

Victoria Station Upgrade (VSU)

Design and Access Statement

August 2008

Victoria Station Upgrade

Design and Access Statement

Approved by	Signature	Date
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Figures 1-6: General photographs of in and around Victoria Station

1 General Introduction

- 1.1.1 London Underground Limited (“LUL”) proposes to carry out substantive improvement works at Victoria Underground Station in order to increase capacity and relieve congestion at peak times. The proposed works include the provision of a new sub-surface ticket hall beneath Bressenden Place, the expansion of the existing Victoria Line ticket hall beneath Wilton Road, new lifts, sub-surface escalators and pedestrian links and new surface-level entrances (together, hereinafter referred to as “**the VSU Scheme**” or “**the Development**”).
- 1.1.2 In order to obtain the necessary authority that will enable it to construct the VSU Scheme, LUL has submitted applications for consent as follow:
- (i) On 22 November 2007, an application was submitted to the Secretary of State for Transport for an Order under section 1 and 5 of the Transport and Works Act 1992 entitled “The London Underground (Victoria Station Upgrade) Order” (“theOrder”).
 - (ii) The application for the Order was also accompanied by a request to the Secretary of State to issue a Direction under section 90(2A) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 granting deemed planning permission for the VSU Scheme (“the Planning Direction”).
 - (iii) On 4 April 2008 three applications were submitted to Westminster City Council under section 10 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 seeking listed building consent for the following works:
 - Victoria Palace Theatre - protective works, minor demolition works and making good (application ref. PT/08/03081/LBC)
 - Victoria National Rail Station - protective works, alterations and minor demolition works (application ref. PT/08/03079/LBC)
 - Little Ben Clock Tower - temporary removal, storage and reinstatement (application ref. PT/08/03080/LBC)

- 1.1.3 The listed building consent applications have been referred to the Secretary of State for determination in accordance with Section 12(3A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This provision requires an application for listed building consent to be referred to the Secretary of State *“in any case where the consent is required in consequence of proposals included in an application for an order under section 1 or 3 of the Transport and Works Act 1992.”*

In accordance with the requirements of [(i)] section 62 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and article 4C of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure)(England) Order 1995 (as amended) (SI. 1995/419) [and (ii) section 10(4) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Regulations 3A of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990], LUL is required to submit a Design and Access Statement in order to set out the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the VSU Scheme and to explain how issues relating to access have been dealt with. Accordingly, the application for the Order submitted on 22 November 2007 was accompanied by a Design and Access Statement (Application Document VSU.A23).

- 1.1.4 Since the Order application was submitted, a number of amendments have been made to the proposed scope and design of the VSU Scheme. These changes include:
- The deletion of the proposed western entrance / exit on the corner of Bressenden Place and Victoria Street; and
 - Alterations to surface structures adjacent to the National Rail Station

- 1.1.5 In light of the proposed changes, the Secretary of State is being invited to consider a modified version of the VSU Scheme by way of an application made by LUL on 5 August 2008. The VSU Scheme (as modified) is shown in Fig. 7.

In consequence of the proposed changes to the VSU Scheme and subsequent to the submission of the three applications for listed building consent in April 2008, as foreshadowed in the Design and Access Statement submitted in November 2007, the contents of that Design and Access Statement have been reviewed and revised, where appropriate. This document constitutes the Design and Access Statement for the VSU Scheme, as modified.

2 The Need for VSU

2.1 Victoria Underground Station

2.1.1 Victoria is one of London's main transport hubs, home to a combination of transport services including Victoria mainline station ("**the National Rail Station**"), three Underground lines (Victoria, District and Circle (D&C)), a bus station and a taxi rank with substantial associated pedestrian movements. The National Rail Station also provides a dedicated link to Gatwick Airport through the Gatwick Express rail service. London's main coach station, Victoria Coach Station, is close by on Buckingham Palace Road.

2.1.2 Over 80 million passengers pass through Victoria Underground Station ("**the Underground Station**") each year, making it London Underground's second busiest station. The Underground Station serves as a gateway to the National Rail Station, an access point for local employment, and an interchange between the Victoria and D&C lines. During 2006, the typical weekday flow of passengers stood at 286,000, with approximately 70,000 passengers using the Underground Station during the morning 7am - 10am peak.

2.2 The Need for Improved Infrastructure

2.2.1 During peak periods, the Underground Station currently suffers major congestion, particularly for passengers using Victoria line services. This congestion is experienced as delay moving along platforms, delay boarding escalators, delay being held outside ticket gatelines and entering the Underground Station.

2.2.2 In order to accommodate current demand and safely manage passenger numbers on the platforms during peak hours and prevent crowding, gateline restrictions and ticket hall closures currently occur on a regular basis. However, such measures do not provide an acceptable long term solution to the Underground Station's congestion problems as closures and restrictions cause delay and discomfort for passengers.

- 2.2.3 Congestion at Victoria is not a recent but a long standing phenomenon. The Underground Station has suffered from severe capacity constraints for many years. A number of scheme options, sub options and variations have been identified, reviewed, developed further and then rejected prior to confirmation of the scheme for which consents are now being sought.
- 2.2.4 Growth in central London employment and the upgrade of the Victoria line train service is forecast to add further to current demand. Network Rail is also forecasting a significant increase in the number of people using national rail services at Victoria. The number of passengers using the Underground Station in the AM and PM peaks is expected to increase by approximately 12% from 2006 levels to 171,000 by 2016. This growth will intensify the current congestion problems at the Underground Station, particularly during the morning peak, where the highest growth is forecast to occur.
- 2.2.5 The projected rise in commuter and visitor numbers over the next decade, as described in the Mayor's London Plan, suggests that existing problems will remain and worsen, with control measures such as gateline restrictions and closures continuing to be necessary but with increased frequency.
- 2.2.6 In addition to these congestion problems, the existing entrances to the Underground Station are mainly focused upon the National Rail and bus Stations to the detriment of accessibility for pedestrians travelling to the Underground Station from the commercial and employment areas around Victoria Street. Furthermore, the Underground Station currently enjoys no provision for step-free access. Victoria line services, in particular are relatively inaccessible for those with reduced mobility.
- 2.2.7 Unaddressed, the problems now occurring will in due course lead to more significant measures to manage the problems, including extended closures at times of peak demand. Accordingly there is an urgent need to upgrade the Underground Station.

2.3 Principal Scheme Objectives

- 2.3.1 Against this background, the principal objectives of the VSU Scheme have been identified as follows:

- To increase the capacity of the Underground Station so that it is fit for purpose for handling forecast demands;
- to minimise passenger journey time; and,
- to improve quality of access and interchange and ambience to the maximum extent practicable within physical, schedule and financial constraints.

2.3.2 In order to ensure each of the principal scheme objectives are met, four supporting objectives have been developed as follows:

- (a) Increasing the entrance capacity of the Underground Station through delivery of
 - a 50% increase in escalator capacity to/from the Victoria line with linking routes providing at least matching capacity.
- (b) Minimising journey times for passengers entering, leaving and interchanging at the Underground Station through
 - a targeted improvement of at least 5 minutes in the current journey time from Victoria Street to the Victoria line platforms;
 - making the location, orientation, facilities and signage of the Bressenden Place entrance prominent and welcoming in order to attract passengers towards the quickest route into the Underground Station;
 - designing passenger flows in normal operation to avoid queues blocking or conflicting with other flows;
 - avoiding in normal operation closures of the inward ticket gates;
 - making routes through the station as short, and as self-directing as possible; and
 - avoiding flows entering and leaving the Victoria line platforms delaying the operation of the upgraded train service.

- (c) The provision of step-free access between the existing National Rail Station entrance and the proposed Bressenden Place entrance and all platforms.
- (d) Fitness for purpose: the Underground Station should meet standards and consents from regulatory and planning authorities.

2.4 The Benefits of VSU

2.4.1 Through delivery of its principal objectives, the VSU Scheme will realise the following customer benefits:

- a major reduction in the future expected peak delay to Victoria line passengers entering, exiting or interchanging with the D&C lines;
- a faster connection from the Victoria line platforms to the employment and commercial area around Victoria Street;
- Step-free access from street to all platforms and step-free interchange between all platforms for persons of reduced mobility or the encumbered.

3 Design

3.1 Background

3.1.1 The main reasons for the problems currently experienced at the Underground Station can be summarised as being that large numbers of passengers arrive on mainline trains and then descend the existing escalator to the Victoria Line but, upon arrival at platform level, they do not continue to move northwards along the platforms. This causes congestion at the southern end of the platform concourse, which then spreads to the escalators serving those platforms and ultimately to the existing station concourse / the ticket hall. This congestion problem results in frequent closure of the Underground Station until the build-up of passengers has been cleared. This problem is expected to increase with passenger growth as predicted [in paragraph 2.2.4] above.

3.1.2 The aim of the VSU Scheme is to relieve this congestion by providing additional and improved means of access to and egress from the Victoria Line platforms. The design of the works has been dictated by the methods by which this can be achieved.

3.1.3 In terms of access, a large proportion of passengers entering the station arrive from the National Rail station. To reduce the build-up of passengers in the existing Victoria Line ticket hall, more escalator capacity is required to take passengers down to the Victoria Line platforms.

3.1.4 The new escalators need to deliver the passengers to an alternative location on the Victoria Line platforms in order to ensure the existing congestion problem at platform level is not exacerbated. As the Victoria line platforms already have two sets of escalators (at the south end and at the central part of the platforms) the only possible remaining location for new escalators is at the north end.

