

Wandsworth Local Plan

Supplementary Planning Document

Local Views



Adopted February 2014

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Introduction

1 The borough's natural topography shaped by the River Thames, and its tributaries, and the ridges of high land and river valleys, together with the buildings and other man-made features contribute to defining its special character. Whilst there are a number of general views from high ground within the borough towards central London and across the valleys, and also from the bridges across the River Thames there are only a few deserve protection through the planning system.

2 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared in accordance with both the National Planning Policy context provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012 and the Strategic Planning Policy context provided by the Mayor's London Plan.

3 Views play an important role in shaping our appreciation and understanding of our environment. The existence of particular views adds to peoples' enjoyment of places and particular views can become cherished because of their distinctiveness with important buildings and landscapes.

4 Within the borough there are a wide range of different types of views that have some local significance and these have been identified. However, of these there are six Local Views that are considered to have the greatest borough wide importance and these have been set out in this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Whilst there are many other important views, particularly within conservation areas these are considered to have more local significance. These views will be identified and managed through guidance set out in the Borough's Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Strategies (CAAMS).

Policy Framework

5 Wandsworth's Local Plan must conform to both National and London Plan policy.

National Policy Guidance

6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012 sets out the Government's planning policy for England and how it should be applied. It provides the framework within which local people and councils can produce local and/or neighbourhood plans. Planning applications have to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

London Plan Policy

7 The Mayor's London Plan was published in July 2011. As part of the London Plan the Mayor has adopted Supplementary Planning Documents. The London View Management Framework (LVMF) forms the Strategic context and sets out guidance for managing important views that traverse a number of boroughs. They are focused on nationally important and cherished landmarks, such as St. Paul's Cathedral, and the Westminster World Heritage Site.

8 In addition the Mayor's Vauxhall Nine Elms Battersea Opportunity Area Planning Framework (VNEB OAPF) sets out some key issues for the regeneration of Nine Elms on the South Bank and these have implications for views. The tall buildings strategy within the VNEB OAPF has been informed by, and is consistent with, World Heritage Site and strategic views policies.

9 The VNEB OAPF suggests that part of Nine Elms on the South Bank is suitable for tall buildings as part of the Vauxhall cluster. Planning applications for tall buildings in this area will be assessed in terms of their impact on the strategic views set out in the LVMF.

10 Policy 7.12 of the London Plan sets out the context for implementing the London View Management Framework. As part of the preparation of Local Plans boroughs should reflect the principles of this policy and include all designated views including protected vistas, into their Plans. It also suggests that boroughs may wish to use the principles of this policy for the designation and management of local views.

Local Plan

11 Wandsworth's Core Strategy was adopted in October 2010. The policies it contains have been formulated within the national policy context. Wandsworth's Core Strategy Policy IS 3 seeks to protect and reinforce the existing character of the borough. In particular Policy IS 3e. states: Views of the Westminster World Heritage Site will be

protected in accordance with the London Plan and the London View Management Framework; and Policy IS 3f. states: The Council will set out proposals for the protection of Important Local Views in a forthcoming Supplementary Planning Document.

12 The Core Strategy therefore sets the context for the preparation of this Local Views SPD. Moreover, the Council's Development Management Policy Document (DMPD) adopted in February 2012 sets out detailed policies for managing development in the borough. As part of the Local Plan review the DMPD is currently being revised.

13 Policy DMS 4 sets out criteria for judging the impact of tall buildings and paragraph 2.54 refers to the important local views which contribute to the character of the borough, as being set out in a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

14 Wandsworth provides guidance through its Supplementary Planning Documents to explain in more detail the policies set out in its Local Plan. Wandsworth published its first 'Local Views' policy document in 2003 following public consultation. This new SPD replaces the previous guidance by updating the policy context and giving recognition and clarification to important local views.

15 DMPD Policy DMS 4 on Tall buildings sets out the criteria to be addressed in justifying proposals for tall buildings as defined in the policy. The following are those most relevant to assessing the impact on local views.

- DMS 4b. iv. show, through a detailed analysis, that the proposal will have an acceptable visual impact on surrounding areas. The visual impact should be illustrated through computer visualisations and photo montages that cover the built and natural environment, strategic views, and the settings of conservation areas and listed buildings. Where clusters of tall buildings are proposed, this should also address the cumulative impact on the skyline;
- DMS 4b. v. assess the impact on the existing historic environment through a conservation impact assessment identifying how the surrounding area's character or appearance or the setting of a listed building will be preserved or enhanced.
- DMS 4b. viii. demonstrate how the proposal successfully sits within the existing townscape and landform by way of a townscape/landscape impact assessment.

