

A Design Strategy for Chinatown



The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment would like to thank all of the local stakeholders who attended the workshop for their time and expertise, which is crucial to the development of the proposals contained in this document. We would also like to thank the following consultants who provided technical support to the Foundation during the workshop: Space Syntax, WSP and The Feng Shui Agency.



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The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment is an educational charity which exists to improve the quality of people's lives by teaching and practising timeless and ecological ways of planning, designing and building.

We believe that if we can understand and apply time-tested principles, building once more in a sustainable way, we will reap improvements in public health, in livelier and safer streets and in a more affordable lifestyle for families and individuals. The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment believes that building in a sustainable way will reap benefits for communities and result in neighbourhoods that accrue higher value over time.

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Introduction

On the 1st November 2007, TRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall visited Chinatown in London with a small, distinguished delegation from mainland China. Later that evening at the Pearl Awards, held at the Royal Festival Hall, HRH The Prince of Wales gave a speech in which he announced that his Foundation for the Built Environment had kindly been invited by Westminster Council to build on existing work and assist in the improvement of Chinatown;

'My Foundation for the Built Environment is, for example, pursuing a project to help restore the traditional Hutongs in Beijing to ensure that these wonderful examples of traditional Chinese architecture are indeed kept for future generations.

Earlier today in Gerrard Street I saw the beautifully crafted stone pots, which have just been shipped from China by the London Chinatown Chinese Association and David Tang, and thought how uplifting it was to see traditional Chinese craftsmanship that provides a real enhancement in the heart of Chinatown.

My Foundation will work with Westminster City Council and the London Chinatown Chinese Association to find ways to build on this and other recent improvements to Chinatown by encouraging the use of traditional Chinese architectural practices and by drawing on the expertise and skill of craftsmen in China and the United Kingdom to help Chinatown to become more authentically Chinese.'

HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES, NOVEMBER 2007

A two-day 'Enquiry by Design' workshop, involving key stakeholders from the local area and community, was organised by The Foundation in close coordination with Westminster City Council and hosted at The Prince of Wales Theatre (Piccadilly Circus) on the 15th and 16th May 2008. The purpose of the workshop was to learn what was already happening in the area, what is planned for the future and to explore opportunities for building on the positive elements to enhance Chinatown's social, economic and environmental performance.

The aspiration that emerged was quite simple; for London's Chinatown to be 'the best Chinatown in the world' and to recognise Asian culture and diversity.

The contents of this document explain how that might be achieved and, with the recent adoption of the Supplementary Planning Guidance, how these aspirational strategies may be implemented.

www.westminster.gov.uk/chinatown





Historical Context

London's Chinatown is today situated on an area once known as St. Martin's Field. A map of 1585 illustrating the area reveals that there were no houses or buildings of any sort in the locality. In 1615, the newly created "Military Company" acquired the region using it as a training ground, building a perimeter wall and later a huge gymnasium. In 1666, the Great Fire of London ravaged the city and destroyed some 13,000 homes. After the fire, attention was focused on St. Martin's Field as a development site, which led to the construction of Gerrard Street and Newport Market (now Newport Court). These, and other neighbouring streets of Soho, would many years later house a thriving London Chinatown.

Gerrard Street was first laid out and developed in the 1670s and 1680s. Most of the original houses were rebuilt during the first half of the eighteenth century, with terraces of flat-fronted Georgian housing. The western half of Lisle Street followed a similar pattern whilst the eastern half was developed in the 1790s on the site of the garden of the former Leicester House. By the mid-18th century the area had been built up and the street layout was very much as it is now.

By 1950 there were approximately 2,000 Chinese in Britain and, with the return of British soldiers from the Far East, the market grew for the Chinese cuisine they had encountered whilst away. At the time there were only two or three Chinese restaurants in the West End and many from China saw the opportunity to move into the area and capitalise on this emerging market.

Lured by the cheap rents and short leases in and around Gerrard Street (partly due to the seedy reputation of Soho), other Chinese trades began to prosper. As the families of the Chinese workers moved to Britain the

community in the area grew larger and the presence of this new enclave around Gerrard Street was noticed.

As the population of Chinatown grew, so too did the need for greater co-operation to facilitate the needs and wants of the community. On 2nd August 1978, the London Chinese Chinatown Association (LCCA) was born. It forged stronger links with Westminster City Council, the Police and the community outside Soho. Originally, the LCCA served both the business and the community of the Chinese living and working within Chinatown. However, the following year the LCCA established the Chinese Community Centre, to deal with community issues and provide translation and interpreter services.

In the 1960s and 70s many Chinese realised the uniqueness of London's Chinatown and gave the area the nickname "The Imperial City". This name alluded to the fact that unlike Chinatowns in other parts of the world, London's Chinatown was in a central location in the heart of a capital city.

From the mid-eighties, in recognition of the area's significance, Westminster City Council began a series of initiatives to improve the area. In 1984, collaboration between the then Greater London Council, Westminster City Council, and the local Chinese community resulted in the restoration of Lisle Street's 18th century shop fronts. In 1985, the first organised Chinese New Year took place and, by the end of the 80s, Gerrard Street, parts of Newport Place and Macclesfield Street were pedestrianised. Chinese gates, street furniture and a Chinese pagoda were erected. The Pagoda, the gates and the stone lions in Gerrard Street became known as the "Three Sights of Chinatown". By 2002, the

Chinese New Year celebrations had grown so large they expanded to include Leicester Square and Trafalgar Square.

Today, the unique character of the area is largely derived from its residents, uses and its role as a focal point for London's Chinese community. Almost all the buildings in the area have oriental restaurants or retail businesses at ground-floor level, with retail, restaurant, office and residential uses on the upper floors. A combination of these is often found in one building. These uses have brought a distinctive overlay of ornament, bright colour and Chinese characters to the historic streetscape, which gives this area its own 'unique identity'. In recognition of this, the locality was designated as a conservation area in its own right in 2005 (it was a part of the Soho Conservation Area prior to this). This uniqueness has meant Chinatown has been transformed into a major tourist attraction as well as a cultural centre for the Chinese community in London. The proposed new Chinese gate in Wardour Street, at the corner of Lisle Street, will further promote the unique character and function of Chinatown and form a new gateway to the area.

*Opposite:
Plan, 1682
Historic photographs
of the Chinatown area*



Spatial Analysis

From Global to Local

For this analysis we used a combination of spatial-integration modelling, provided by the consultants Space Syntax, existing data on transport (i.e. footfall data), and observations of pedestrian flow at different times of day.

Global Movement

Chinatown is made up of a few streets running mainly east-west and is nestled in the busy centre of London between Soho (north), Leicester Square/Trafalgar Square (south), Regent Street/Piccadilly Circus (west) and Covent Garden (east). These areas are well used at all times during the week and weekend by Londoners and tourists. Chinatown is surrounded by accessible and legible streets with a high level of users travelling on foot, by car and via public transport: Haymarket (west), Shaftesbury Avenue (north), Charing Cross Road (East). On the south side, from west to east: Piccadilly Circus, Coventry Street, Swiss Court, Leicester Square and Cranbourn Street (pedestrian only). Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square tube stations are aligned on the south side. During 2007, Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square tube stations had an entry exit level of 38 million (an average of 200,000 a day). Between Charing Cross and Rupert Street, the distance is 300m (less than a 5-minute walk) and between Shaftesbury Avenue and the north of Leicester Square the distance is 150m.

Block Structure

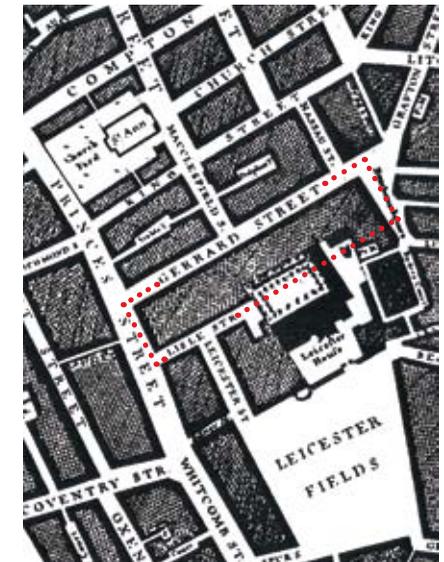
As can be seen in the 1716 plan of London, the north side of Leicester Square (at that time Leicester Fields) was occupied by Leicester House with its garden adjacent to Lisle Street.

This meant that the urban block between Lisle Street and Gerrard Street remained very long with no north-south access at all. What can also be seen is how Gerrard Street links into Grafton Street to the east, making an important connection up towards Oxford Street. This route was blocked by the intervention of Cambridge Circus and Charing Cross Road and, by the 1960s, hosted a surface-level car park.

In the 1980s, the Newport Sandringham Building was constructed, with a multi-storey car park and waste depot contained within it, which served both Chinatown and the West End.

This had the effect of isolating the heart of Chinatown, necessitating visitors to specifically aim for the area, rather than simply stumble across it, as they might were it to lie en route to other attractions. At one level, this gives the streets their important character of spatial containment and relative seclusion; on the other, it means that the area is less likely to attract passing trade. This is a serious strategic issue, as it means that Chinatown is currently not properly integrated into the overall movement network of Soho's finely grained sequence of streets. As a result, Chinatown is not performing to its full economic potential.

1716 Map of the North side of Leicester Square, then Leicester Fields





Chinatown, hidden by T-Junctions

The experience of wayfinding to Chinatown is described by users as a welcome surprise despite the proximity to highly accessible, legible and well-used streets surrounding it.