3.1.5 In terms of egress the station is limited by the size of the existing Victoria line ticket hall. The capacity of the ticket hall is affected by the fact that passengers are leaving as well as entering the station at the same time. Analysis has shown that the while the majority of the passengers entering the station in the morning will come from the mainline station, about a third of passengers leaving the station in the morning wish to travel to areas to the North East of the station (along Victoria Street). In the evening these flows are reversed.

3.1.6 Therefore the best possible solution to reducing congestion within the existing Victoria Line ticket hall is to construct a new ticket hall that will remove as many passengers as possible from it by offering them an alternative route that takes them more directly to their destination. The proposed solution has been arrived at following a long design process as described in the Scheme Option Selection Report (Technical Appendix C to the Supplementary Environmental Statement). The design process for an underground station is led by a very different a set of parameters from that of most buildings. These parameters are:

- Estimating passenger demand for the next fifty years of the life of the station. This is based on forecasts from Transport for London's strategic public transport model, Railplan. From these forecasts origin/destination matrices are formulated that show, over a given period of time during a day, how many passengers will travel between any two locations in a station.
- Elements of the station (passageway widths, sizes of concourses etc.) are sized from these matrices, according to standards dictated by London Underground.
- The difficulties of constructing these elements beneath existing buildings, adjacent to existing sewers and other utilities, some of which would be prohibitively costly to divert.
- Keeping the Underground Station operational throughout the construction of the VSU scheme.
- Constructing tunnels in poor ground conditions.

3.2 Site Location and Setting

- 3.2.1 The Underground Station is located adjacent to the National Rail Station in the City of Westminster, approximately 1km north of the River Thames.
- 3.2.2 The Victoria Line tunnels are located to the north of the National Rail Station and are concealed below the dense urban fabric of central Westminster. The District and Circle (D&C) line ticket hall and sub-surface running tunnels are located on the north side of Terminus Place.
- 3.2.3 The D&C line was originally opened as the Metropolitan District Railway in 1868, constructed below the surface (6m to platform level) using cut and cover techniques. The D&C lines are some distance north of the National Rail Station on an east-west alignment close to the surface. The area between the D&C and the National Rail Station is occupied by Victoria bus station. Buildings have been erected above the D&C line such that most of the air space above the ticket hall is covered.
- 3.2.4 The Victoria line was constructed in the 1960s and a new sub-surface ticket hall was constructed immediately north to north-east of the National Rail Station as part of the works. It is known as the Victoria line ticket hall.
- 3.2.5 Numerous roads surround the Victoria public transport facilities including Victoria Street to the north, Bressenden Place and Allington Street to the north/northeast, Wilton Road to the east and Buckingham Palace Road to the west. Terminus Place, where Victoria bus station and the taxi rank are situated, lies partly above the Victoria line ticket hall.
- 3.2.6 In the area surrounding the Underground station there are retail uses located on the main roads, in the National Rail Station and in the new Cardinal Place development on Victoria Street. There are also a number of residential areas and office spaces, including those of LUL and Network Rail, and a number of Government department offices. There are a number of conservation areas close to the station. However, none of the above ground elements of the VSU Scheme are located within a conservation area.

- 3.2.7 There are several listed buildings in the area including the Victoria Palace Theatre (VPT), the Apollo Theatre, the Little Ben Clock Tower, the National Rail Station and Grosvenor Hotel.
- 3.2.8 The applications for listed building consent associated with the VSU Scheme seek authorisation to carry out works to three of these buildings; the VPT, the Little Ben Clock Tower and the National Rail Station. All are Grade II listed. The features of special character and historic interest are fully described in the applications and can briefly be described as follows:
- 3.2.9 The VPT is an example of the work of theatre architect, Frank Matcham. Features of particular special character and historic interest include the main Victoria Street elevation which is faced in white faience and the plasterwork and other decorative features of the interior.
- 3.2.10 The Little Ben Clock Tower is an example of a freestanding Victorian clock tower. It was originally erected (at an unknown location) in 1882 and was later re-erected in its current location at the junction of Vauxhall Bridge Road and Victoria Street.
- 3.2.11 The National Rail Station actually comprises two termini. The application for listed building consent relates to the northern part of the Eastern Station which dates from 1909 - 10 and was designed by Alfred W Blomfield and A J Ancell in a typically Edwardian Baroque Revival style. The Terminus Place elevation is the most prominent external feature of the building.
- 3.2.12 The King's Scholars' Pond Sewer (which is culverted River Tyburn) runs approximately north to southeast under the eastern edge of VPT, heading south and to the east of Vauxhall Bridge Road and King's Scholars' Passage. It lies at a depth of 1 - 1.5m below ground level. A second sewer, the Western Deep Sewer, runs north to south through the site, and is located at an approximate depth of 27m below existing ground level. These sewers, in particular the former, together with existing LUL infrastructure, are significant constraints to further sub-surface development

3.3 Outline of the VSU Scheme

3.3.1 The proposed works that comprise VSU and the associated station modernisation project are summarised as follows:

- Utilities diversions;
- Demolition of certain buildings to enable the works;
- a new subterranean North Ticket Hall (NTH) at the junction of Bressenden Place and Victoria Street improving access from the north and east of the station;
- an enlarged existing Victoria line ticket hall (identified within the VSU Scheme as the South Ticket Hall (STH)) providing greater ease of passenger movements inside the station;
- three new banks of escalators (each bank comprising three escalators);
- A new interchange tunnel, referred to as the Paid Area Link (PAL). This new pedestrian tunnel will connect the NTH to the STH;
- New lifts providing step-free access for persons of reduced mobility between the street, ticket hall and platform levels, for the NTH and STH and for interchange between the D&C line and Victoria line platforms;
- Improved emergency services access by the provision of and evacuation core in the NTH; and
- Improved access for passengers interchanging between the National Rail and to the Underground stations by means of a widening of an existing stairway and lift provision.

3.4 Station Planning & Architecture

3.4.1 The proposed station layout will provide improved wayfinding and an additional choice of passenger routes. Operational analysis has highlighted the need for

passenger improvements and demonstrates the improved operational flexibility offered by the proposals.

3.4.2 Works to the STH will provide a series of improvements to the pedestrian environment within Terminus Place. The ticket hall and surface works form an integrated proposal that relates the above and below ground spaces.

3.4.3 The large open spaces and intuitive way finding of the new NTH are designed to reinforce simplicity and clarity throughout. The PAL, which forms the backbone of VSU, provides connectivity between the new and extended ticket halls and the platforms, as well as step-free access to all platforms.

Above Ground Elements of the Development

Above ground level the VSU Scheme will provide:

3.5 Improved pedestrian area in front of the Southern Railway building, known as 'The Beach'

3.5.1 The area in front of the Southern Railway building, known as 'The Beach', would be entirely re-landscaped in a manner appropriate to its role as a gateway to London:

3.5.2 As part of its 'Art on the Underground' programme, London Underground is in the process of short-listing an artist/artists for a major work in this location.

3.5.3 The paving to this area will be a quality/ durable material.

3.5.4 The two existing LUL stairs on the Beach and the existing large brick ventilation tower will be removed, and their functions relocated as integral parts of the new Wilton Road stair. This will permit the entrance of the Southern Railway building to be seen as a continuous whole.

3.5.5 The Wilton Road entrance to the underground station as relocated will be such that it no longer impedes the flow of passengers into/out of the mainline station.

- 3.5.6 Street furniture will be rationalised to remove the visual clutter.
- 3.5.7 Along the edge of the area large bronze bollards/seats will be used. The proposed bollards are part of security measures by others and would be subject to further consultation.
- 3.5.8 With “the Beach” entirely revamped as described above, and with the existing visual clutter removed, the setting of the front of the listed National Rail Station will be much improved. Additionally the improvement and opening up of the Beach will enhance the setting of two other listed buildings, both of which are listed Grade II. These are the Apollo Theatre in Wilton Road and the Grosvenor Hotel located on the western side of the National Rail Station.

3.6 The Relocated Wilton Road Entrance

The proposed Wilton Road Entrance will comprise a 4.5m wide stair and also vital ventilation equipment. The design for the structure is painted steel work which will be well detailed and expressive. The walls will be mainly glass with a decorative bronze screen facing the Southern Railways façade. This screen will sit in front of bronze louvres which will provide ventilation in the event of an emergency below. The Wilton Road entrance will measure 7.4 x 2.8 m and has been relocated (as compared with the illustrative details submitted in November 2007) following comments from English Heritage. The new structure has been designed and positioned to be as compact as possible and to be of the highest quality design and to enable the station to function effectively.

Illustrative details of the proposed Wilton Road entrance and its context are shown in Figure 3.6.2. The new entrance would replace the two existing Wilton Road Stair and facilitates the removal of the existing brick ventilation tower in this area, as shown in figure 3.6.1



Figure 3.6.1: Eye level view of 'The Beach' as existing



Figure 3.6.2: Eye level view of 'The Beach' as proposed

3.7 Cardinal Place entrance to Bressenden Place Ticket Hall

A new public entrance on Cardinal Place will access the new North ticket hall. This will be a free standing structure on the east side of Bressenden Place close to the junction with Victoria Street. This entrance is similar in detail to the proposed Wilton Road Stair but has larger footprint 12m x 13.5m and no ventilation shaft so it is largely fully glazed apart from the lift surround and the stainless steel housing for the folding gates which are shut outside operational hours. An illuminated London Underground roundel will be used at the junction of Victoria Street and Bressenden Place to signify the location of the entrance to pedestrians on Victoria Street. This design is illustrated in figure 3.7.1.