16 Policy DMO 6 Riverside development states:

a. New development on sites adjoining the River Thames and River Wandle will be permitted where it:

ii. protects existing views

17 Policy DMO 7 Development in the river and on the foreshore states:

a. River-related development which enhances the river infrastructure and increases access to the Thames such as short-stay visitor moorings and piers and jetties for river-based recreation passenger or goods transport will be permitted in appropriate locations where:

iv. views of the river are not harmed.

v. the development does not form a barrier, impeding views of the river from the riverside

18 There is a range of important local views that contribute to the character of the borough. These categories of views are derived from principles of townscape and landscape quality, which underpin the borough's varied character and appearance. These include:-

- **Views** of specific buildings from specific viewpoints.
- **Panoramas** from specific viewpoints encompassing a broad vista containing many objects of interest.
- **Prospects** often giving 180° or wider visibility, notably those from the bridges over the River Thames.

19 Within these categories two types of view merit special attention.

- ***Views upstream and downstream from bridges over the River Thames;***
- ***Views of heritage assets and landmarks;***

20 This document focuses on these two types of local views because of their importance for the borough. Six have been identified for their significance. These cover the River Thames, which is recognised as an area of unique landscape character with the bridges being significant places from which to behold cherished views of the river landscape. This includes the renowned stretch of river at Putney marking the start of the annual University Boat Race and views towards important bridges. These views also cover Battersea Power Station, which is the borough's most important historic landmark and a grade II* listed building of special architectural or historic interest. The building is also of wider significance to London, a 'Cathedral of Power' representing an era of power generation on a massive scale.

21 Moreover, in a number of views of Battersea Power Station its context is changing due to the regeneration of Nine Elms on the South Bank, and hence the need to evaluate the impact of development proposals on these views.

22 Whilst there are a number of local heritage views within the categories above in other parts of the borough it is considered more appropriate that these are managed through the borough's Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Strategies (CAAMS).

Other Planning Policy Documents

23 Additionally developers and architects submitting planning applications will also need to address the Local Views set out in policy documents in adjacent boroughs as part of a package of information. In particular the Draft City of Westminster's Metropolitan Views SPD, the London Borough of Lambeth's SPD on Vauxhall as well as Wandsworth's SPD on Local Views.

24 English Heritage has produced guidance on views as set out in 'Seeing History in the View' published in 2011. This guidance draws on the principles of conserving our heritage and provides a suitable context for managing local heritage views, particularly appropriate for the views to be set out in the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Strategies.

Local Views SPD

25 This document forms a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to the Local Plan and is a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications and may be used to support evidence in appeal cases. These Local Views have been selected for managing along the lines of the Mayor's strategic views as set out in the LVMF.

View Management

Planning Applications

26 Only applicants submitting planning applications that affect the Local Views set out in this SPD will need to provide accurate illustrative material as part of the Design and Access Statement and/or environmental/townscape appraisal. Normally Accurate Visual Representations (AVR's) can be an appropriate means of assessing the impact of proposals on local views. Wire line representations can also be of value. These are particularly important in assessing the impact of tall buildings. Applicants should describe the impact of proposals on the view composition. Occasionally there may be opportunities to enhance views and these should be considered in conjunction with proposals.

Consultation on Planning Applications

27 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework published in 2012 local authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries.

28 The Council will undertake to notify adjacent local authorities, particularly Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham about applications likely to impact on the backgrounds of cross river views.

Assessing and Managing Local Views

29 Any development proposal that is likely to affect one or more of the six defined local views referred to in the SPD should through the planning application submission carefully assess the impact of proposals on the view. This consideration will be in addition to any impact on strategic views set out the London View Management Framework (LVMF) guided by London Plan policies and impacts on the World Heritage Sites, and any local views set out in SPDs of adjoining boroughs.

30 The analysis should seek to assess the magnitude of the impact on the view, whether it is the foreground, middle ground or the background comprising the silhouette to landmark buildings. The analysis should be set out in the Design and Access Statement or Environmental Impact Assessment accompanying the planning application. Applicants should set out a description of the view and describe the nature of the impact or harm to the view from any proposals. It is helpful that where there are development proposals already consented that the AVR assesses the cumulative impact on the view taking into account known development proposals.

31 In order to assist the assessment of the impact of proposals on defined Local Views it is expected that applicants will undertake an Accurate Visual Representation (AVR) to show the nature of the proposal relative to the view. Appendix 1 sets out a note about the requirements for a method statement to accompany the assessment of views as the photography used will affect the perception of the view.

32 The defined Local Views need to be managed to ensure that any proposals that impact on the view are carefully assessed. Each of the six defined Local Views is described with a plan of the viewing location and a photograph of the view to be managed together with an assessment of their foreground, middle ground and background and how development may impact on the view.

33 It is recognised that some of the views depicted will change as a result of the development already permitted in the Nine Elms Area. These changes will be confined to the middle and background part of the view and reference is made to this in the description of the view.

River Prospects: Views upstream and downstream from bridges over the River Thames

34 Views from the bridges across the River Thames need to be managed to carefully assess the juxtaposition between elements particularly the development of the river frontages, any proposals for in channel development (piers, jetties and moorings) as well as the impact on established longer distance landmarks.