This is due to the particular spatial organisation of Chinatown in relation to its surroundings. The diagram on the left shows that most of the streets linking Chinatown to its wider context have a "T" configuration. From the north, the grid is offset and the same occurs from the south.

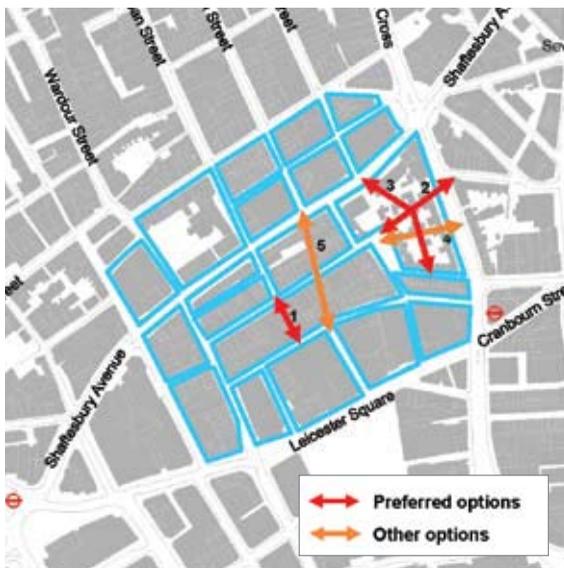
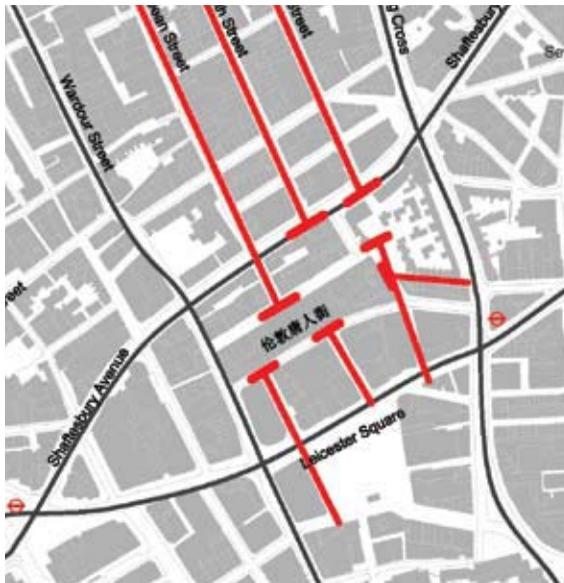
Besides the two main streets of Chinatown, Gerrard Street and Lisle Street, there are two tiny streets (Newport Court and Little Newport Street) linking to Charing Cross Road. They are a spatial mystery, directly linking with Covent Garden and Leicester Square tube Station. To the north, Dansey Place, and to the west, Rupert Court, have similar spatial characteristics.

Once in Chinatown, the spatial layout is quite simple. As it is not a big place, if a new restaurant is sought, one need just walk through the streets one by one in circles and loops, browsing.

The stakeholders agree that they would like Chinatown to be more visible and to encourage visitors to stay in Chinatown longer, browsing and sightseeing.

Top: Hidden T-junctions

Bottom: Preferred route options



Preferred routes

The preferred approach combines options 1, 2, and 3 (shown in map, below left) in delivering a range of spatial browsing capacities, adding better access and visibility when coming from the North West, whilst in keeping with the T-junction character of Chinatown. The preferred options are feasible, but need to be explored in greater detail. Full details of the options can be found in appendix 3.

Local Movement

Chinatown sits in a valuable central location in London, nestling between Covent Garden, Leicester Square, Soho and the shopping area of Oxford Street to the north. It is bounded by strategic links on three sides: Shaftesbury Avenue to the north, Leicester Square to the south and Charing Cross Road to the east. This allows for excellent access to the area by bus and underground, with overland rail stations nearby. These three streets are major thoroughfares for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles but, from many angles Chinatown itself is well hidden. However, this central area of historic London, like many other areas, benefits from an excellent network of connected streets, a great walking environment and several entrances to the Chinatown district.

The majority of people arriving on foot come from either the Piccadilly Circus end to the southwest or the Leicester Square/Covent Garden direction to the east. It was assumed that many of the people who come from the Soho direction would be local or work locally and would probably know their way to Chinatown. For visitors, however, the main routes from the east and west, as identified

above, need to have better facilities to allow such people to find and enjoy Chinatown. There are detailed ways in which these can be achieved, described later, but there are also wider initiatives that may help people locate and visit Chinatown, including better tourist maps and GPS information on phones.



A typical Beijing streetscene

Section 4

Solutions for improved accessibility

If London's Chinatown is to realise its potential as the world's best Chinatown, it needs to be better integrated into the surrounding movement network.

To achieve these aspirations two new strategic routes need to be seriously considered and access and information from the Underground need to be improved.

- ◆ *North–South route:*
The Soho/Leicester Square Link (A)
- ◆ *East–West route:* Newport Market (B)
- ◆ *New Underground access* (C)



A hutong in Beijing



The Soho/Leicester Square Link

Currently, the two thriving hubs of Leicester Square and Soho are cut off by the long block to the south of Gerrard Street. A visible link aligning with Macclesfield Street would enable pedestrians to easily move between three busy, distinct areas of intense activity. It would be premature to specify where and how this link might be achieved, but it is recommended that the owners of a number of buildings on the south side of Gerrard Street be approached to see whether this strategic link can be made.

Due to the nature of much of the listed Georgian fabric, the opportunities for redevelopment are limited. 32 Gerrard Street, on the south side, may be a viable opportunity for a link if the relevant development opportunity arose in the future. Should further floor space of the building become available, then the building form and location would lend themselves to becoming a cultural and entertainment 'anchor' for the local and global Chinese population and an ideal place to house a Chinese Culture Centre to promote Chinese culture and arts. Any link might provide additional frontage to run back into the building, potentially adding value and compensating for lost space resulting from any redevelopment.

WORKING GROUP: LCCA AND SHAFTESBURY PLC





An arcade may be a way to create a pedestrian link through an existing building which would be secured at night

Newport Market

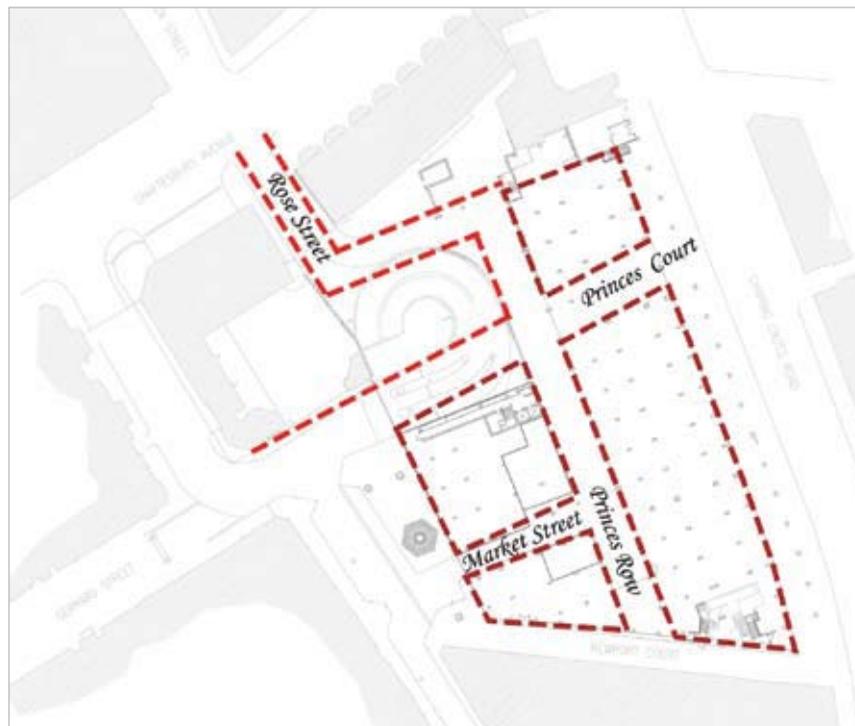
There would be considerable merit in creating an arcade through the Newport Sandringham building at ground-floor level to link Gerrard Street with Charing Cross Road (through Newport Place) to draw in people from the northeasterly/Oxford Street direction.

There is significant technical work which needs carrying out to establish if access to the multi-storey car park and refuse collection point could be relocated to Shaftesbury Avenue.

If this is possible, an arcade linking Newport Place with a new crossing point close to the junction of Charing Cross Road and Cambridge Circus (North East) could alleviate the feeling of division that is currently created by the building. This would help to attract people into Chinatown by creating an important new pedestrian entrance to the area and would potentially provide for additional retail frontages within the building complex. These frontages would break down the sheer mass of the block which is currently out of scale with its surrounding context.

By making reference to precedents contained within historical maps dating back to the early 17th century, it can be seen that some historic streets remain to the present day; for example, Newport Place, Newport Court and Little Newport Street.