Figure 3.7.1: View of the new Cardinal Place Entrance

3.8 New ventilation and a new entrance for fire-fighting personnel on the west side of Bressenden Place

Above an essential fire fighting shaft, three floors of plant space will provide ventilation to the station below ground. This core is approximately 22m x 8m at ground level, and 18m x 8m at levels 1-3. At ground level fire-fighting access occupies 39m², ventilation shafts 37m² and a bin store 16m². Levels 1-3 are occupied by ventilation shafts, plant and access to this.

The existing LUL ventilation shaft which currently forms part of 5 Bressenden Place will be retained.

These structures will eventually be incorporated within the oversite development that will take place above and around it.

3.9 Demolitions

3.9.1 A number of buildings at street level will need to be demolished to allow for the construction of the of the VSU scheme, namely:

- 175-179 Victoria Street;
- 120-124 Victoria Street;
- 3-11 Bressenden Place;
- Elliot House

Proposals for reinstatement of these sites following demolition of these buildings are described (in paragraphs 3.10 and 3.11) below

3.9.2 In addition it will be necessary to demolish:

- The subway and public lavatories under Bressenden Place
- The existing roof structure of the South Ticket Hall (STH)
- Cardinal Place basement structure (part); and;

- National Rail Station basement (part)

3.9.3 Underpinning designs and strengthening works, where appropriate, have been developed so that 4 to 7 Victoria Buildings, 22 Terminus Place, 181 to 183 Victoria Street and the Duke of York public house can be retained. These buildings will need to be vacated during construction works.

3.9.4 Underpinning works will also be carried out as necessary to strengthen the foundations of the VPT and those parts of Allington House running closest to the Paid Area Link tunnels.

3.10 Future surface development on the west side of Bressenden Place and in Allington Street (adjacent to Victoria Palace Theatre)

As mentioned above, the existing buildings at 120-124 (even) Victoria Street, 3-11 (odd) Bressenden Place and Elliot House need to be demolished in order to construct the VSU scheme.

The reasons they need to be demolished include:

- To permit the construction of the sub-surface VSU works and the ventilation shaft and entrance to the fire fighting shaft referred to above
- To permit a temporary diversion of Bressenden Place during the construction of the North Ticket Hall

It is envisaged that a building or buildings will be developed on these sites following the completion of VSU and these will be designed to incorporate the fire fighting and draught relief shafts which are necessary for the VSU works. The principles of design options for permanent development on the site have been discussed with the City of Westminster in the context of a document titled A Strategy for the Reinstatement of the Sites of Demolished Buildings (this forms an Annex to the VSU Scheme's Supplementary Environmental Statement).

There are two main options for future development. The first is as part of a larger scheme (Land Securities are currently promoting a scheme which includes a large part of Victoria north of Victoria Street). If for any reason a comprehensive scheme does not proceed, a specific scheme for the sites vacated in consequence of demolitions of the buildings to be demolished to facilitate VSU would be developed.

If there is likely to be a significant period between completion of the VSU Scheme and redevelopment of the vacated sites, they would be landscaped as open space for the enjoyment of local residents, workers and tourists, in accordance with the Site Reinstatement Strategy.

Figure 3.10.1 shows the illustrative details from a north westerly viewpoint.

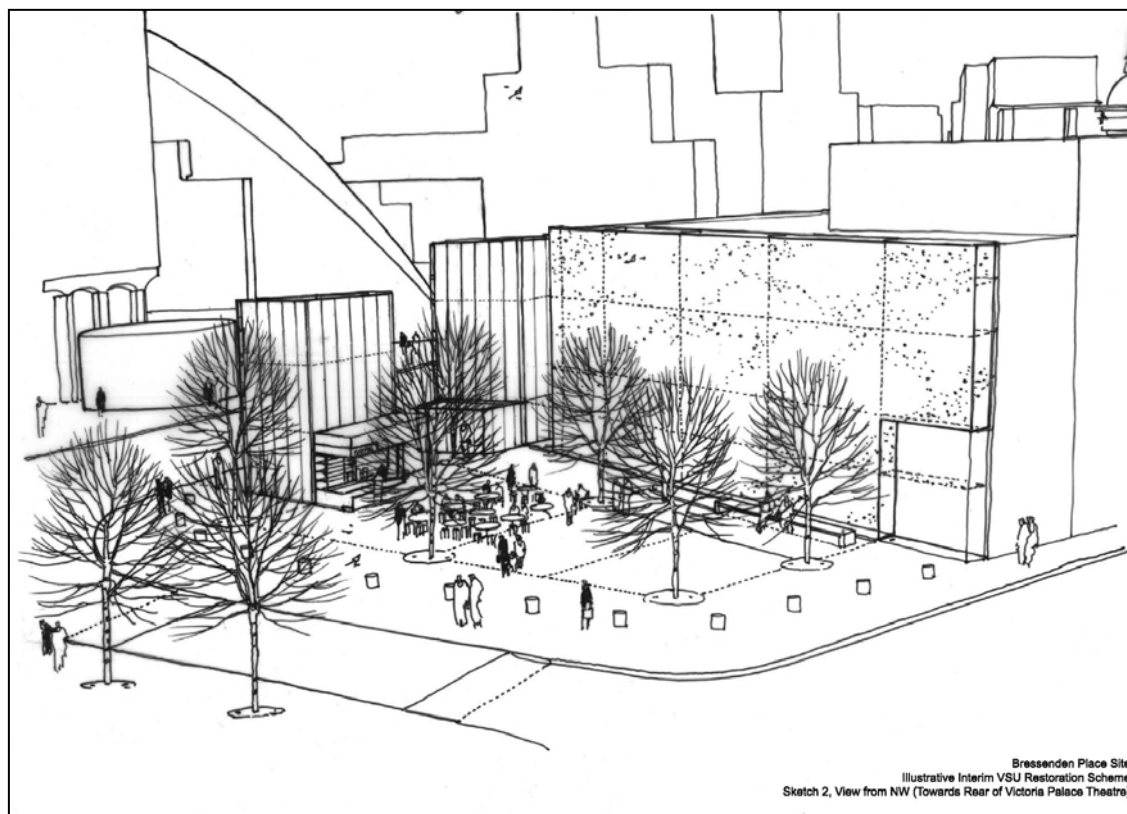


Figure 3.10.1

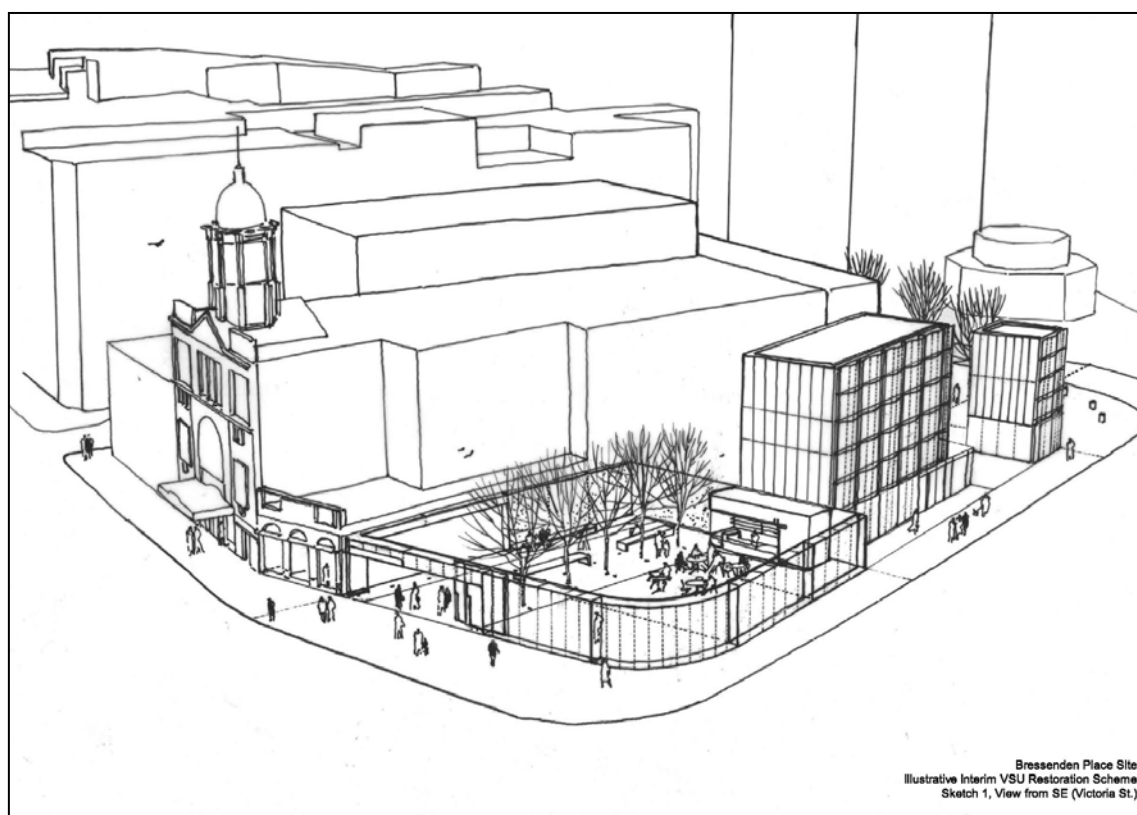


Figure 3.10.2:

Figure 3.10.2 shows an illustrative view from the junction of Bressenden Place and Victoria Street. This could incorporate a coffee kiosk and be a popular south facing open space. It could also be popular as a spill out space for the Victoria Palace Theatre. A mesh screen is envisaged to contain the area to be closed off, if appropriate. The figures show the new and retained LUL ventilation shafts.