Views of Heritage Assets

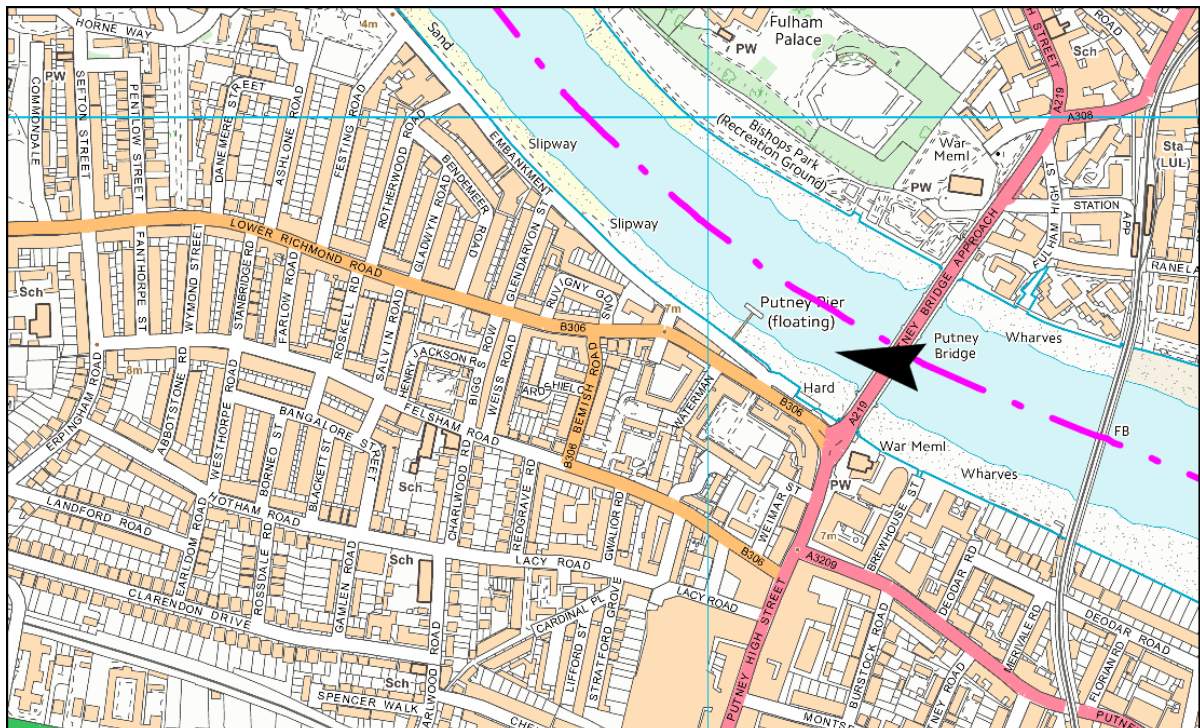
35 These views refer to specific heritage assets within the borough and the management of the view will carefully consider the impact of any proposal on the ability to see these in their context. Where development is proposed in the silhouette of a heritage asset this may cause undue harm on the appreciation of the building's architectural features.

36 In terms of the six Local Views set out in this SPD these cover views upstream and downstream from bridges over the River Thames and views of heritage assets such as listed buildings Battersea Power Station (grade II*) and Albert Bridge (grade II*), Chelsea Bridge (grade II), Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (Battersea Park - grade II*) and Conservation Areas.

View 1: Upstream from Putney Bridge



View 1: Upstream from Putney Bridge



Viewing point for View 1

Description

37 The character of the River Thames upstream from Putney Bridge contrasts markedly with areas downstream, being almost rural in character with trees dominating the view. This stretch of the River Thames hosts the internationally important Head of the River races and start of the annual University Boat Race which is marked by a stone on Putney Embankment. The distinctive character of Putney Embankment is dominated by boat houses and boating activity with crews launching their boats from the slipway to the river. With mature London Plane trees lining the Embankment the green skyline continues unbroken upstream towards Hammersmith. This riverside scene is unique in London.

Foreground

38 This comprises the open water area of the River Thames with Putney Pier serving the Embankment. Any proliferation of moorings in this area would mar the setting to Putney Bridge and the view westwards.

Middle Ground

39 The canopies of the mature London Plane trees along Putney Embankment dominate the middle ground with the buildings comprising the boat houses nestling behind. The boat houses form a unique setting to this part of the River Thames and a distinctive part of the Putney Embankment Conservation Area.