*Top left: A typical market street in China
Top right: New plans overlaid on historical map
Right: Proposed new layout of Newport Sandringham*





Chinese artisans at work, Beijing

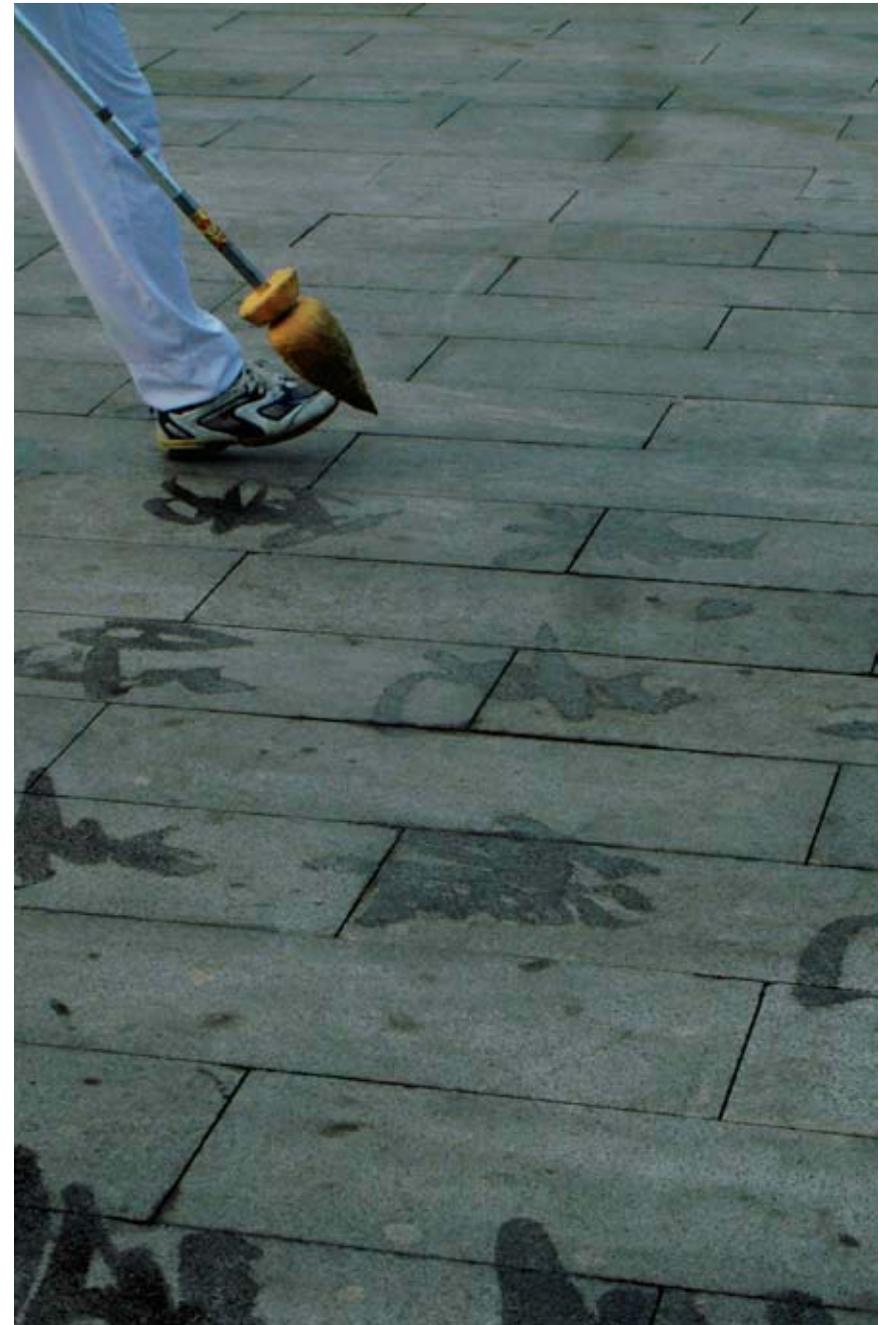
New Internal Circulation for the Newport Sandringham Building

The fragmentation of the ground floor of the Newport Sandringham building (historically known as Newport Market) has been explored, including proposals to restore the original street names, still within their historic locations, such as Rose Street, Prince's Court, Prince's Row and Market Street, as set out below:

- ♦ *East–West route: Prince's Court*
- ♦ *North–South route: Rose Street & Prince's Row.*
- ♦ *The site: Market Street and Newport Market.*

In order to bring a new cultural dimension to Chinatown, already thriving with restaurants and food, it is proposed that the theme for ground floor activities will focus on traditional Chinese crafts and workmanship. To allow this site to resonate with its historic market past, the activities will be arranged so visitors can observe the craftspeople in action and can learn how various items are created and decorated.

LEAD WORKING GROUP ORGANISATION:
LCCA & ROSEWHEEL PLC



A calligrapher at practise, Beijing



London Underground: The Chinatown Exit

As part of the workshop process, it was noted that there is a closed entrance to the Leicester Square underground station on the corner of Little Newport Street and Charing Cross Road. The site is currently used as a 'Eurochange' currency exchange business. It was suggested that reopening this access point as the main entrance to Chinatown would greatly enhance access to the area and improve the overly congested entrance to the south.

Even with an additional entrance and exit, due to the increased amount of visitors to Leicester Square tube station since this entrance was closed off, the entrance itself is likely to need to be enlarged to be viable.

Since the workshop, exit 2 has been signed in Chinese as the Chinatown exit but further visual clues are limited when you arrive above ground. For those coming from the eastern exit and Covent Garden, a pelican crossing across Charing Cross Road would lead directly to Chinatown. The bus-stop location might need to be reconfigured to improve the access in addition to the pelican crossing.

It was also suggested that, similar to the announcements at Green Park Station for Buckingham Palace, there should be tube announcements informing visitors that they need to alight at Leicester Square for Chinatown. Platform signage could be changed to read 'Leicester Square for Chinatown'.

LEAD WORKING GROUP ORGANISATION:
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL &
LONDON UNDERGROUND





This prominent corner shows no sign of being in Chinatown and has the potential to be an additional exit to ease congestion and create a visible marker that will help to identify Chinatown

Section 5

Solutions for improved visibility

The Nine Dragons

During the workshop, the idea of having a simple, popular and meaningful connection to Chinese cultural heritage was explored. It was thought important that this should appeal to all age groups, be easy to see and understand and should improve people's understanding of the origins of Chinese culture. For those with greater interest, this theme would act as a portal to the deep and complex world of ancient Chinese symbolism.

One of the simplest and most compelling suggestions put forward by a member of the local community was the concept of the nine Dragons. This has a special place in Chinese cultural heritage, as not only is the number nine considered auspicious, being the largest single number, but various legends state that the Dragon is composed of nine creatures, that there are nine species of Dragon and that the Dragon has nine sons.

Ancient Chinese dragons are the ultimate symbols of cosmic Chi (energy). They are said to be the most potent indicator of good fortune in the Chinese pantheon of symbols. As one of the four creatures of the world's directions, the Dragon represents new beginnings. The Dragon also has the power to release water to parched lands, which in turn stands for abundance and relief. Continued success, high achievement and prosperity are also listed among the Dragon's arsenal of good qualities, which rank it as one of the most popular and important of Asian signs.

It is proposed to hold a competition in collaboration with the LCCA, the London

Chinatown community and business representatives, to design a strategy for a dragon wall and then, if appropriate, dragons to adorn the nine main entrance points to Chinatown. This needs careful research to ensure that any strategy is correctly studied and implemented.

The Feng Shui advice sought during the workshop indicated that, for the different compass orientations, the Feng Shui dragons of the Later Heaven Sequence could be used as shown in the map below.

Although the southwest entrance was originally located on the corner of Rupert Street and Coventry Street, it was felt that it would be more useful to situate it on Whitcomb Street as that location would draw people directly into the heart of Chinatown.

In order to provide a starting point for the competition, the following dragon placements have been suggested. (See map below.)

The use of dragons as 'markers' increase the legibility of the entrance points and a nine-dragon wall may be appropriately located in Newport Place or Lisle Street.

LEAD WORKING GROUP ORGANISATION:
LCCA AND THE PRINCE'S FOUNDATION





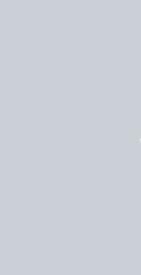
Yazi
North West Entrance

Yazi (Kin Dragon or Heaven Dragon, the NW is the Heaven Gate and the leader position. Gold and with 5 claws) Valiant and bellicose (warrior), his image is seen on sword and knife hilts.




Baxia
North Entrance

Baxia (Kam Dragon or Water Dragon – Dark Blue, journeys and travel) is a good swimmer, his image decorates many bridges and archways.



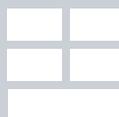

Jiaotu
North East Entrance

Jiaotu (Gan Dragon or Spiritual Dragon, multicoloured) is as tight-lipped (silent) as a mussel or snail. His image is carved on doors




Qiuniu
West Entrance

Qiuniu (Doey Dragon or Happy Metal Dragon, silver in colour) loves music and his figure is a common decoration on the bridge of stringed musical instruments.

Chiwen
Central Point

Chiwen (the Yellow Dragon – T'ai Chi (centre) position, colour yellow, representing balance and ability to take informed action) likes to gaze into the distance; his appearance is often carved on pinnacles



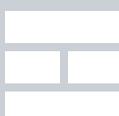

Haoxian
Eastern Entrance

Haoxian (Dzan Dragon or Thunder Dragon, dark green, represents new beginnings) a reckless and adventurous dragon whose image can be found decorating the eaves of palaces



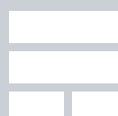

Bixi
South West Entrance

Bixi (Kwan Dragon or Mother Dragon – rich Earth colour like terracotta, represents the nurturer). Bixi looks like a turtle and is fond of carrying heavy loads.

Suanmi
Southern Entrance

Suanmi (Lei Dragon or Fire Dragon – red, representing future and vision) is fond of smoke and fire, his likeness can be seen on the legs of incense-burners.

Pulao
South East Entrance

Pulao (Soen Dragon or Wind Dragon representing signals and information. Light Green) is fond of roaring, his figure is carved on bells



Trigrams, the symbols that accompany the dragon's names, are not just abstract lines but signals of energy qualities – a solid line is the Yang principle, and a broken line is the Yin principle.