3.11 Interim reinstatement of 175 to 179 Victoria Street

This property is owned by LUL and is currently vacant. Demolition is necessary in order to construct a sub-surface lift shaft and the site is needed as a worksite for a substantial part of the VSU construction period.

The site is located within a group of buildings on an “island site” bounded by Victoria Street, Wilton Road, Terminus Place and Buckingham Palace Road. The group includes the Victoria station booking hall for the District and Circle lines and 181-183 Victoria Street, 22 Terminus Place and 4-7 Victoria Buildings as referred to in paragraph 1.5 above. 175-179 Victoria Street are the only buildings on the “island site” that are scheduled for demolition as part of the VSU works, as engineering solutions are expected to be found such that the other buildings on the site can remain.

The site of 175-179 Victoria Street is constrained in that it is small with limited depth horizontally and also vertically because it sits astride the District and Circle lines which are just below the surface. Accordingly the potential for redevelopment of this site on its own is very limited.

- The site will be tidied and hoardings removed
- New hard landscaping appropriate to the proposed use will be provided.
- The bridge parapet that separates the site from an exposed section of the District and Circle lines assets will be suitably finished so it is both functional and respects the visual amenity of the area.
- The exposed elevations of 7 Victoria Buildings and 181 Victoria Street will be suitably treated in order to ensure the buildings are protected and respect the visual amenity of the area.

The potential for part of the site to be used for one or more of the following will be examined and discussed with Westminster City Council:

- As a site for licensed street traders who currently occupy pitches in busy locations where their presence materially obstructs pedestrian movement
- As an outdoor extension to the nearby class A3 use
- As a location for facilities needed in association with the nearby bus station.

As a location for carefully considered outdoor artwork in a highly visible location where it could enliven the street scene and also help screen the exposed end elevations of adjoining buildings. This is shown in figure 3.11.1.



Figure 3.11.1: 175 to 179 Victoria Street with carefully considered outdoor artwork.

3.12 Location of new Passenger Lifts

In order to minimise the size of the Wilton Road entrance and also to increase its transparency and to better suit the ticket hall layout, the passenger lifts have been positioned within the Southern Railways building in the arch currently occupied by Threshers wine merchants. This is shown on the plan in figure 3.12.1.

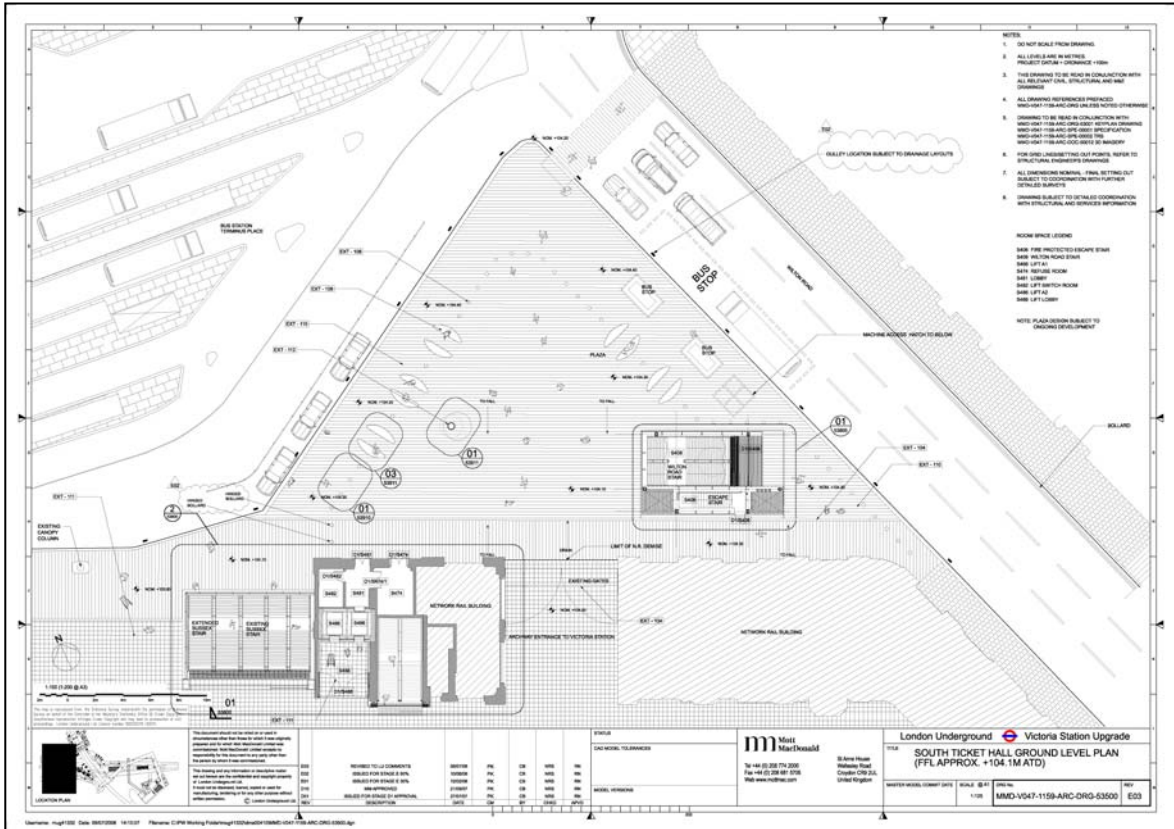
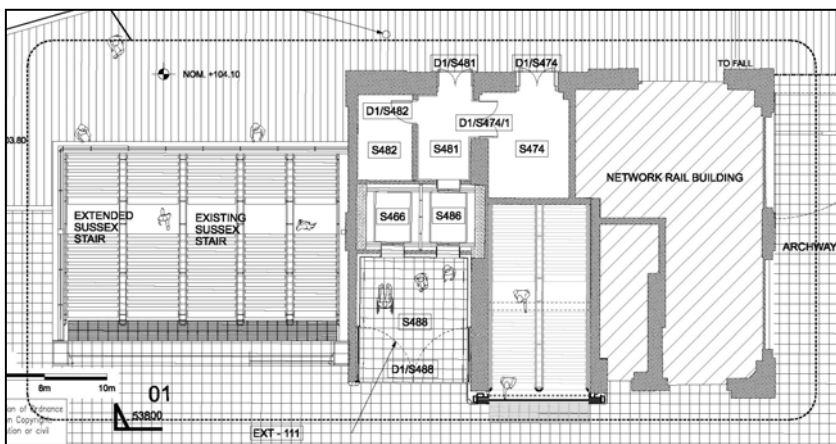


Figure 3.12.1: This drawing shows the South Ticket Hall Ground Level Plan, with detail below showing the planned lift shaft.



3.13 Temporary entrance/ egress to the National Rail Station

During the construction periods, adequate access / egress will be maintained at all times and this is likely to involve the creation of a new temporary entrance / egress to the National Rail Station by converting one of the existing retail units.

3.14 Works to Listed Buildings

3.14.1 The proposed works which are necessary for the VSU scheme to be implemented involve works affecting three listed buildings or structures, namely the National Rail Station, the Victoria Palace Theatre and the clock tower at the junction of Victoria Street, Wilton Road and Vauxhall Bridge Road known as “Little Ben”.

3.14.2 As previously mentioned, LUL has submitted three applications for listed building consent under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. These listed building consent applications will be considered concurrently with the TWAO Application and the request for a planning direction.

3.14.3 Mitigation will be such that none of these listed buildings will be materially affected in the long term.

3.14.4 In the case of the VPT, the works proposed are required to protect the building (and its special character and historic interest) from the possible effects of tunnelling and associated ground treatment and the demolition of adjoining buildings. Ground treatment is likely to comprise of jet grouting which will serve to protect the building from any potential settlement effects. The jet grouting process will be carefully managed such that the likelihood of any residual damaged from associated ground-borne vibration is negligible. Demolitions will result in exposure of parts of the VPT flank wall. The main part of VPT that will be affected by this is of recent construction and in any event, exposed areas will be protected.

- 3.14.5 As regards the Little Ben Clock Tower, it is proposed that this will be carefully dismantled and then stored in secure premises for the duration of the works. It will then be re-erected in the same condition as it is now or better.
- 3.14.6 Detailed assessment indicates that the VSU works are unlikely to materially affect the structural integrity of the National Rail Station. Proposed minor demolitions are limited to areas of the basement including the floor of the existing Threshers retail unit and internal fittings of that unit. None of these works will affect the special character and historic interest of the building.
- 3.14.7 The proposed permanent works will not have any material effect on the VPT or Little Ben Clock Tower in terms of access.
- 3.14.8 The minor demolitions at the National Rail Station are all required to implement the VSU Scheme and hence improve existing access between the National Rail and Underground stations. The alterations within what is currently the Threshers retail unit are specifically required to provide lifts between the National Rail concourse and the South ticket hall and hence significantly improve access for persons of reduced mobility.
- 3.14.9 During construction, appropriate measures will be taken to ensure satisfactory access is maintained.

4 Access

Improving the quality of access and interchange and ambience at the Underground Station is one of the principle aims of the VSU Scheme. As such, issues relating to access have substantially influenced the design of the proposed works, as is illustrated by the description of design elements provided in the preceding chapter of this Statement.