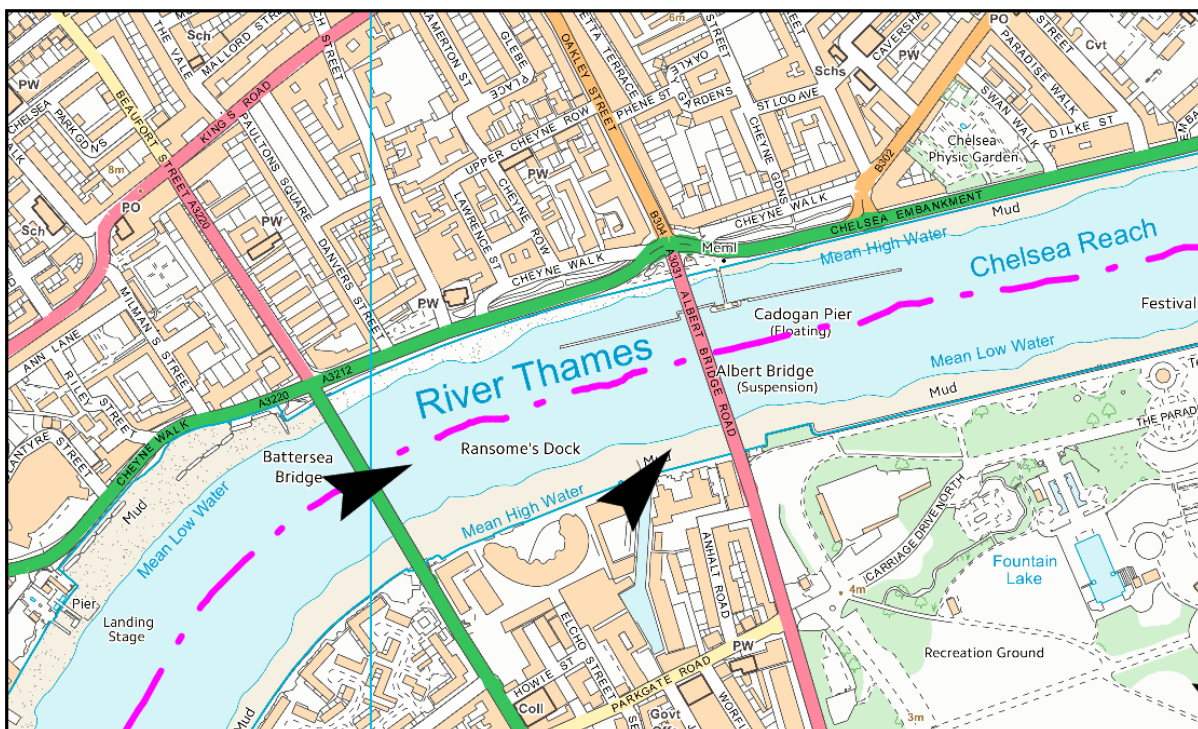
Background

40 The tops of the tree canopy forms a distinctive skyline. Any tall building above the tree canopy would detract from the quality of the view.

View 2: Downstream from Battersea Bridge



View 2: Downstream from Battersea Bridge



Viewing points for View 2

Description

41 This view focuses on the grade II* listed Albert Bridge. It was designed by R M Ordish in 1873 as a Cable Stayed bridge partly suspended and partly cantilevered. The bridge represents a local landmark, and is a feature at night with its myriad of lights illuminating the crossing of the River Thames. There are two main viewing locations, from Battersea Bridge and from the Riverside Walk near Ransome's Dock.

Foreground

42 This is represented by the open water viewed from Battersea Bridge. Any additional in-channel development could affect the view of Albert Bridge.

Middle Ground

43 Albert Bridge represents the focus of the view with its connections to the north and south banks of the River Thames. The frontage development to the river helps to frame the view of the bridge. The bridge is painted which enhances its visibility by day against the backcloth of buildings. The night time view is spectacular with the bridge illuminated by around 4000 bulbs to the cables and towers making it a striking landmark.