Three Yang lines are pure heaven (male) and three Yin lines are pure earth (female). Yang is outward and creative and Yin is inward and receptive. Each contains its opposite, and these forces are seen to be present in our environment.

Section 6

Solutions for improved streets, squares and alleys

At present, Chinatown is perceived by visitors to be primarily focused on one place, Gerrard Street, as it benefits from the three gates that define the intense and prominent activity of the street. In comparison, the surrounding streets and spaces in Chinatown feel small and of 'one character'.

The occurrence of mixed-use in a place is often seen as evolving organically and not as that which can easily be controlled. However, the most successful retail or mixed-use strategies are pro-active and hands-on in facilitating and promoting an interesting mix of activities that can be nurtured over time. Successful retail strategies for high streets and shopping centres are carefully thought out and are consistent in understanding the 'character' of activities taking place and the 'compatibility' of these activities that form clusters with, or around, one another.

Chinatown needs a similarly robust strategy to build 'depth' into the experience of the area and should initially focus on having three strong, parallel streets and one square. Each element should promote or enhance a distinct character, as well as a set of activities. Once this has been achieved, the adjacent streets and spaces should be tackled.

- ♦ *Gerrard Street: The 'preparation of food' will bring life to the interface between the inside and outside of the buildings in a number of ways. (1)*

- ♦ *Lisle Street: The 'adaptation of Chinese culture' will be expressed through the dialogue between street activities and the fine Georgian buildings. (2)*
- ♦ *Newport Place: 'Well-being' in its broadest sense will be represented in this square treating body, mind and soul. (3)*
- ♦ *Horse & Dolphin Yard/Dansey Place: A 'Chinese market' will serve both local and wider needs and the full array of produce for purchase will be visible. (4)*





Gerrard Street

Design brief

*'The way you cut your meat
reflects the way you live'*

Confucius

Gerrard street is the heart of Chinatown and already lively and successful. It is therefore a case of enhancing and consolidating existing activities rather than changing them. It is proposed this is done by;

- ◆ *Making a better interface between the street and buildings at ground-floor level*
- ◆ *Coordinating the colours of buildings to enhance the existing composition*
- ◆ *Reflecting the uses on the upper floors of buildings by the use of signage*

The street is roughly split into four quarters; northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest. It is proposed to trial the design strategy for Gerrard Street on the northeast and southeast quarters. Once complete, the

improvements should be reviewed and then either extended to the other quarters or refined.

Northeast quarter

- ◆ *All restaurants and shops to be encouraged to make minor improvements to improve the visibility of food preparation and/or consumption. This could involve;*
 - *opening up windows in the summer so that people walking under the canopies feel a part of the dining/preparation experience*
 - *placing tables and chairs outside in summer so that pedestrians can see diners*
 - *having stalls where food is prepared and sold outside*
 - *enhancing window activities/displays so that food preparation is visible*
- ◆ *Colour coordination starts by looking at the composition of buildings above ground-floor level. In this case, the grand*



Greek-revival building at No 9 Gerrard Street should be highlighted by making it the only white/cream building in the quarter. The other stucco buildings to either side should be emphasised in a series of soft pastel blue/greens to complement the brick buildings on either side of these buildings. Once the upper-floor palette is established, a careful strategy of complementary, but not necessarily similar, shop frontage colours should be chosen. (Note: Some colours from the SPG document palette are suitable for masonry and others for joinery. Therefore, preliminary work needs to be undertaken to define suitability).

- ◆ *A strategy for the erection of signage to the upper floors of the buildings will be developed that will highlight businesses on the first-floor of the properties. The strategy will assist businesses in the selection of appropriate signage and ensure a complementary approach is taken to other improvements proposed.*



Having stalls where food is prepared and sold outside is one of the measures being considered in order to increase the visibility of food preparation and dining in Gerrard Street



Southeast quarter

There is a cluster of restaurants that share railings. These should be used as the basis of a coordinated strategy for enhancing menu boards, planting and signage, to see if a more coherent display can celebrate the diversity of each place without sterilising the experience. As a first step, each restaurant should have vertical and sculptural planting on either side of the door to clearly signify the 'entrance'. The planting may be fixed or potted but should contain species which enjoy a northerly aspect. The optimum angle and size for sign boards should be determined and applied in a variety of designs/colours to create diversity. The railings should be compatible with the signage boards behind and the entrance doorcases should be celebrated by having the inner reveals as 'colour spectrum opposites' from the doorcase and signage.

Before the signage and railing colours are settled upon, the stucco building colours should be determined, as in the northeast quarter. In this case, harmonising with the brick colours is perhaps a better option than contrasting with it. Therefore, the aesthetic effect of the upper floors will be muted, allowing vibrancy to exist on the ground floor through the coordinated signage and railing strategy. Giving the stucco on the upper floors a muted effect will also allow the first-floor business signage to appear more prominent.

Centre

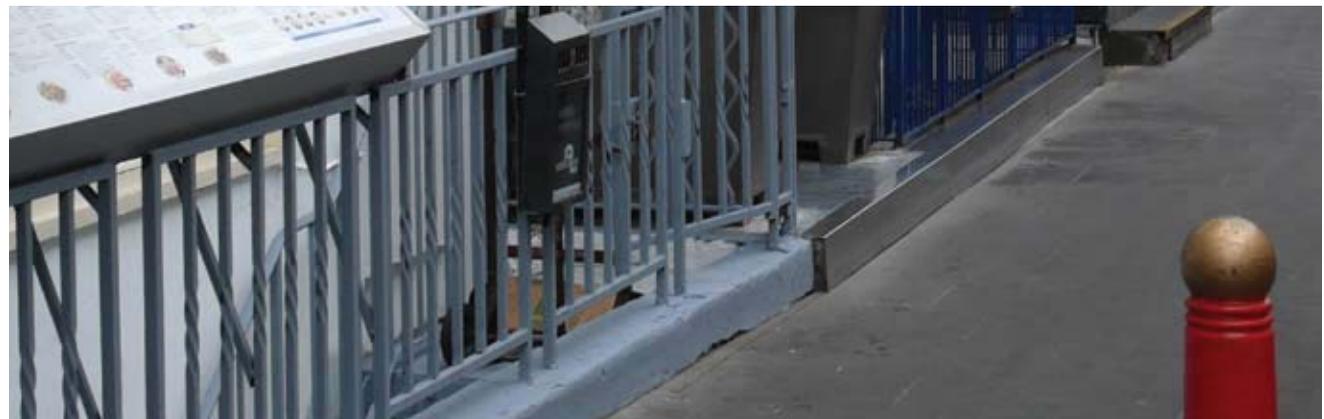
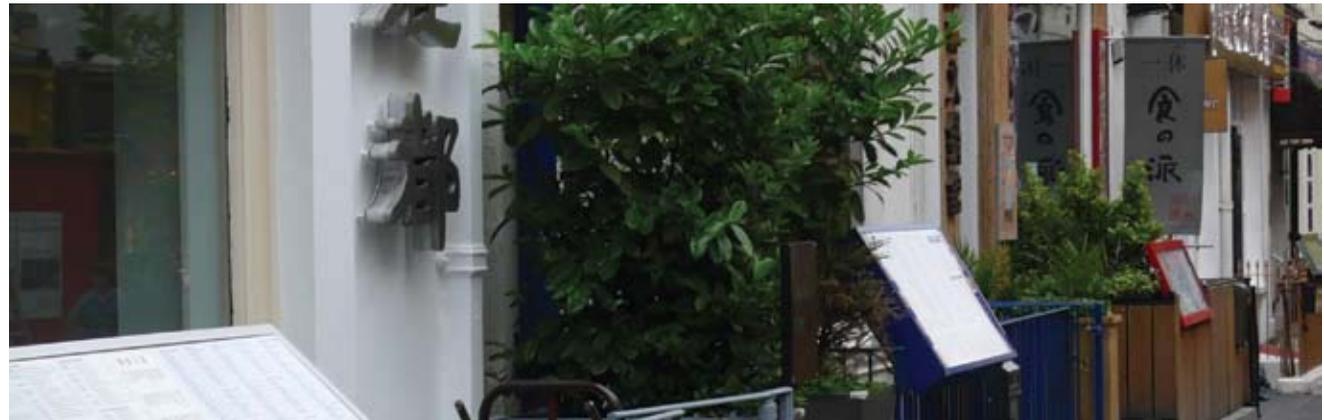
(Suggestions arising from Feng Shui analysis)
The lions are currently aligned in a direction which is seen to have a weak Zero Fate Kua, with no power. To improve this, the lions could be moved back slightly and re-angled by a few degrees, if the public highway considerations allow. The creation of a small "Heaven's Pool" of circulating water and a little green planting in front of the lions in the centre of Gerrard Street was advised. As this would represent the T'ai Chi centre of Chinatown, it was decided that this would be better located in Newport Place due to maintenance and pedestrian flow considerations.

Street Furniture

The broad use of red in the existing street furniture is seen to create an excessive fire element, which is draining the wood energy. This could be mitigated by painting the bins and bollards black, leaving only the lights and gates red.

The existing gates should also be refurbished, lit and maintained, as these, along with the pagoda and lions, form the three existing symbols of Chinatown.





The entrance planting, menu boards and railings should all be different but co-ordinated as a test for ground-floor improvements

Lisle Street

‘The young should be dutiful at home, modest abroad, careful and true, overflowing in kindness for all, but in brotherhood with love. And if they have strength to spare they should spend it on the arts.’