This Chapter explains the existing access difficulties experienced at the Underground Station and the measures that are proposed in order to overcome those difficulties. It also explains the policy adopted by LUL in relation to access. The ways in which the VSU Scheme has taken into account policies relating to access in relevant local development plan documents is dealt with in the next chapter.

4.1 Existing Access Difficulties

4.1.1 As described above, the Underground Station currently suffers from major congestion within the existing ticket hall, escalators and platform concourse. This congestion detrimentally affects access to London Underground services. Temporary closures and gateline restriction compound this problem.

4.1.2 In addition to difficulties arising from passenger congestion, the existing layout of the Underground Station and surrounding area suffers from the following access issues:

- Existing surface entrances leading to the Victoria line platforms are focussed on access to and from the National Rail Station. As a consequence, the many passengers arriving on Victoria line services during the morning peak, exit via the existing South Ticket Hall, directly in front of the National Rail Station. However, a large proportion of these passengers are travelling to employment destinations along Victoria Street, within Cardinal Place or beyond. At sub-surface level, the existing patterns of movement of these passengers serves to worsen congestion in the existing south ticket hall. Above ground level, the passengers must effectively retrace their steps via a route that involves crossing two or three very busy roads.
- The only means of vertical movement within the existing Underground station is via steps and escalators. There is no step-free provision and this is a significant disadvantage for persons of reduced mobility.

4.2 Features of the VSU Scheme Designed to Enhance Accessibility

4.2.1 The VSU Scheme will significantly improve access to the Underground Station in the following ways

- New Street Level Entrance to the Underground Station

Construction of the new North Ticket Hall will involve the creation of a new surface level entrance at Cardinal Place which will be well placed to serve passengers arriving from or departing towards the Victoria Street /

Cardinal Place area. This will improve the capacity and quality of access to the Underground Station from street level.

- Improvements to Existing Entrances

The VSU Scheme will involve the widening of the Sussex Stairs, which form the existing entrance to the Underground Station adjacent to the National Rail Station. This will also improve the capacity and quality of access to the Underground Station from street level.

- Provision of step-free access

London Underground recognises that it has an obligation to seek to provide a service which is available to everyone and it has a programme to provide step-free access. Transport for London (“TfL”) has stated aims to improve step-free access and has committed to providing full step-free access at 25% of all Tube stations by 2010.

London Underground follows industry best practice and national standards, among them the DfT Train and Station Services for Disabled Passengers: “A Code of Practice” and BS 8300:2001, “Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – Code of practice”. The VSU Scheme will conform to these standards as far as reasonably practicable. It will involve the following:

- Provision of step free access between street level and the platforms through the provision of new lifts, between street level and ticket hall level at the following locations:
- One lift from the surface adjacent to the new Cardinal Place entrance to the North Ticket Hall
- One or, more probably, two lifts from the National Rail Station concourse to the South Ticket Hall (with the lifts located between the two existing LU stairs at the front of the National Rail Station ; and
- Within the station further lifts will provide step-free access to all the District and Circle and Victoria Line platforms

While respecting their context, the station entrances are designed to be highly visible to the public, employing illuminated London Underground roundels. Within the station, step-free access routes have been designed to be as visible as possible and as close to other routes.

5 Planning Policy Context

5.1 Introduction

The VSU scheme has been developed within the context of an extensive framework of policies provided at the national, regional and local levels.

Within this section of the Statement an indication of the general policy context appraisal that has been undertaken in respect of the scheme is provided followed by a consideration of the specific access policy context and (because this statement also supports applications for listed building consents) the policy context relating to listed buildings.

5.2 General Policy Context

An appraisal of the general policy context set out at the national, regional and local context relevant to the VSU scheme has been undertaken, and is summarised in the Statement of Case of London Underground for the public inquiry into the Order, planning direction and listed building consent applications. For ease of reference a summary of this appraisal has also been provided at Appendix 1.

5.3 Access Policy Context

The VSU scheme will improve existing access and provide additional access to a major transport interchange facility. Improved access to and from the Underground network in this location will have further additional benefits at street level in terms of pedestrian access to facilities, employment opportunities and residential dwellings.

A number of the key design and access policy aims and objectives set out at the regional level are reflected in the adopted City of Westminster Unitary Development Plan 2007 (“**the UDP**”). Within the UDP the National Rail, Underground, bus and coach stations are described as providing the gateway for many people arriving in the area and that many people’s perception of the area is formed as they pass through the various stations on their way to their destination (paragraph 1.25)

Strategic UDP policy STRA 20: ‘Integrating Land Use and Transport’ sets out the City of Westminster Council’s aim of reducing the need to

travel, whilst improving access to facilities and services, by integrating land use and transport policies in co-operation with other bodies across London. Policy STRA 21: 'Walking, Cycling and Public Transport', seeks to: improve the environmental quality, safety and directness of routes for pedestrians and cyclists; and, to improve the quality, reliability efficiency, safety and accessibility of public transport by promoting and supporting proposals that integrate, improve and extend bus, Underground and rail networks and services and river services. The VSU scheme will improve access to Underground services, which in turn will improve access to facilities both locally and throughout London. The provision of improved and new access to the Underground through the VSU scheme has taken account of pedestrian routes. The scheme will improve the quality, reliability efficiency, safety and accessibility of public transport.

Paragraph 4.15 of the UDP explains the City of Westminster Council's Strategy for transport. The City Council's transport policies are designed to, amongst other things, improve accessibility to services within Westminster, by reducing dependence on the car and promoting other forms of transport, improve the efficiency of the existing road and rail networks and minimise traffic congestion, and provide safe and convenient access to services for disabled people. The achievement of these objectives, which are then set out in various following policies in the plan which are discussed below will be significantly assisted by the VSU scheme.

Policy TRANS 3: 'Pedestrians', makes clear that the City Council will, in considering development proposals, aim to secure an improved environment for pedestrians, with particular regard to their safety, ease, convenience and directness of movement. The development of the VSU has given consideration to these matters and will provide benefits to pedestrians in respect of these matters.

Policy TRANS 5 'Surface, Underground Railways and Trams' is particularly relevant to VSU and states that, amongst other things:

(A) The City Council will encourage and support improvements to the main line rail termini, Underground stations and associated interchange facilities, including improved access to and capacity of stations and interchanges...

(B) The City Council will seek to retain and enhance accessibility to public transport in all parts of the City...

(D) Where new or improved rail or tram facilities are proposed the City Council will seek to ensure that the proposals include suitable and convenient access for people with mobility difficulties. The Council will also urge operators to improve the access for such people to existing

facilities.'

The scheme is an improvement to the Underground Station, will improve access to the station, will enhance accessibility to public transport generally and includes suitable and convenient access for people with mobility difficulties.

The City Council's aim through policy STRA 26 is to *"ensure that all users and visitors have access to individual buildings and developments. Particular regard will be paid to the needs of people with disabilities."* The VSU scheme is not just concerned with improving the capacity of the access to and from the Underground system but also has been designed to take account of the access needs of persons of reduced mobility.

Paragraph 10.8 of the UDP makes clear that *"Access for all, including people with disabilities is a material consideration. The City Council will expect suitable access to be provided for people with special needs, where it is practicable and reasonable to do so"*.

Policy DES 1: 'Principles of Urban Design and Conservation', sets out a series of design criteria which should be met by new development. Under the sub-heading 'Amenity, accessibility and community safety' it is made clear that to protect amenity development should, amongst other things, *"provide for safe and convenient access for all"*. The VSU Scheme has been developed against this access objective and will provide access for people of reduced mobility through the provision of lifts between street level and ticket hall level and lifts within the station to provide step free access to all the District and Circle and Victoria Line platforms.

5.4 Listed Building Policy Context

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) contains the Government's policies for the identification and protection of historic buildings, conservation areas and other elements of the historic environment. Paragraph 3.5 of the PPG sets out the issues which are generally relevant to the consideration of all listed building applications. In summary, these are:

- i. the importance of the building, its intrinsic architectural and historic interest and rarity in both national and local terms;
- ii. the particular physical features of the building (which may include its design, plan, materials or location) which justify its inclusion in the list;

- iii. the building's setting and its contribution to the local scene, which may be very important;
- iv. the extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial benefits for the community, in particular by contributing to the economic regeneration of the area or the enhancement of its environment (including other listed buildings).

Paragraphs 3.12 to 3.15 of PPG15 deal with alterations and extensions of listed buildings and make clear that *"many listed buildings can sustain some degree of sensitive alteration or extension to accommodate continuing or new uses"* (paragraph 3.13) but that in *"judging the effect of any alteration or extension it is essential to have assessed the elements that make up the special interest of the building in question"* (paragraph 3.12).

The development of the VSU scheme has had regard to the importance of the listed buildings for which listed building applications have been made along with regard to the contribution they make to the local scene. Any implications for nearby listed buildings as a result of the VSU works have been limited as far as practicable. The works to the listed buildings for which applications have been made are necessary in order for the VSU scheme to be provided. The VSU scheme will bring substantial benefits to the community, will contribute economic benefits to the wider area and enhance the surrounding area.

In respect of the listed building applications made there are clear convincing reasons why the proposed works are necessary. The works proposed form part of a scheme which will generate significant benefits and have been assessed following consideration of the criteria set down in PPG15.