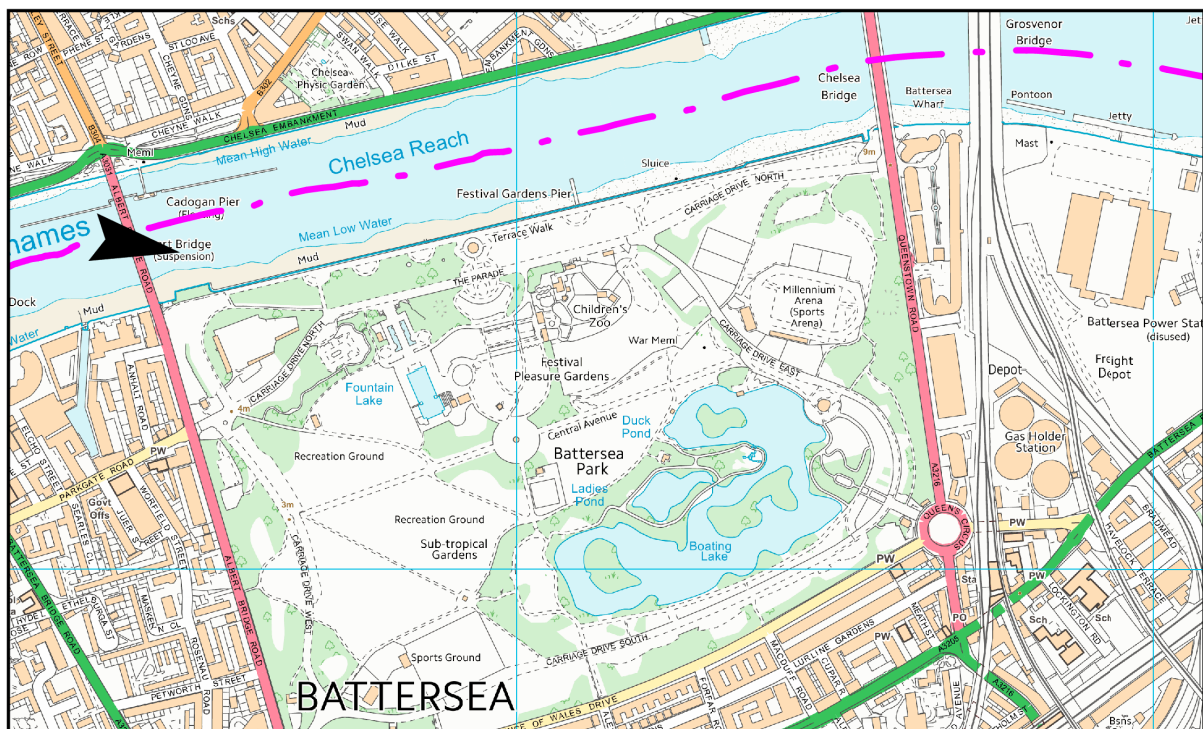
Background

44 The filigree-like framework of the Cable Stayed bridge allows views through it which highlights its shape against the background. Any development within the channel or additional river crossings behind the bridge would compromise the view. The development of One Nine Elms (58 and 43 storeys) will appear to the right of the Vauxhall Tower, as well as the emerging proposals for the New Covent Garden Market site. The impact of any proposed pedestrian/cycle bridge across the River Thames beyond Chelsea Bridge on this view will need to be evaluated as and when a scheme comes forward.

View 3: Downstream from Albert Bridge



View 3: Downstream from Albert Bridge



Viewing point for View 3

Description

45 This view focuses on the setting of Battersea Park, a grade II* Registered Historic Park and Garden, with the chimneys of Battersea Power Station forming an important backdrop to the park. The tall buildings of the Nine Elms cluster are emerging to the left of the view.

Foreground

46 The open water of the River Thames forms the expansive foreground to the view. Any development within the river channel could impact on the quality of the view.

Middle Ground

47 The composition of the riverside promenade to Battersea Park, the tree canopy to the Park, the chimneys to Battersea Power Station and Chelsea Bridge dominate the middle ground along with the tall buildings emerging as part of the Nine Elms cluster. The chimneys to Battersea Power Station represent a significant landmark, which forms a distinctive backdrop to Battersea Park. The tree canopy should form the dominant composition to the Park frontage to the River Thames. Any tall buildings behind Battersea Power Station will impact on the view of the chimneys which are silhouetted against the sky. The view towards Chelsea Bridge at night is dramatic as the cables are illuminated by light bulbs giving the structure a striking presence as a landmark river crossing.