Confucius

Lighting

Lisle Street has a range of particularly fine Georgian buildings to the north side and is dominated by the backs of cinemas to the south, which not only deadens the street but creates an uncomfortable scale. To make the scale more human and the street

feel less cavernous, it is proposed to hang large, golden/yellow Chinese lanterns from the buildings to the south side of the street at a height of about 5–7m. These lanterns could also incorporate the requirements for street lighting and project symbols onto the pavement at night. The lanterns should nudge into view at the edges of the three streets connecting Lisle Street to Leicester square without obscuring the buildings which form the focus of the view.

The Georgian buildings on the north side of the street should have subtle “up-lighting” from the first floor upwards. The symmetrical façades of the gabled building facing Leicester Street and the pedimented building facing Leicester Place will be lit more

elaborately, so as to be seen more clearly at night from Leicester Square.

LEAD WORKING GROUP ORGANISATION:
THE PRINCE’S FOUNDATION FOR THE BUILT
ENVIRONMENT & WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL



Street trading/market

Whilst the blank walls of the cinemas to Lisle Street are unpleasant, they do offer themselves as a possible backdrop for a range of activities, provided that escape routes are kept clear. Street activities need careful planning with a robust management strategy. Rather than predict what form this might take, it is better to test a series of one-off street markets to test which approach will be the most successful. These activities could include street trading by existing businesses on Lisle Street or by themed businesses, such as: Chinese tourist gifts/artefacts; Asian art & crafts; literature; clothes; music; and youth culture.

There is also an option to further explore opportunities based on the existing businesses located at the backs of the theatres and the companies housed in the large buildings backing onto Lisle Street. This process may lead to freeing up space at the back of the building so that permanent kiosks/hatches can be inserted into these blank brick walls, adding a permanent selling place. Tiled canopies may be appropriate at first-floor level to extend the trading space.

LEAD WORKING GROUP ORGANISATION:
THE PRINCE'S FOUNDATION FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT & WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL



Newport Place

Design brief



Newport Place is currently blighted by the uniform character of the gigantic Newport Sandringham building, the van parking, car park entrance and refuse depot access, all of which need to be fundamentally addressed if Newport Place is to have any chance of becoming a world-class space. Rather than maintaining the existing qualities of the location, it is felt that this space needs healing. From this, the idea of Newport Place becoming somewhere to promote 'well-being' emerged.

Full feasibility studies into these strategies will be carried out by Westminster City Council.

Access and servicing

The multi-storey car park entrance and refuse depot access need to be reconfigured and accessed from Shaftesbury Avenue. This appears to be technically feasible, but requires testing and negotiation with Transport for London as well as Westminster City Council. The square is used by vans for the distribution of goods, so a servicing strategy including the provision of a number

The parking of vans could be better managed to allow for convenient parking places before noon.



Left:

The north side of Newport Place needs screening or redeveloping, as it currently does not enclose the square properly

Following Page:

Newport Place does not currently feel like a coherent square as there are too many conflicting elements. It is to be transformed using Feng Shui to create a 'heart of well-being' in the centre of London

of short-term parking spaces needs to be developed. It is suggested that, as with Gerrard Street, vans are allowed from morning until noon, incorporating the improved parking and servicing strategy, followed by full pedestrianisation until late in the evening, when restricted vehicular movement is advantageous to improved safety.

The existing car park is important for the safety of staff finishing after the tube closes and for businesses whose main operations are leisure activities, such as theatres, cinemas and restaurants. Although there is no proposal to remove the car park, if the entrance were relocated, pedestrian access from the car park onto Newport Place should be maintained providing direct access into Chinatown and Leicester Square.

LEAD WORKING GROUP ORGANISATION:
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

Humanising the space: Newport Place

The intention is to transform Newport Place into the hub of Chinatown, creating a

popular cultural meeting place that presents itself as an oasis, where the principles of Feng Shui (literally meaning wind and water) can improve the health of this space. To improve the air, trees and moving water need to be introduced to enhance 'well being'. Chinese pagodas are typically found in palace gardens, hence Newport Place should be redesigned to reflect the theme of a palace garden. A landscape architect with specific expertise in Chinese palace gardens should be commissioned to undertake this exercise.

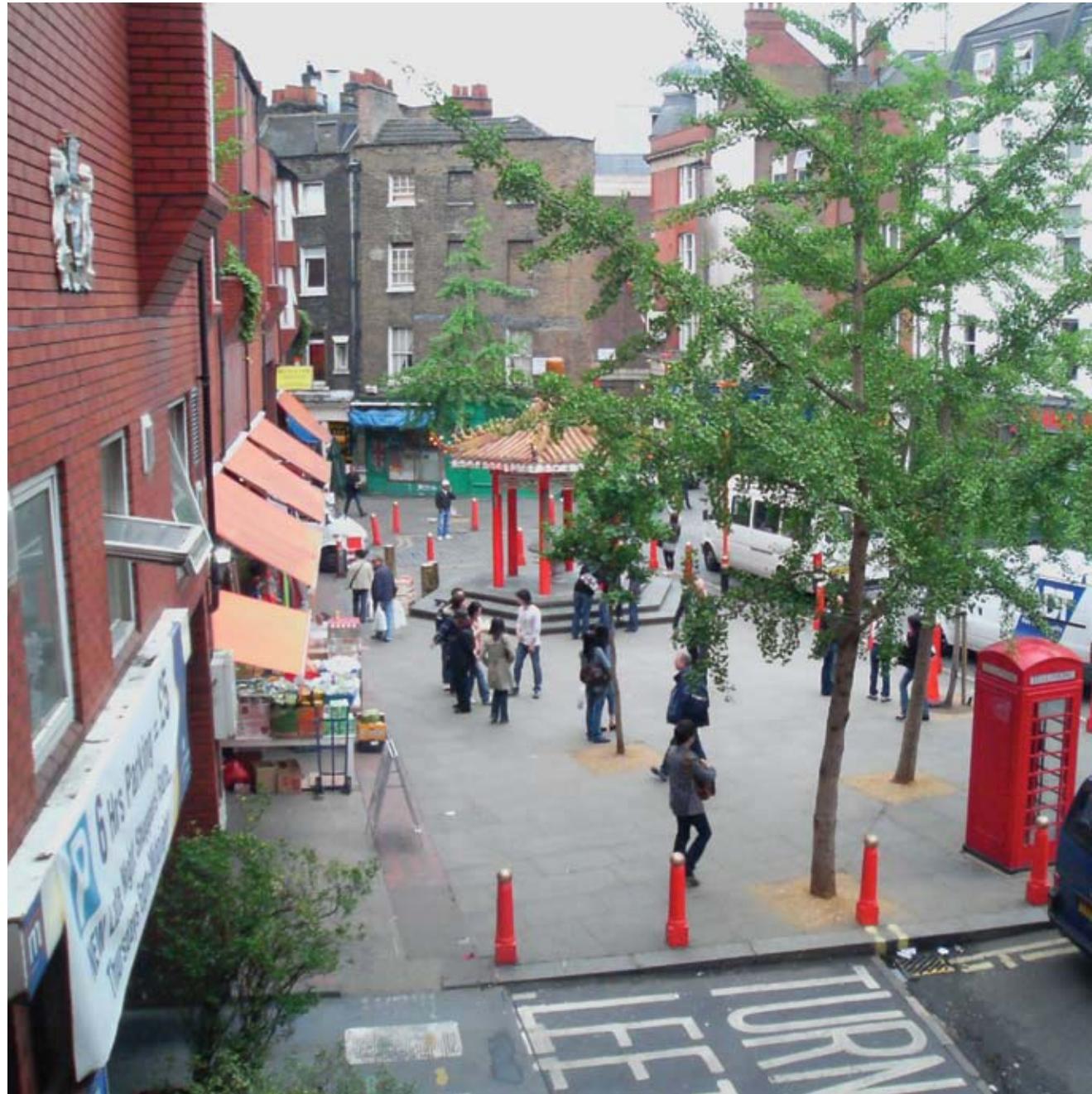
The proportions and human scale of the space also require redefinition. Therefore, a number of interventions are required.

Improvements to Fire Station Wall

This north elevation to Newport Place has the potential to become a mixed-use development site; however, this would require a detailed strategic plan, incorporating the fire station function. If such a scheme is not viable, then this wall could be significantly improved by the creation of a vertical garden, dragon wall, or traditional Chinese screen.

*‘If there is light in
the soul there will be
beauty in the person
If there is beauty in the
person there will be
harmony in the house
If there is harmony in
the house there will be
order in the nation
If there is order in the
nation there will be
peace in the world.’*

Chinese proverb





Improvements to buildings enclosing Newport Place

Using the SPG colour palette, shops should have different coloured awnings, as well as shop-front signage boards which represent the diversity of activity, rather than the uniformity represented by the current single orange colour. It is suggested that the entire elevation to the east and the north elevation of Newport Court are rendered, in addition to splashes of individual colours on shop units, which would conceal the sterile brickwork currently dominating the street. This could be achieved on the north elevation by screening and rendering the fire station wall and, on the east elevation, by rendering and painting the upper parts of the Sandringham building.