In respect of applications for development involving the alteration of a listed building policy DES10 of the City of Westminster UDP makes clear that full details of the development proposed are required in order to demonstrate that the proposed alteration would “*respect the listed building’s character and appearance and serve to preserve, restore or complement its features of special architectural or historic interest*” (policy DES 10(A)). Full details of the proposed VSU development have been provided. Policy DES10 (B) further makes clear that development involving the total demolition of a listed building will only be permitted if, where relevant it meets certain criteria. In respect of the relevant criteria the temporary dismantling of the Little Ben Clock Tower is required because: it is not possible to continue to use it for its existing purpose or function during the construction of VSU and its temporary removal is to ensure its protection (criterion a); substantial benefits to the community will derive from the nature, form and function of the proposed VSU development (criterion d); and, the temporary ‘demolition’ will not result in the creation of a long-term cleared site to the detriment of adjacent listed buildings (criterion e).

6 Consultation

6.1 Introduction

LUL has consulted widely on the VSU scheme. Details of the consultation activity conducted by LUL during the development and design of the VSU proposals are set out in a separate Consultation Report (Application Document VSU.A5).

This chapter outlines the consultation that LUL has undertaken on issues relating to access and explains the ways in which account has been taken of the outcome of that consultation.

6.2 Consultation with accessibility groups

6.2.1 In June 2006, LUL briefed the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) and that organisation has also received a copy of all project update letters (these were issued in April 06, Nov 06, May 07, Nov 07 & May 08) which provided contact details for further information.

The following accessibility groups also receive project update letters;

- Westminster Action Network on Disability (WAND)
- DaRT
- Disability Rights Commission
- Employers' Forum on Disability
- Greater London Forum for the Elderly
- RADAR
- RNIB
- Association of Disabled Professionals
- Carers UK
- Mental Health Foundation
- Age Concern London

6.3 Design & access issues raised during consultation

6.3.1 As a result of discussions with Land Securities LUL has made a minor alteration to the alignment of the Paid Area Link.

6.3.2 LUL has also re-designed the proposed entrance & ventilation shaft in front of the National Rail station in response to comments from English Heritage.

6.3.3 A number of local residents asked whether a subway link from the South side of Victoria Street to the NTH could be provided. LUL has considered this proposal but it is not being progressed for the following reasons:

- The high pedestrian flows and limited pavement width make it difficult to locate a satisfactory entrance on the South side of Victoria Street.
- The District & Circle (D&C) line tunnels run underneath the junction between Bressenden Place and Victoria Street. A trunk sewer runs along Victoria Street and meets alongside the District & Circle line in this area. To construct the subway over the D&C lines would require the sewer to be diverted. In discussions, Thames Water have indicated that they would object to any diversion of the Victoria Street sewer. Additionally, there is no obvious diversionary route.
- Constructing the subway link underneath the D&C tunnels would mean that the link would be too deep to allow a workable solution in relation to the proposed North Ticket Hall.

LUL has therefore concluded that a subway link from the south side of Victoria Street should not form part of the VSU Scheme given the combination of engineering difficulties, the difficulties that this would potentially create for Thames Water and the prohibitive costs involved. This conclusion has been explained to those consultees who suggested this proposal.

6.3.4 Local residents and LUL customers have asked if the proposals could include escalators from the National Rail station to the South Ticket Hall. There are significant

problems, mainly related to safety and availability of space, associated with the provision of escalators in this location. However, LUL is aware that Network Rail is considering the possibility of a new link to the Underground from the National Rail concourse and this could possibly provide an opportunity for escalators in the future. The design of the proposed works to the existing South Ticket Hall has taken the possibility of a future link to the National Rail Concourse into account and any future provision would not be precluded by the VSU Scheme.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Conclusion

7.1.1 In accordance with the scheme objectives, the VSU Scheme will provide additional capacity within the Victoria line part of the Underground Station and this will serve to significantly reduce congestion and cater for forecast future demand. The quality of access to, and interchange within, the Underground station will be much improved. Step free access will be provided to and between all platforms which will be a major benefit for persons of reduced mobility. Thus the VSU works will result in a very significant improvement as regards accessibility to, from and within this important Underground station located at one of the busiest transport interchanges in London.

As improving accessibility is one of the principle objectives of the VSU Scheme, issues relating to access have formed a key element of the design principles and concepts applied to the Scheme.

7.1.2 The above ground works proposed for 'The Beach' area in front of the listed National Rail Station will result in the removal of much visual clutter and the creation of an entrance structure appropriate to its context. 'The Beach' will be much improved as regards fulfilling its roles as an area of public realm and as an important element of the setting for three major listed buildings.

7.1.3 Above ground works in Bressenden place will provide a new entrance to the Underground station creating a new visual and functional focus for the area. Accessibility to this busy part of Victoria Street, Bressenden Place and the surrounding area will be significantly improved. LUL infrastructure (and sub-surface works) on the west side of Bressenden Place has been designed such that it can be incorporated into new development that will eventually transform this area. Proposals for interim reinstatement of sites where buildings are to be demolished are being developed in case such works are necessary.

7.1.4 In conclusion VSU will provide major benefits to the Victoria area in terms of both accessibility and townscape.

Appendix 1 - Appraisal of the General Policy Context

National Policy Context

Sustainability

Planning *Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)* reiterates the four aims for sustainable development to be achieved by the planning system (paragraph 4) and sets out guidance on how sustainable development can be achieved under the headings of spatial plans, design and community involvement. Although predominantly advice to local planning authorities in respect of the production of their development plan policies, the VSU scheme assists in the achievement of a number of the identified ways of achieving sustainable development set out under these headings.

The design and assessment of the VSU scheme has also had regard to the relevant aspects of the key planning objectives for the delivery of sustainable development set out in *Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 (2007)*.

The Government's strategy for sustainable development set out in *Securing the Future – The UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005)* recognises that the design and use of transport is an important element in encouraging more sustainable consumption and production and that transport specifically has to make a contribution to reducing carbon dioxide emissions. The VSU scheme will enable greater use to be made of what is recognised as a sustainable transport system.

The Government's Urban White Paper *Our Towns and Cities: The Future – Towards an Urban Renaissance (2000)* identifies the provision of a modern, efficient transport service as: essential to the effective functioning of local economies, communities and neighbourhoods; providing vital links to national and international markets; having a direct effect on the quality of people's daily lives, and on their access to jobs, services and leisure opportunities; and having a major part to play in making towns and cities more attractive places in which to live and work (Action to create and share prosperity 4). The VSU scheme will assist in the achievement of such a modern efficient transport system for London.

The recent Government discussion document *Towards a Sustainable Transport System: Supporting Economic Growth in a Low Carbon World (2007)* recognises that transport has a vital role to play in supporting sustainable economic growth and develops a series of broadly defined goals that capture the full range of Government objectives that could be furthered by transport. The VSU is in accordance with these goals as it will assist in maximising competitiveness and productivity, assist in tackling climate change, contribute to better safety, security and health, enhance the quality of passenger journeys and improve access for people to transport networks (Figure 2.5).

Transport

The Government's approach to transport set out in the 1998 Transport White Paper *A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone* is developed further in the 2004 White Paper *The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030*, which recognises that the London Underground system is experiencing both a growth in passenger numbers and improving levels of service (paragraph 4.6), but also that it is a large and complex system that requires significant investment and management to maintain it as an efficient and effective network (paragraph 4.19). The VSU scheme is a key element in the ongoing development and maintenance of the Underground to ensure it is an efficient and effective network.

Within the Government's *Transport Ten Year Plan 2000*, the broad approach to improving transport in London shared by the Government and the Mayor is set out, including a number of objectives (paragraph 6.68), the achievement of which will be assisted by the VSU scheme. These objectives include: the delivery of increased public transport capacity and efficiency to cater for London's growing economy and a reduction in overcrowding; tackling road congestion with, amongst other things, improved public transport; improving access to, amongst other things, jobs and key local facilities; and providing a better door-to-door journey for all. The VSU scheme will also assist in achieving the overall vision of a transport system set out at paragraph 1.4 of the plan.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport (2001) recognises that quick, easy and safe interchange is essential to integration between different modes of transport (paragraph 48). The VSU scheme will enhance and further develop the function of the wider interchange facilities at Victoria and assist in the achievement of the objectives set out in PPG13.

Environment

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) provides a full statement of Government policies for the identification and protection of historic buildings, conservation areas, and other elements of the historic environment. The VSU scheme is located close to conservation areas and listed buildings, which have been taken account of in its design. Regard has been had to the requirements of this guidance, in particular in the approach adopted towards the assessment and mitigation of effects on built heritage. Regard has also been taken of the guidance in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (1990)* in respect of the design and assessment of the scheme and the definition of appropriate mitigation measures and strategies.

The overall objective of Government policy on waste as set out in *Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management* is to protect human health and the environment by producing less waste and by using it as a resource wherever possible. LUL have had regard to this advice and have produced a proposed CoCP in consultation with the LPA, the provisions of which the contractor appointed to construct the proposed works will be required to adhere to.

Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control makes clear that the Government attaches great importance to controlling and minimising pollution (paragraph 4). Regard has been had to the guidance in PPS23, in particular that the land is suitable for the development envisaged and that any potential risks associated with contaminants can be and will be satisfactorily mitigated.

The VSU scheme is classified by *Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (2006)* as 'essential infrastructure' and is proposed in a 1 in 100 year fluvial flood risk zone. Regard has been had to the guidance in PPS25 and in particular the 'Exception Test' set down in PPS25. The scheme meets the requirements of this test in that the proposed redevelopment of the site provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk, is on developable previously developed land and will be safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

Account has also been taken of relevant guidance provided in other policy statements and guidance notes, including: *Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres*, *Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*, *Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy* and *Planning Policy Guidance Note 24: Planning and Noise*.