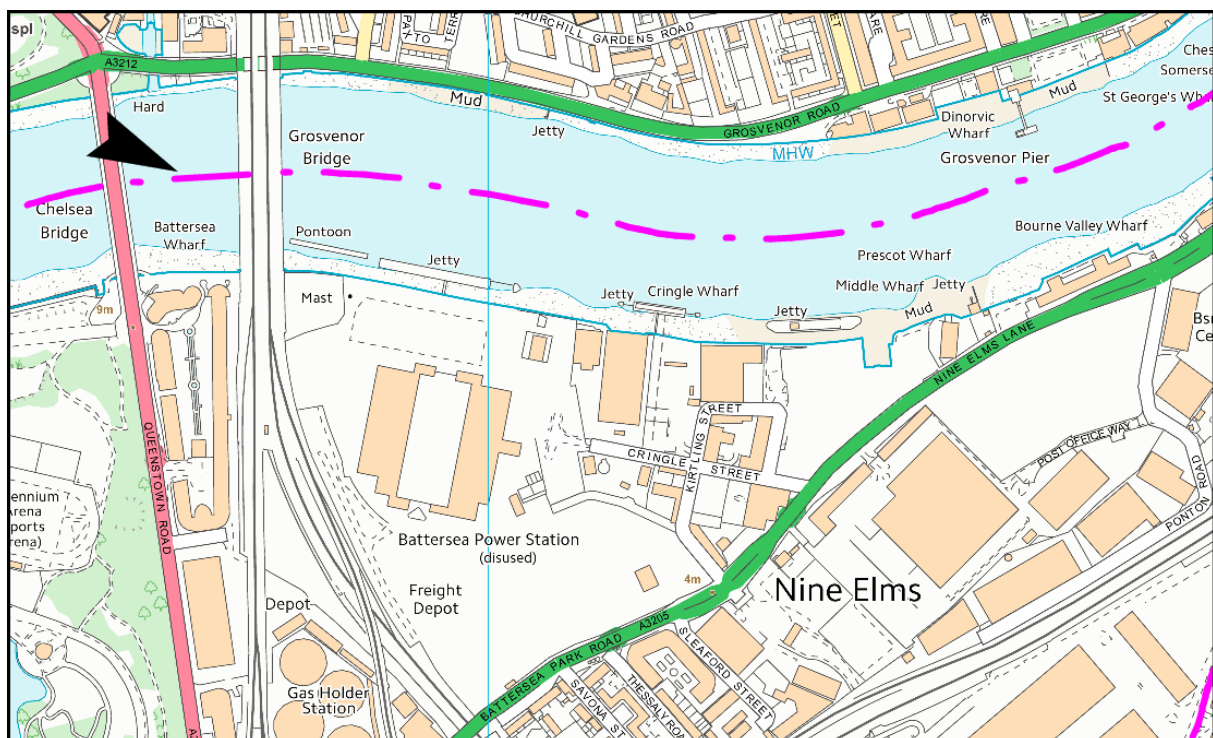
Background

48 This view will change as the redevelopment of Nine Elms takes place. One Nine Elms, when constructed, will be prominent at the centre of the view next to the existing Vauxhall Tower. Next to this will be the towers proposed as part of the redevelopment of the New Covent Garden Market site. The emerging tall buildings cluster at Vauxhall will eventually form a dramatic focal point in the distance. The impact of any proposed pedestrian/cycle bridge across the River Thames beyond Chelsea Bridge on this view will need to be evaluated as and when a scheme comes forward.

View 4: Battersea Power Station from Chelsea Bridge



View 4: Battersea Power Station from Chelsea Bridge



Viewing point for View 4

Description

49 Battersea Power Station represents one of London's iconic and cherished landmarks. The building was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and dates from 1932-34. It is listed grade II*. There are a number of striking views of the Power Station, some from north of the River Thames (see City of Westminster's SPD on Metropolitan Views 24A & B). In Wandsworth there are striking views from Chelsea Bridge, Battersea Park and north along Queenstown Road.

50 The striking silhouette of the four chimneys against the sky gives significance to the setting of the building.

Foreground

51 This is formed by the open water of the Thames between the northern approach to Chelsea and the arches of the Grosvenor Railway Bridge. Any development on either bank and within the open water could affect the quality of the view.

Middle Ground

52 The Power Station was built at a time when the river frontage was largely industrial and the retained cranes and jetties provide a reminder of the past. Battersea Power Station stands prominently facing the Thames and will be framed on either side by the consented scheme as shown in the montage image. Apartments beside Chelsea Bridge are indicative of the regeneration of this part of the Nine Elms on the South Bank project. The VNEB OAPF promotes high density development around Battersea Power Station with taller buildings in key locations, but it is important that any proposed development should not harm the setting of the Power Station. The view to the left of the Power Station will change once consented schemes for tall buildings to the right of Vauxhall Tower (shown in outline) are completed. These include One Nine Elms and the towers on the New Covent Garden Market site.

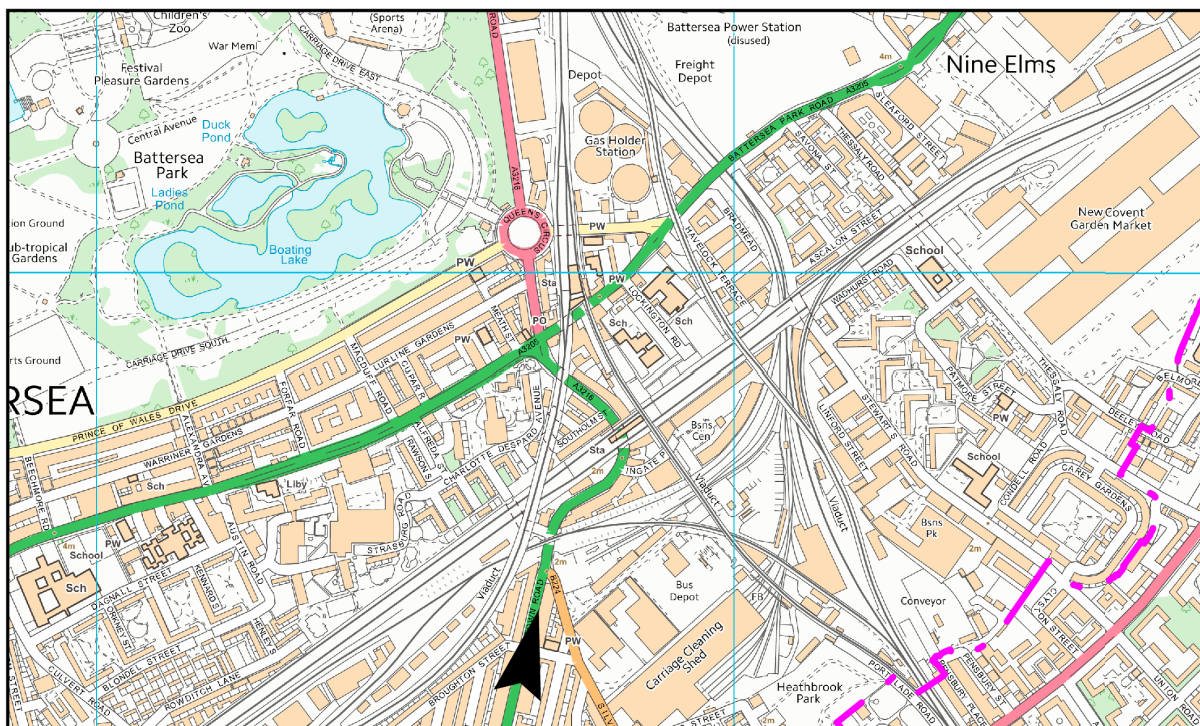
Background

53 It is important that the distinctive silhouette of the four iconic chimneys of the Power Station should remain as a dominant feature on the skyline. It is important that tall buildings do not appear in the background where they could spoil the profile of the Power Station chimneys against the sky.

