19 or over made up a quarter of the population, compared with 14.9% across Bloomsbury and 8% across the whole borough. The Council considers that significant growth in the proportion of students in Fitzrovia (beyond the expansion of existing student halls) would be harmful to the mix, balance and inclusiveness of the community.