Additional Measures

- ◆ *The removal of the majority of existing street furniture (including telephone kiosks, bollards, and free-standing lamp posts) to reduce the visual clutter of the space.*
- ◆ *Resurfacing of the entire area of Newport Place with stone to match that used along Gerrard and Lisle Street.*
- ◆ *Relocation of the existing Masterpark car park entrance from Newport Place to Shaftesbury Avenue and ensuring pedestrian links into Newport Place.*
- ◆ *Use of the pavement areas adjacent to restaurants for al fresco dining.*
- ◆ *A Feng Shui-led planting, water and lighting strategy.*

LEAD WORKING GROUP ORGANISATION:
LCCA & WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL



Pagoda

The aspiration is to either upgrade, recarve or rebuild the existing pagoda, relocating it to the axis of Newport Court and Little Newport Street. The new or refurbished pagoda should be commissioned through links with the Beijing business community and provide a showcase for traditional Chinese crafts to be displayed in Chinatown during the construction period. The new placement of the pagoda should be closely linked to the new landscape strategy

NB: Crafts workshops may be located in the Newport Sandringham building during the remodelling of the pagoda, as this ties in with the emerging new theme of authentic Chinese crafts.

LEAD WORKING GROUP ORGANISATION:
LCCA & WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

Newport Court

Newport Court, formerly known as Newport Alley, is an historic pedestrian route connecting Newport Place and Charing Cross Road .

Fronted on the south side with listed Georgian properties and to the north with the Newport Sandringham building, this narrow lane, still intact after 300 years of

use, is seen to be cluttered and detached from Chinatown with street furniture that blocks the sight line into Newport Place from Charing Cross Road.

This intimate space has the potential to reflect the style of traditional, Chinese hutongs along the north-facing elevation.

Drawing on The Foundation's work in Beijing on the restoration of hutongs, Rosewheel will welcome The Foundation's exploration of similar possibilities in the alley, as it will, as in former times, form the southern boundary of Newport Market.

LEAD WORKING GROUP ORGANISATION:
LCCA & ROSEWHEEL PLC



Newport Court could be remodelled to reflect the traditional hutongs in Beijing

Dansey Place and Horse & Dolphin Yard

Design brief

Work has already begun to turn Horse & Dolphin Yard from a service alley into a pleasant set of market stalls and small shops. There are also plans to create visible access and windows into the restaurants that back onto this space, enlivening it further. Dansey Place, whilst housing a few unique little shops, is blighted by exposed refuse storage and poor surface treatment and drainage. Dansey Place should be redeveloped in a similar manner to Horse & Dolphin Yard, once refuse and drainage problems have been resolved.

Refuse and drainage

Both Horse & Dolphin Yard and Dansey Place should have refuse storage which is concealed from the public realm. It is understood that underground storage is being explored, and if viable, this should be tied into an area-wide refuse and recycling plan.

Drainage should be extremely efficient (as in a fall to a central drainage channel typically found in mews streets) and road surfaces should be both robust and allow the quick run-off of water into drains for when market stalls are cleaned up/hosed down.

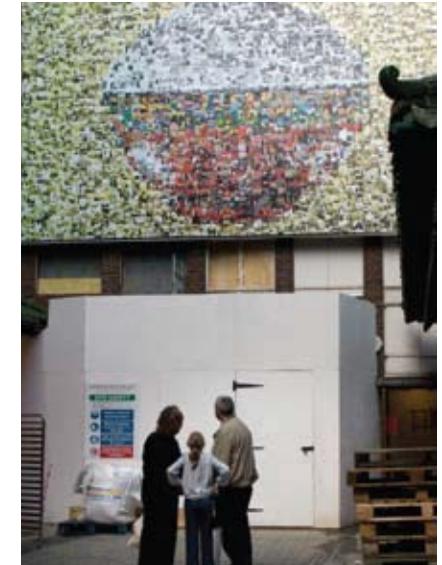
LEAD WORKING GROUP ORGANISATION:
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

Market stalls and restaurant frontage

Copying the success of Horse & Dolphin yard, other food stalls should be encouraged to take space with brightly coloured canopies. Any unoccupied space may be turned into small shops (i.e. extensions of stalls).

Restaurants backing onto these alley spaces should be encouraged to put in access doors and windows or, alternatively, to allow natural light into kitchens, preparation areas and restaurant spaces.

LEAD WORKING GROUP ORGANISATION:
SHAFTESBURY AND LCCA



‘Vegetables of one’s own raising are not relished — those from other’s gardens are best.’



Charing Cross Road

The Newport Sandringham Building, including the Vale Royal House above, looms along the western frontage of Charing Cross Road. The colonnade at ground-floor level, with its heavy brick-clad columns and set-back shop frontage, creates a dark and uninviting space. The colonnade is cloaked in shadow and poses a security issue with its inactive frontage on Charing Cross Road. It has, in effect, transformed this part of Charing Cross Road into an undefined, forbidding stretch of neither successful public realm nor dedicated retail space.

The ground-floor and mezzanine shop frontage to Charing Cross Road could be pulled forward (possibly to the building line or perhaps three or four metres back from the remodelled columns, which would be thinner and rounded). In addition to treatment to the Newport Court elevation, the existing colonnade and ground-floor elevation, should be remodelled in a manner that reflects the proposed changes to the façades in Newport Place.

The measures will enclose the existing colonnade in a general retail area known as Newport Market.

The towering brick façade of the Vale Royal House (above ground floor) on the Charing Cross Road elevation could undergo similar

rendering treatment to that proposed for the Newport Place façade, in line with Westminster City Council SPG recommended colours.

The whole block fronting Charing Cross Road is approximately 130m in length, bordered by Shaftesbury Avenue to the north and Newport Court and Little Newport Street to the south. The proposed east-west break-through would be established in front of 71–73 Charing Cross Road, which can also be identified as the 'Prince's Court' access.

As a part of the redevelopment, this entrance would be a suitable location for a set of gates which could be the subject of an international design competition.

In front of the gates, the road surface of Charing Cross Road will be materially changed for 35m in both directions (north and south) to accentuate the prominence of the gates and to create ease of pedestrian flow.





Implementation

The strategy has many strands and each initiative is to have a small working group and a lead organisation responsible for developing a business plan and implementation strategy. It is proposed that all the major stakeholders involved in the workshop will take the lead on at least one initiative, to indicate that the sum of collective action will total more than each of the parts.

The scheme development and implementation timetable is subject to available funding, and lead organisations will be responsible for developing a funding model to progress and deliver their proposed actions.

It is essential that lead organisations convene working groups to gauge the views of other stakeholders as the schemes progress.

Lead organisations will also be asked to consult with the wider local community on proposals. Therefore, it is necessary that each organisation assign a communications contact to liaise with others, agree the communications and media strategy and to ensure that all stakeholders are 'on message'.

It is likely that any work within the public realm will need to be undertaken by the Council's contractor, WestOne.



Section 8

Management

With consideration of the long-term vision for Chinatown, a care and maintenance strategy needs to be established for the planned improvements throughout Chinatown.

There will be a substantial capital cost to the planned and proposed improvements and once these have been paid and the improvements carried out, the entire district will require carefully planned maintenance.

There will also need to be a programme drawn up of planned improvements to the district (for example, a schedule for

repainting the buildings throughout Chinatown).

Each initiative will be funded from a variety of sources, and a management regime will be developed for each scheme. The dates shown in the table overleaf are indicative of the length of time it will take to implement some of these schemes.

The appendices contain more detailed information about a number of the proposals.



Project title Lead organisation / Secondary organisation						
Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Phase 6	Phase 7
Gerrard Street Design Brief The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment with London Chinatown Chinese Association, Shaftesbury Plc, Westminster City Council						
Oct–Dec 2008 including obtaining planning consent	Jan–Mar 2009 subject to evaluation/agreement	Mar–May 2009 (Southwest)	Jul–Sept 2009 (Northwest)			
Lisle Street Design Brief						
i) Lighting The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment & Westminster City Council						
Oct 2008 Draft and agree lighting brief	December 2008 Commission Brief (design competition)	Jan 2009 Evaluate and select design submissions	Jan–Mar 2009 Initial and detailed design/ engineering	Apr–June 2009 Implementation subject to funding		
ii) Market Stalls The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment & Westminster City Council						
Nov 2008 Commission Economic Analysis to assess proposal/viability	Feb 2009 Assess recommendations from analysis and agree way forward with all stakeholders	May–Oct 2009 Subject to consultation, implement a six month pilot	Jan 2010 Evaluate pilot and draft Cabinet Member Report recommending adoption/refusal			
Newport Place						
i) Access and servicing Westminster City Council & Rosewheel Plc/ The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment						
Sep–Dec 2008 Commission feasibility report to assess the possibility of relocating the entrances to Shaftesbury Avenue	Feb 2009 Recommendations presented to Cabinet Member for Built Environment and Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport and officers at TfL	Apr–Sept 2009 Subject to feasibility/ Cabinet/TfL agreement commence initial and detailed design stages	Dates TBC Subject to funding including loss of parking revenue to Westminster Council implementation			
ii) Humanising the space: Newport Place Westminster City Council & Rosewheel Plc / London Chinatown Chinese Association & Rosewheel Plc						
Nov 2008 Draft and agree design brief (two options) with stakeholders	Jan 2009 Facilitate landscape design competition	Mar 2009 Stakeholders select winning design options to develop	Apr 2009 (Six Weeks) Consultation on final concept design option (at this stage we will have a clear idea whether or not it is feasible to relocate the entrances to Shaftesbury Avenue)	June 2009 Report to Cabinet Member for Built Environment and Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport recommending/refusing adoption of concept design	Jul–Sept 2009 Initial and detailed design	Oct 2009 – Feb 2010 Implementation of scheme
iii) Pagoda London Chinatown Chinese Association & Rosewheel Plc / The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment, Westminster City Council & Rosewheel Plc						
iv) Newport Court The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment, Westminster City Council & Rosewheel Plc / London Chinatown Chinese Association & Rosewheel Plc						
Dansey Place and Horse & Dolphin Yard						
i) Refuse and Drainage The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment / Westminster City Council						
ii) Market Stalls and Restaurant Frontage Shaftesbury Plc / London Chinatown Chinese Association						
Project title Lead organisation / Secondary organisation						
Soho / Leicester Square link London Chinatown Chinese Association & Shaftesbury Plc						
Newport Market London Chinatown Chinese Association / Rosewheel Plc						
London Underground: The Chinatown Exit Westminster City Council & London Underground Ltd						
The Nine Dragons London Chinatown Chinese Association / The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment						
Charing Cross Road Rosewheel Plc / Westminster City Council						

Feng Shui

Appendix 1

Chinese Dragons

The Chinese associate the direction of the dragon with Feng Shui meaning e.g. the northeast dragon is the multicoloured spirit dragon because northeast is the Ghost Gate.