View 5: From Queenstown Road to Battersea Power Station



View 5: From Queenstown Road to Battersea Power Station



Viewing point for View 5

Description

54 Battersea Power Station represents one of London's iconic and cherished landmarks. The building was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and dates from 1932-34. It is listed grade II*. This view is of the building approaching it from the south along Queenstown Road. Queenstown Road (formerly Queen's Road) was formed to link Clapham to Victoria when Chelsea Bridge was opened in 1858. It functions as an important entry route into central London and the view of Battersea Power Station announces the arrival of central London.

Foreground

55 This comprises the carriageway and footways to Queenstown Road. Any enhancement to the surfaces will be in discussion with the local highway authority.

Middle Ground

56 The terraces of historic buildings fronting Queenstown Road within the Parktown Estate Conservation Area frame the view northwards to the Power Station. The Power Station with its iconic chimneys terminates the view north along Queenstown Road. It represents an important relationship between the Parktown Estate Conservation Area and the Power Station beyond, which forms an important townscape view. The gas holder to the left is due to be demolished following de-commissioning. The view of the chimneys to the Power Station building would be affected by any development in front of it. The heritage significance of the Power Station are the chimneys and the Wash Towers to which they are attached. It will be important to ensure that these features are not adversely affected by development proposals to the south in front of the building. The consented scheme for development to the south of Battersea Power Station shows the attachment of the chimneys to the Wash Towers.

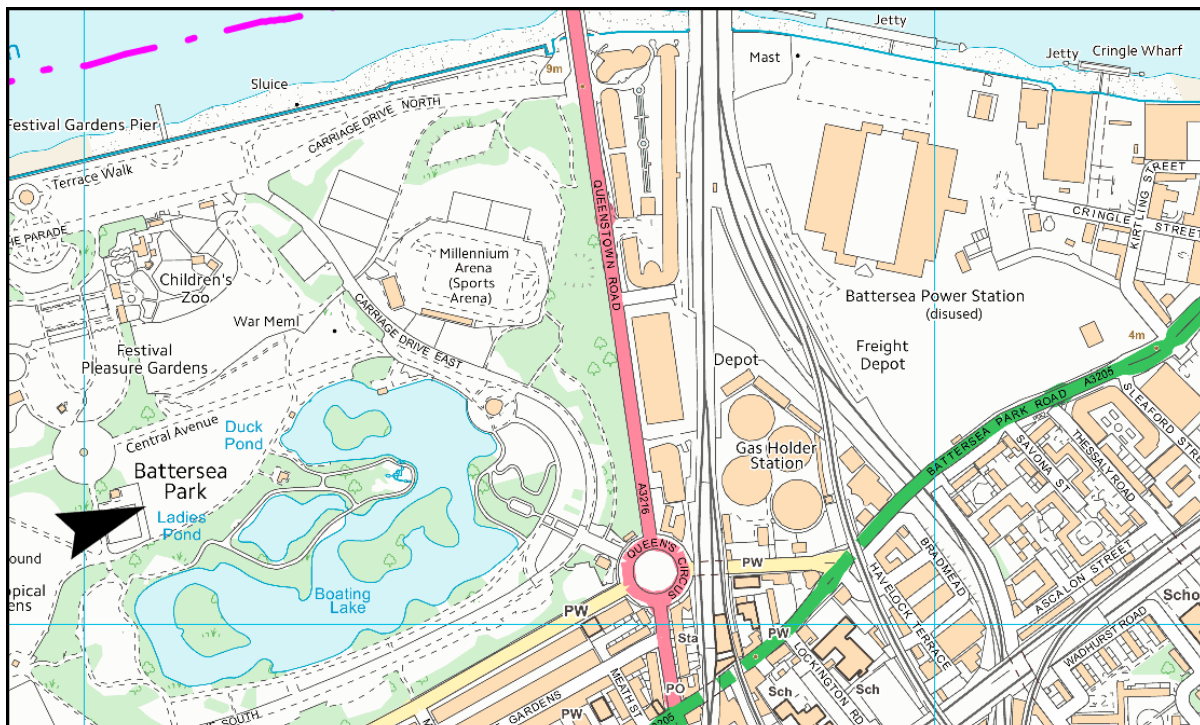
Background

57 It is important that the distinctive silhouette of the four iconic chimneys of the Power Station should remain as a dominant feature on the skyline. It is important that tall buildings, including buildings on the opposite bank of the River Thames do not appear in the background where they could spoil the profile of the Power Station chimneys against the sky.