Regional Policy Context

The London Plan (February 2008) develops six objectives aimed at fully implementing the Mayor's vision for London, which is to develop London as an exemplary, sustainable world city, based on the three balanced and interwoven themes of strong, long term and diverse economic growth, social inclusivity and fundamental improvements in the environment and use of resources (Introduction paragraph xxiv and xxv).

Overall Strategy

During the design of the VSU scheme account has been taken of the relevant sustainability criteria set out in policy 2A.1. The VSU scheme will assist in the achievement of various aspects of the overarching spatial strategy for development set out in policy 2A.2, including "*improving London's accessibility through the co-ordination of transport and development with an emphasis on improvement to public transport and reducing traffic congestion*".

Economic Context

One of the objectives identified to meet the Mayor's vision is "*to make London a more prosperous city with strong and diverse long term economic growth*". Chapter 3B of the plan articulates the detailed policies which centre on the achievement of this objective. Policy 3B.1 makes clear that the Mayor, working with strategic partners will address the spatial needs and implications of a developing world city economy and the sectors, work practices and linkages (identified as those within London, nationally and internationally) that this gives rise to. The VSU scheme will assist in

addressing the needs of the various transport linkages associated with the Victoria area.

Transport / Accessibility context

Another of the plan's objectives is *"to improve London's accessibility"*. Chapter 3C of the plan articulates the detailed policies which centre on the achievement of this objective. Under the heading *'Better public transport in London'* policy 3C.9 seeks to increase the capacity, quality and integration of public transport to meet London's need. The policy states that the *"Mayor will work with strategic partners to increase the capacity of public transport in London by up to 50 per cent over the plan period and to improve the integration, reliability, safety, quality, accessibility, frequency, attractiveness and environmental performance of the existing public transport system."* The supporting text refers to a list of transport schemes (provided in Tables 3C.1 and 6A.2 of the plan) which will increase public transport capacity by up to 50 per cent in year 2022 compared to 2001. The VSU scheme is included in this list within the references to *"Underground station congestion relief, accessibility projects and interchange improvements"*.

In addition the VSU scheme will improve the integration, reliability, safety, quality, accessibility and attractiveness of the Underground Station and assist in the achievement of the benefits of improved frequency and environmental performance resulting from other proposed improvements to the Underground.

Other policies of relevance to the VSU scheme provided in the plan to meet the objective of improving London's accessibility, and to which regard has been had, include:

- The integration of transport and development by, amongst other things, seeking to improve public transport and accessibility in areas within which the VSU scheme is located, and by encouraging integration of the major transport infrastructure plans with improvements to the public realm (policy 3C.1 and supporting text).
- The support for, amongst other things, measures that encourage shifts to more sustainable modes of transport and improved public transport for areas such as Victoria identified as a specific 'Opportunity area' (policy 3C.3 and supporting text).
- The improvement of links between London and the surrounding regions (policy 3C.5 and supporting text).
- The commitment to improve the Underground service and to ensure its development supports the spatial strategy of the plan by delivering improvements in safety and security, reliability, customer service and effective capacity and by identifying and taking forward improvements to the network that support the priorities of the plan (policy 3C.13 and supporting text).

Sustainability and Design Context

Another identified objective of the plan is “to make London an exemplary world city in mitigating and adapting to climate change and a more attractive, well designed and green city”. Chapter 4 provides the policies that particularly focus on the achievement of this objective and is split into various parts. LUL’s evidence will demonstrate the account that has been taken of the relevant policies of this chapter of the plan and the conformity of the VSU scheme with these policy requirements.

Sub Regional context

The site of the VSU scheme is within the indicative boundary of the Central Activities Zone (“CAZ” shown on map 5G.1). Policy 5G.2 sets out the strategic priorities for the CAZ. The VSU scheme will assist in the achievement of these strategic priorities, in particular:

- providing a competitive, integrated and varied global business location;
- enhancing the operating environment supporting different clusters within the CAZ;
- sustaining and enhancing the offer of the country’s premier retail destinations in Knightsbridge and the West End;
- enhancing and managing the role of the CAZ as the country’s premier visitor destination;
- developing and implementing the framework for the Victoria Opportunity Area to realise its opportunities for local communities, businesses as well as London as a whole (an issue explained in more detail below); and
- enhancing the strategically vital linkages between the CAZ and labour markets within and beyond London in line with objectives to secure sustainable development of the wider city region.

The VSU site also falls within the North London sub-region. The VSU scheme will assist in the achievement of the priorities of this sub-region set out in policy 5B.1. The VSU site also falls within the Victoria Opportunity Area for which policy 5B.2 indicates that subsequent planning frameworks will be drawn up by the Mayor and partners. The general policy directions for the Victoria planning framework to follow are indicated in paragraph 5.37, which recognises that Victoria is a major transport interchange, the busiest in London, in need of substantial upgrading and enhancement, with the public realm also in need of improvement. The station and nearby sites are identified as having significant capacity for intensification but that this will require management to sustain its heritage features. Advice on the suitability of tall buildings and synergy with another nearby Opportunity Area is also outlined.

The VSU scheme is clearly in line with the policy direction and aspirations for the Victoria Opportunity Area set out in the plan.

The Mayor's Transport Strategy 2001 (as amended)

The Transport Strategy was originally published in 2001 with revisions being provided in 2004 and in 2006. The London Plan (2008) indicates that the Transport Strategy will be updated.

The strategy emphasises the reliance of Central London on both national rail and Underground services (paragraph 2.76) indicating that key issues for transport in, to and from central London include unreliability and gross overcrowding of Underground services, and high levels of interchange from National Rail to underground and bus, often at routinely over-loaded stations (paragraph 2.81).

The VSU scheme will contribute to the achievement of the five overarching objectives of the vision for London as they relate to the key implications for London's transport system set out in the strategy (paragraph 3.9). The VSU scheme is in general conformity with the wider policies and proposals set out in Chapter 3 of the Transport Strategy.

The VSU scheme will assist in the achievement of relevant key transport system priorities identified in the strategy (Chapter 4A) to provide the world class system the capital needs to support the overall vision for London set out by the Mayor. In particular the VSU scheme will assist in:

- overcoming the backlog of investment so as to safely increase capacity, reduce overcrowding, and increase both reliability and frequency of services (Transport System Priority b);
- improving the accessibility of London's transport system so that everyone, regardless of disability, can enjoy the benefits of living in, working in and visiting the Capital, thus improving social inclusion (Transport System Priority i); and
- bringing forward new integration initiatives to, amongst other things, improve key interchanges (Transport System Priority j).

The VSU scheme is, in accordance with policy 4C.2, a proposal that will address overcrowding and unreliability problems of the Underground to assist in the provision of a service to passengers that is consistently reliable, comfortable, easy to use, safe and secure. The design of the VSU scheme has also had regard to the principles of developing and maintaining a programme for funding and improving the Underground set out in policy 4C.3. The VSU scheme will also contribute to the objectives of various relevant proposals set out in chapter 4C of the strategy.

The VSU scheme will make the Underground system more accessible for persons of restricted mobility by removing barriers that affect independent mobility, in conformity with the relevant policies and proposals of chapter 40 of the strategy – 'accessible transport'.

One of the key benefits of the VSU scheme is the improvement it will provide to the interchange of different transport modes at Victoria, in conformity with the relevant policies and proposals of chapter 4P of the strategy – 'integration: the seamless journey'.

Sustaining Success – Developing London’s Economy: Economic Development Strategy (January 2005)

Chapter 3 of the strategy emphasises that investment in places and infrastructure is vital to support London’s continued economic success. Section 3.2.1 recognises that transport is a key economic development issue for London and makes clear that realisation of the strategy requires a comprehensive, accessible transport system for people and freight, enabling easy access to and from all parts of London. Improvement to the Underground and interchange facilities are identified as helping support development and regeneration across London. The VSU scheme will assist in the delivery of relevant strategic objectives, including: delivering an improved and effective infrastructure to support London’s future growth and development; deliver healthy, sustainable, high quality communities and urban environments; and maintain and develop London as a top international destination and principal UK gateway for visitors, tourism and investment.

Other Mayoral Strategies

Regard that has been had in respect of the VSU scheme to other relevant strategies of the Mayor.

Central London Sub-Regional Development Framework (May 2006)

This framework remains extant in the absence of a new north London sub regional implementation framework that will be produced to reflect the recently published 2008 London Plan. Within the existing sub-regional framework the site of the VSU scheme is located within the defined Central Activities Zone and defined as an Area for Intensification.

Annex 2 deals in detail with the Areas for Intensification which in respect of the Victoria area, identifies various key issues which are generally and specifically of relevance to the VSU scheme. Action 2C of the framework requires the production of frameworks for individual Areas of Intensification taking into account the issues and parameters summarised in Annex 2. In respect of the status of the Victoria area framework Annex 2 refers to the Victoria Area Planning Brief produced by Westminster City Council, the details of which are discussed below.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Considerable supplementary planning guidance providing detailed advice and guidance on the policies in the London Plan have been produced by the Greater London Authority. Although relating to the previous version of the London Plan regard has been had to relevant guidance in respect of the VSU scheme, including:

- ‘*Accessible London: achieving an inclusive environment (2004)*’. In particular Implementation Point 25 relating to public transport infrastructure and the aim of achieving the highest standards of safe, easy and inclusive access for all and the importance of integrating various transport modes in a fully inclusive way.
- ‘*Land for Transport Functions (2007)*’. In particular the encouragement given to considering the requirements of additional infrastructure to upgrade both Underground and interchange facilities when considering development proposals on land near to such facilities.