Trigrams

We can use the late heaven trigram sequence with a brief explanation of the qualities of the particular trigram. e.g. the northeast trigram is *Thunder, the Arousing, the Instigator*. We could also explore the idea of binary code (Yin & Yang) in the construction of the trigrams.

Feng shui maths

Kuas and Hexagrams

Another layer of Feng Shui meaning. The Kuas are a numerical representation of the elements and the time period we find ourselves in. The northeast Kua is 8/6, where 8 represents the current fate period (1996 to 2016) and 6 is the northeast star during this time.

Finding patterns

There are all sorts of fun patterns that can be revealed through games for children—such as the Kuas adding up to 10 in diagonal directions e.g. northwest is 8/8 and Southeast is 8/2—the stars add to 10.

The Magic Square is a classic pattern: adding to 15 in each direction. Further, each direction is associated with a family member—again, this is going to appeal to families.

Metropolitan Police Guidance

Appendix 2



Your reference: .
Our reference: .
Date: 19 June, 2008



Mr Ben BOLGAR

Metropolitan Police Service
Charing Cross Police Station
Agar Street,
London,
WC2N 4JP

The Princes Foundation
19-22 CHARLOTTE ROAD
LONDON EC2A 3SG

Tel: 020 -7240-1212
Direct line 020-7-321-7722
Fax 020-7-321-7700

Dear . Mr Bolgar

I recently attended the planning session for the Chinatown area; at your request the local crime prevention officer and I have highlighted the crime issues and crime generators within the area that would be of relevance to you within the planning brief.

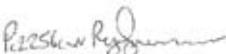
Specific areas within Chinatown that have anecdotal evidence, community intelligence and statistical evidence highlighting crime are:

- Gerrard Street: Recessed doorways, these are used specifically for the use of drugs and vagrancy into the late evening and early morning. Most businesses close around midnight resulting in reduced lighting to the street, as the area is made up of predominantly restaurants there is little pedestrian traffic after hours. The dim lighting, quite streets and deep recessed doorways makes the area attractive to drug dealers, as their activities are difficult to detect and the approach of police easy to spot.
- Horse and Dolphin Yard and Dansey Place: Drugs activity is attracted to these areas as a result of the lack of natural surveillance due to the narrow entrances. Once inside individuals can remain hidden from view and the single point of entry in Horse and Dolphin Yard makes it difficult for police to approach undetected. Dansey Place on the other hand is open either end and this provides more than one means of escape. The reduced lighting territoriality and lack of pedestrian traffic also make these areas attractive for criminals in relation to robberies and vice offences.
- Newport court: the lack of light, pedestrians and territoriality make this a haven for drug use and antisocial behaviour.
- Lisle street: recessed doorways, poor lighting, lack of through traffic during non business hours allows this area to be prevalent in vagrancy and anti social behaviour.

We would ask that any planning and construction should incorporate secured by design principles by 'adopting crime prevention measures in the design of developments to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime'

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be involved in the Chinatown project and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely


Pc2256CX Reg GREENACRE
Chinatown Unit



Space Syntax Report

Appendix 3

**Excerpts of the report shown for information only.
The full report can be obtained from PFBE on
0207 613 8500 or www.princes-foundation.org**

London Chinatown
伦敦唐人街
TPF



Spatial Analysis Report

June 2008

Space Syntax

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report summarises Space Syntax's involvement in the 'Enquiry by Design' of May 2008 that the Prince's Foundation organised along with Westminster City Council and the London Chinatown Association for exploring opportunities for Chinatown in London, in order to enhance its social, economic and environmental performance.

Location

Chinatown is located in the hyper centre of London. The area is made up of a few streets running mainly east west and nested in the hyper centre of London between Soho (north), Leicester Square / Trafalgar Square (south), Regent Street/Piccadilly Circus (west) and Covent Garden (east). These areas are very well used at all times during weekday and weekend by Londoners and tourists. Chinatown is surrounded by very accessible and legible streets with high level of use by pedestrians, car and public transport: Haymarket (west), Shaftesbury Avenue (north), Charing Cross Road (East). On the south side, from west to east: Piccadilly Circus, Coventry Street, Swiss Court, Leicester Square and Cranbourn Street. The last two are pedestrian streets only. Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square tube stations are aligned on the south side. In 2007 Piccadilly Circus tube station had an entry exit level of 38m and Leicester Square a 38m (an average of 200,000 a day). Between Charing Cross and Ruppert Street, the distance is 300m (less than 5 min walk) and between Shaftesbury Avenue and north of Leicester Square the distance is 150m.

Space Syntax Limited © 2008
Chinatown TPF

Hidden in the light – the Ts

The wayfinding experience to Chinatown is described by users as a welcome surprise despite the proximity to highly accessible, legible and well used streets that surround it.

This is due to the particular spatial organization of Chinatown in relationship to its surroundings. The diagram on page 4 shows that most of the streets that are linking Chinatown to its wider context have a T configuration. From the north the grid is offset and the same occurs from the south.

Besides the two main streets of Chinatown (Gerrard Street and Lisle Street), Newport Ct and Little Newport St. are two tiny streets linking to Charing Cross. They are a spatial mystery directly linking toward Covent Garden and Leicester Square tube Station. To the north Densy Place and to the west Rupert Court have similar spatial characters.

Once there, the spatial layout of Chinatown is quite simple. Also, it is not a big place. So, if one wants to try a new restaurant, one will just walk through the streets one by one in circles and loops, browsing.

The stakeholders agree that this spatial experience should be maintained and extended to enhance the browsing capacity.

Option generation

In the spatial option generation we chose to use the Ts (see page 4) as Chinatown's spatial type feature. In accordance we generated several link options to be tested (see page 6).

Link 1 - enhances browsing capacity from the north-west by extending Dean Street into Lisle Street

Links 2 and 4 - enhance access from the north-east by extending Gerrard Stret with an access to Charing Cross Road

Link 3 - enhances access from the north-east by linking Greek Street to Newport Street

Link 5 - as a counter example we also evaluated a link where Frith Street would cross through Chinatown to reach Leicester place, the east side of the square.

We analysed the spatial impact of each link independently and in combination, creating three options that look at the spatial accessibility and the browsing capacity (block size) and compare the baseline and the option impacts.

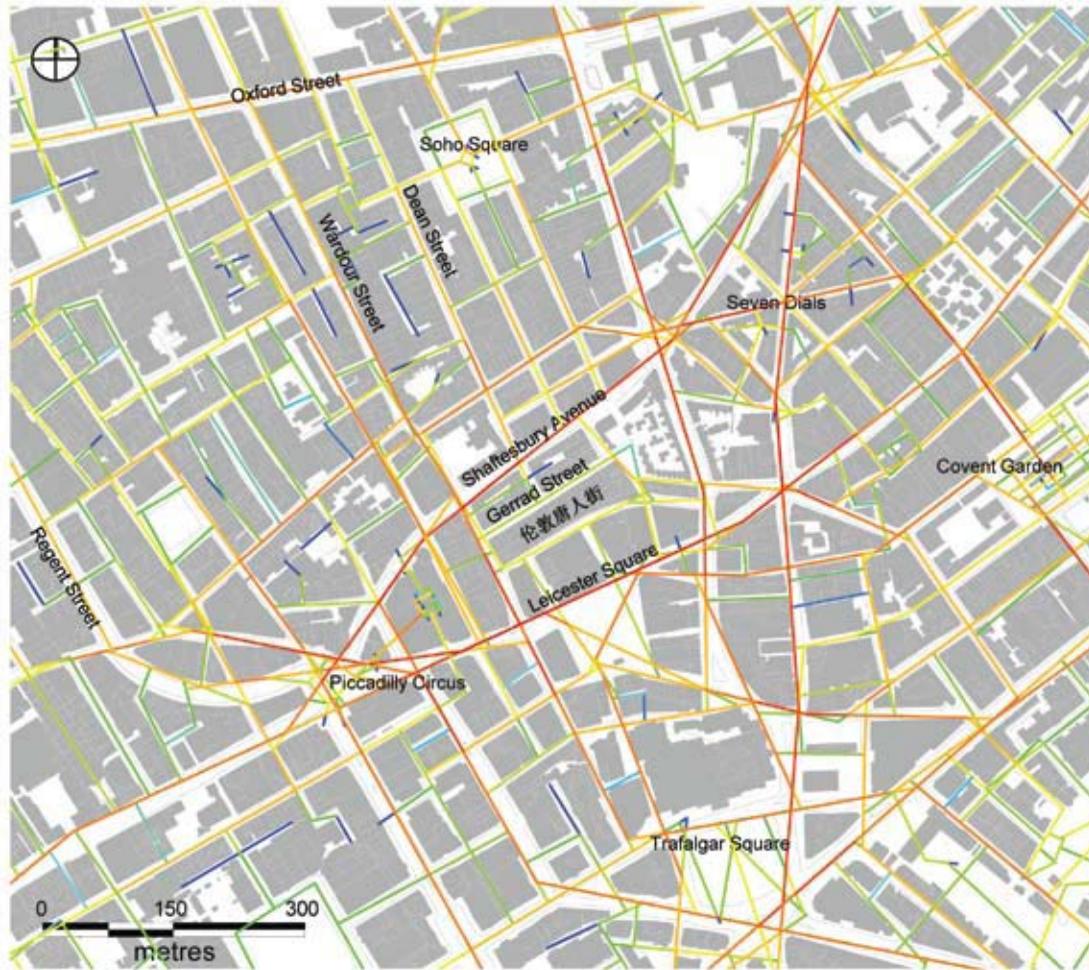
Evaluation and preferred options

Links 1,2,3 and 4
Each of the links 1,2,3 bring a benefit to the browsing experience of Chinatown. The combination of links 2 and 3 will allow for the discovery of Chinatown from both the north-west and further east, the Seven Dials and Neal Street areas. Link 4 leads nowhere further east and does not bring much benefit.