View 6: Battersea Power Station from Battersea Park



View 6: Battersea Power Station from Battersea Park



Viewing point for View 6

Description

Battersea Power Station represents one of London's iconic and cherished landmarks. The building was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and dates from 1932-34. It is listed grade II*. This view of the building is from within Battersea Park which is a popular view of the building with people using the Park.

Foreground

58 This comprises the formal green lawn of the bowling green within Battersea Park (grade II* Registered Historic Park and Garden).

Middle Ground

59 This is composed of trees within the Park and around the perimeter of the Park with the profile of the Power Station chimneys beyond. The middle view would be affected by any tree planting in front of the view to the building. The VNEB OAPF promotes high density development around Battersea Power Station with taller buildings in key locations, but it is important that any proposed development should not harm the setting of the Power Station.

Background

60 The iconic silhouette of the four chimneys will be clearly visible on the skyline and unaffected by tall buildings to the east that are proposed within Nine Elms. The existing Vauxhall Tower can just be glimpsed in the distance to the left of the Power Station's southern chimneys and One Nine Elms, when constructed, will appear just to the right of the Vauxhall Tower in this view .

61 It is important that the distinctive silhouette of the four iconic chimneys of the Power Station should remain as a clearly visible feature on the skyline. It is important that tall buildings do not appear in the background where they could spoil the profile of the Power Station chimneys against the sky.

Conclusion

62 The Local Views set out in this report represent cherished views of buildings and locations in the Borough which it is desirable to safeguard against undesirable development. The document represents a Supplementary Planning Document as part of the Council's Development Plan and has been subject to consultation with statutory agencies and local amenity societies.

63 Any development proposals affecting the Local Views set out in this document and subject of a planning application will need to demonstrate the impact on the Local View by providing an analysis through Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs). These will normally be set out in the Design and Access Statement or Environmental Statement accompanying a planning application.

64 Opportunities to enhance the setting of these Local Views have been identified and discussions with the appropriate agencies will be required to achieve these. Discussions with other agencies will also be required to ensure that the Local Views are not adversely affected by proposals that do not require planning permission.

Appendix 1: Photography: Field of View

Appendix 1

Photography: Field of View

65 The Landscape Institute has produced an Advice Note 1/11 on Photography and photomontage in Landscape and visual impact assessment. They say that it is essential to recognize that two-dimensional photographic images and photomontages alone cannot capture or reflect the complexity underlying the visual experience, and should therefore be considered an approximation of the three-dimensional visual experiences that an observer would receive in the field.

66 While a standard lens giving a horizontal field of view of about 40 degrees may be suitable for some purposes, a single-frame photograph based on this field of view is unlikely to convey the breadth of visual information required to represent a proposed development and relevant context. If the required field of view is only slightly greater than 40 degrees, a wide-angle lens or wide-angle setting on a zoom lens may be appropriate.

67 The guidance suggests the equivalent of a 50 mm lens on a 35 mm format camera may be appropriate but that different tasks require different approaches.

68 It is important that where specialist photography is being used to convey the images of a proposed development it will be important that the consultants set out in their report a method statement. The guidance in the London View Management Framework (LVMF) on using photographic images is useful and referred to below.

69 The LVMF says: 'Creators of Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs) should make clear in their method statements the criteria used to select appropriate fields of view for a particular study. In addition, for each AVR clear information must be provided to explain the resulting field of view used, in order to permit sensible comparison between AVRs, both within a single study and across studies'.

70 As the LVMF explains: 'Users of AVRs should be aware that photographic or computer images most closely match our perception of shape at the optical axis this being the line that passes from the eye point to the target or look-at point, or in photographic terms the centreline of the lens. As angular distances increase away from this line, while the relative positions of objects remains correct, their perceived shape may be less familiar than when we look directly toward them. For this reason, the representation of the proposed development should ideally occur close to the optical axis, i.e. towards the centre of the image'.

71 The LVMF also says: 'Where a proposal needs to be shown in a broad context, choices must be made between using wide-angle photography, which may give rise to less natural perspective at the edges of the images or by combining additional images taken from the same position. Where this latter technique has been used AVRs should include additional annotation to indicate how images have been combined'.

72 The LVMF states that for each individual AVR the following information should be provided:

- Unique identification code
- Textual description of viewpoint location and direction of view
- Time of day and date for any source photography or video
- Map and site photography showing location of camera position
- Co-ordinates of camera position
- Peripheral annotation to the image to confirm the direction of view in the original photography (the optical axis)
- Definition of the field of view depicted each side of the optical axis, either in the form of peripheral annotation, textual description or more sophisticated maps
- AVR type i.e. which visual properties are shown

73 Overall the LVMF guidance and industry experts suggest that wider angle lenses can be used particularly for townscape analysis as they can portray peripheral information about a view that a closer image would not. The key is getting accurate information about the method statement. This will help to validate the usability of the image.

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