- '*Planning for Equality and Diversity in London (2007)*'. In particular the principles of development being accessible and inclusive for all.
- '*Sustainable Design and Construction (2006)*'. In particular guidance in relation to energy assessment and wider sustainability appraisal and assessment.

Best Practice Guidance

In the development of the VSU scheme regard has also been had to relevant Best Practice Guidance, including:

- '*The control of dust and emissions from construction and demolition (2006)*'.
- '*Health Issues in Planning (2007)*'.

Local Policy Context

City of Westminster Unitary Development Plan (2007)

Strategic policy STRA 3 states that the aim of the City Council in respect of Westminster's Central Area (within which the VSU scheme is located) is "*to protect and enhance the strategic role, historic character, social and cultural importance of the central part of Westminster through the designation of a Central Activities Zone and Central Activities Zone Frontages*".

The UDP identifies Victoria as a sub-area in the CAZ where, in describing its character and function, makes clear that the railway, underground, bus and coach stations provide the gateway for many people arriving in the areas and that there are likely to be major opportunities to improve the stations and local environmental quality during the plan period (paragraph 1.25).

The Underground Station, as part of a wider interchange facility for public transport of some significance, is identified as a particularly appropriate non residential Central London Activity (UDP Table 1.1 and paragraph 1.84). The VSU scheme is appropriate to the character and function of its particular area in accordance with policy CENT 1

Strategic policy STRA 21 sets out the Council's aims in respect of walking cycling and public transport which include the improvement of the "*quality, reliability, efficiency, safety and accessibility of public transport by promoting and supporting proposals that integrate, improve and extend bus, Underground and rail networks and services and river services*". The VSU scheme will result in such improvements to Underground services. Strategic policy STRA 22 further aims to protect and improve environmental quality by reducing the use of all motorised vehicles and encouraging modes of transport and types of engine and/or fuel which cause less pollution and congestion.

Policy TRANS 5 gives specific encouragement and support to "*improvements to the main line rail termini, Underground stations and associated interchange facilities, including improved access to and capacity of stations and interchanges*" (policy TRANS 5 (A) and makes clear that where improved rail facilities are proposed the

Council will seek to ensure that they *“include suitable and convenient access for people with mobility difficulties”* (policy TRANS 5 (D)). Such accessibility issues have been key in the design of the VSU scheme.

In accordance with part E of policy TRANS 5, measures have been taken to protect the environment through the minimisation of the adverse impacts of the construction of the VSU scheme including those impacts relating to traffic and the measures that will be taken to minimise impacts on listed buildings and other valued buildings.

Through policy TRANS 15, the Council in seeking *“To minimise the adverse effects of traffic on the environment and amenity”* will *“seek to increase the use, integration and development of public transport, cycling and walking as viable alternatives to motor vehicles”*. The VSU scheme, once constructed, will increase the use and integration of the Underground public transport system. In seeking to protect the environment from the effects of transport activities the Council, through policy TRANS 1(A), will seek to improve air quality, reduce the emission of greenhouse gases and minimise noise disturbance to residents and workers by, amongst other things, *“improving provision for, and giving higher priority to, walking, cycling and the use of public transport”*.

Regard has also been had to policy TRANS 14 and Appendix 4.1 in respect of the production of the Transport Assessment of the VSU scheme.

The VSU scheme has been designed to ensure access for all having regard to persons of reduced mobility, in accordance with policies STRA 26 and DES 1(B)(2). Account has also been taken of design matters set out in policies STRA 27 and policy DES1 in respect of the VSU scheme, in particular in respect of the benefits to the urban environment that are proposed as part of the scheme.

In respect of conservation areas, strategic policy STRA 28 highlights the Council’s aim as being the preservation or enhancement of *‘the built and landscaped environment of Westminster; paying particular regard to its historic character, appearance and cultural importance and ecological value’*. Further guidance is provided in policy DES 9, which makes clear that development, even if it is not partly or wholly within a conservation area, will not be permitted if it were to have a visibly adverse effect upon the area’s recognised special character or appearance. The VSU scheme will not have an adverse effect on the setting of nearby conservation areas as there will be appropriate reinstatement of sites where buildings need to be demolished.

Strategic policy STRA 29 makes clear the Council’s aim *“To preserve or enhance listed buildings and their settings”*. Further policy guidance relevant to both the protection of listed buildings and their setting is provided in policy DES 10.

Strategic policy STRA 18 sets out one of the Council’s aim as being *“To reduce the fear of crime, actual crime and nuisance for residents, businesses and visitors”*. Policy DES 1(B)(3) further makes it clear that developments should *“adopt design measures to reduce the opportunity for crime and anti social behaviour”*. The VSU scheme has been designed to maximise security and minimise crime.

The UDP contains various policies relating to environmental matters which are of relevance to the VSU scheme. These consist of strategic policies set out in part 1 of the UDP and more detailed policies provided in Chapter 9 of the UDP, and include:

- Policy STRA 32 which sets out the Council's aim of seeking to achieve sustainable development and to meet the economic, social and environmental needs of the city in an integrated and balanced way.
- Policy STRA 33, which sets out the Council's aim of promoting the efficient use of materials and the reduction of energy and water consumption by various means.
- Policy ENV 1, which sets out various ways in which the Council will aim to ensure the resource efficiency and sustainability of buildings in Westminster.
- Policy STRA 34, which sets out the Council's aim in respect of the pollution of air, water and land, including, amongst other things, the aim of improving air quality through Westminster's Air Quality Management Plan.
- Policy ENV 5, which sets out various measures by which the Council will seek to reduce air pollution.
- Policy ENV 9, which sets out various measures by which the Council will seek to conserve water and reduce water pollution.
- Policy STRA 17, which sets out the Council's aim of reducing noise levels in Westminster below maximum noise levels in the World Health Organisation 'Guidelines for Community Noise'.
- Policies ENV 6 and ENV 7, which seek, through various measures, to limit and contain noise from development, to protect noise sensitive properties from noise disturbance, to protect tranquil areas and to reduce noise from transport, including the requirement to produce a noise and vibration assessment report where development could affect noise sensitive properties.
- Policy ENV 13, which sets out various ways in which the Council will seek to protect amenities, daylight, sunlight and environmental quality.

Account has been taken of the aims, objectives and requirements contained within these various policies in the design and subsequent assessment of the VSU scheme.

Westminster City Council Supplementary Planning Guidance

In the development of the VSU scheme regard has been had to relevant supplementary planning guidance produced by the Westminster City Council, including: *Inclusive Design and Access* (2007); *Design Matters in Westminster* (2004); *Designing out Crime* (2004); *Sustainable Buildings* (2003); *the protection of Historic Buildings in Westminster* (2000); and *Central Activities Zone* (2001).

Victoria Area Planning Brief

The Victoria Area Planning Brief (“VAPB”) was adopted in April 2006 and covers an area located around the National Rail Station and includes the VSU scheme site. The VSU scheme has been developed having regard to the principles for major development set out in chapter 3 of the brief. The scheme:

- has given the highest priority to pedestrian movement around sites and within the transport interchange;
- has taken account of, and addressed as far as possible the transport requirements at Victoria;
- has limited the harm to residential amenity;
- has been designed to and is proposed to be built to the highest quality and seeks to ameliorate the negative impacts of construction activity;
- will assist in supporting and developing the strategic and long term objectives for Victoria.

Chapter 7 of the brief sets out the existing and required provision for all transport modes at the Victoria Interchange. It recognises that Victoria is one of the busiest interchanges in London and is under stress, particularly for four main reasons, including that the LUL station is regularly closed for short periods during the morning peak due to excessive demand (paragraph 7.7).

In respect of the Underground paragraph 7.23 sets out the existing provision and paragraph 7.24 the required provision, which concentrates on the VSU congestion relief scheme. Paragraph 7.24 of the VAPB makes clear that, *“The City Council fully supports the Victoria Station Upgrade and will work with TfL and the GLA to facilitate the consents process and development of the project”* before adding that *“When proposals for any other development that could materially affect the VSU project proposals are being considered the potential impact on the delivery of VSU will be considered”*. The brief also identifies that by improving access and increasing capacity at Victoria, the VSU scheme will optimise delivery of the benefits of VLU.

In respect of required provision for pedestrians and the public realm the brief (at paragraph 7.16) makes clear that a proportion of pedestrian trips between the Underground and the north east will be redistributed via the new LUL access at Bressenden Place that forms part of the VSU scheme. Other relevant aspects of the brief have been taken account of in the design and assessment of the scheme.

TfL Policy

Transport2025 – Transport Vision for a Growing World City

The VSU scheme will assist in the achievement of the vision of T2025 to create a world class transport system which delivers the safe, reliable and efficient movement of people and goods that enhances London’s economy, environment and social

inclusion, and has had regard to the three objectives developed to achieve this vision. Those objectives being: supporting economic development; tackling climate change and enhancing the environment; and improving social inclusion.

T2025 concludes by summarising identified key priorities which include completing the full PPP to rebuild the underground system and increase its capacity. In respect of the full PPP section 6.6.1 of the document indicates that in addition to the work committed under the PPP contracts directly, other improvements to ensure the full benefits of the PPP can be realised need to be funded and delivered. Such improvements are identified as including station capacity enhancements at key interchanges in central London to capture the full potential of the additional capacity provided by the investment in train services. As explained elsewhere in the statement, the full benefits of the broader Victoria Line Upgrade proposals will not be realised without the VSU scheme.