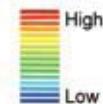
Link 5
We can clearly see how link 5 alters drastically the spatial character of Chinatown by introducing in its middle a north-south high thoroughfare. This configuration would imply very large alteration of the urban fabric even if it is the case of creating arcade like passage ways.

Preferred option
The preferred option combines links 1, 2, 3 in delivering a range of spatial browsing capacity, adding better access and visibility when coming from the north-west, while in keeping with the Ts character of Chinatown. The preferred option is feasible but still needs to be explored in greater detail.

Spatial accessibility Existing – Local



The image to the left presents the existing spatial accessibility model of Chinatown in its context. The street segments are coloured up from red to blue, representing spatial accessibility from high to low. The model is analysed for local pedestrian trips of 800 metre distance or 10 minute duration. The results show the potential for every street segment to be chosen as part of a 800 metre or 10 minute walk trip. The model highlights Shaftesbury Avenue and Leicester Square, Charing Cross and Wardour Street. Accessibility values within Chinatown are still relatively low compared to the values of its context. The resulting contrast between the accessibility of the outskirts and inner Chinatown is also apparent at the global scale (page 11) and reflects the spatial character that relates to the sense of discovering Chinatown by surprise. It is this spatial character that we aim to maintain and enhance through the different proposals. Links 1 to 4 (preferred option 2 and option 1) succeed in doing so while link 5 (option 3) fails to maintain this character and radically changes the relation between local and global accessibility (see appendix C)



Space Syntax Limited © 2008
Chinatown TPF

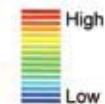
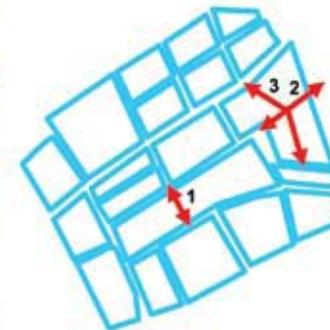
Spatial Analysis Report

Spatial accessibility Preferred option (option 2) – Local



Space Syntax Limited © 2008
Chinatown TPF

The image to the left presents the spatial accessibility model of the preferred option for Chinatown in its context. The street segments are coloured up from red to blue, representing spatial accessibility from high to low. The model is analysed for local pedestrian trips of 800 metre distance or 10 minute duration. The results show the potential for every street segment to be chosen as part of a 800 metre or 10 minute walk trip. The model highlights again Shaftesbury Avenue and Leicester Square, Charing Cross and Wardour Street. Accessibility values have improved to the north east of Chinatown while keeping the spatial character of the area.



Spatial Analysis Report

A Methodology Spatial accessibility analysis

Space Syntax and urban design

Urban analysis and urban design must simultaneously engage with two key factors: the activities – both social and economic – that take place in towns and cities and, second, the physical form of the urban environment itself or the situational variable. What matters most in urban practice is the relationship between urban activity and physical form. These two factors have both quantitative and qualitative components. Space Syntax methodology is unique in that it works to directly relate the effects of each factor on the other.

Space Syntax specialises in the analysis and design of urban environments and, in particular, the design of pedestrian linkages and public spaces. We make direct observations of pedestrian and vehicular activity patterns, identify the important factors that influence these patterns, and then use purpose-designed computer programs to incorporate these factors into models that forecast the effects.

Spatial accessibility analysis method

Both the urban grain and structure of a place contribute to its accessibility, which can be defined as the ability and degree of ease that people have when moving around in their environment.

Space Syntax analysis methods take into account standard route choice strategies and preferences of pedestrians and cyclists, and are able to robustly simulate pedestrian journeys.

These analytical techniques have been demonstrated to be an efficient way of assessing the accessibility of the urban structure and grain and, in doing so, indexing the ease of movement for most people in an area, most of the time. This index is often referred to as "spatial accessibility". An understanding of spatial accessibility can then be used to establish the hierarchy of routes within the public domain movement network.

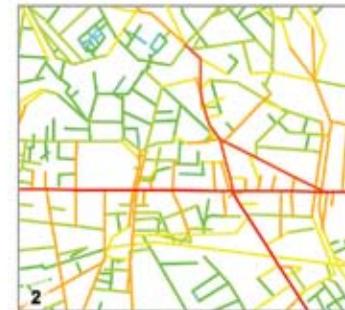
The spatial accessibility analysis of London Chinatown was done using the 'spatial accessibility map' as its base information.

The spatial accessibility map is constructed on the basis of an accurate scale map, by drawing the longest and fewest straight lines, or 'lines of sight', that pass through all the accessible space in an urban area. The resulting pattern of intersecting lines is then digitised and the inter-relationships between the lines are analysed using a bespoke software package.

Spatial accessibility values can then be calculated from the spatial accessibility map by first selecting a line, then calculating how many other lines must be used wholly or in part to reach every other line in the whole spatial accessibility map. When this calculation is made for each line in the map it turns out that some lines require fewer changes of direction than others in order to cover the rest of the spatial accessibility map.

The 'spatial accessibility value' assigned to each line reflects the complexity of routes from that line to all the others within the system. This complexity should influence movement in two ways. First, an accessible line is more easily accessible than a segregated one because it can be reached by simpler routes from other lines – thus it should receive a high degree of 'to' movement.

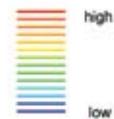
Second, a more accessible line should be more likely to be selected as part of a route between other pairs of lines: that is, it will attract more 'through' movement. It is the combination of their role in 'to' and 'through' movement that make spatial accessibility values a reasonable measure to consider in estimating movement potentials.



1. Example of an unprocessed spatial accessibility map

2. Example of a processed spatial accessibility map, after values are assigned to each line

Route hierarchy



Spatial Analysis Report

B Principles Influences on pedestrian behaviour

Influences on pedestrian movement

People construct mental maps of an area by using both perceptual information (what they can see, hear, etc.) and inferences about things they cannot directly perceive. These mental maps then inform route choice plans across an area. They also change in response to new information, and are thus part of a 'way-constructing' and 'way-finding' process.

Beyond mental maps, research has shown that the influences on pedestrian route choice preferences include income level, gender, age, perception of one's own strength and stamina, familiarity with an area, and the time and place of their journey's origin.

Pedestrians also tend to exhibit a number of spatially-related tendencies that affect route choice decisions. Most of the time most people will:

- use spaces that lie on the shortest path towards their seen or unseen destination
- select the longest direct leg earlier in a journey, when faced with alternatives
- minimise directional changes along a journey and avoiding back-tracking
- select spaces that offer natural surveillance/deterrence, such as those with active frontages and clear indications of use and ownership

- select routes which allow them to link into 'chain' destinations and so facilitate multi-purpose journeys

Proceeding from and 'multiplying' all these other factors, the presence or absence of other people along routes or in spaces will also affect an individual's route choice preferences.

Influences on public space use

Extensive research has found that there are six main influences on pedestrian stopping and public space use:

1 Proximity to high levels of pedestrian movement – good public spaces are located close to the routes with high levels of pedestrian movement

2 Good accessibility from the surrounding area – successful squares are located at strategic points in the pedestrian movement network (such as at the intersections of important pedestrian movement routes)

3 Movement routes pass through the body of the space – to achieve good levels of use; it is important that the routes bring movement from several directions through the heart of the space, and do not just 'skirt' around the edges

4 Multi-directional views into the surrounding urban area – people are more likely to use squares where they can see where they are going and feel safe. Similarly, people prefer to stay where they have good visibility from within a space into the surrounding areas

5 Proximity of 'live-uses' – land uses such as retail and catering attract activity over and above the effects of spatial layout, and contribute to the natural surveillance of the space by providing presence in the space

6 Adequate seating and street furniture – good seating, lighting and high-quality landscaping all encourage informal / stationary activity within public spaces.

Influences on visitors' spending in town centres

The mode of transport used to access town centres has an impact on the average spending of visitors, as suggested by research prepared for TfL Surface Transport in 2004.

Visitors' average spending per week by mode of transport

Walking	£91
Car	£64
Bus	£63
Tax/cycle/other	£56
Train/underground	£46

People who most contribute are those who walk. Their average spending per week exceeds that of people who use any other mode of transport. This group is followed by people who travel by car or bus.

This implies that the way people move, dwell or stop within the public realm influences their spending or contribution to the economic health and viability of town centres across London.

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Town Centre Survey 2003-4: Summary Report. July 2004 by Accent Marketing Research for TfL Surface Transport, London

For an overview see

Network and psychological effects in urban movement. Hillier B. & Shinichi I., 2005. Proceedings of the Fifth Space Syntax Symposium, Technological University of Delft, Vol. 1.

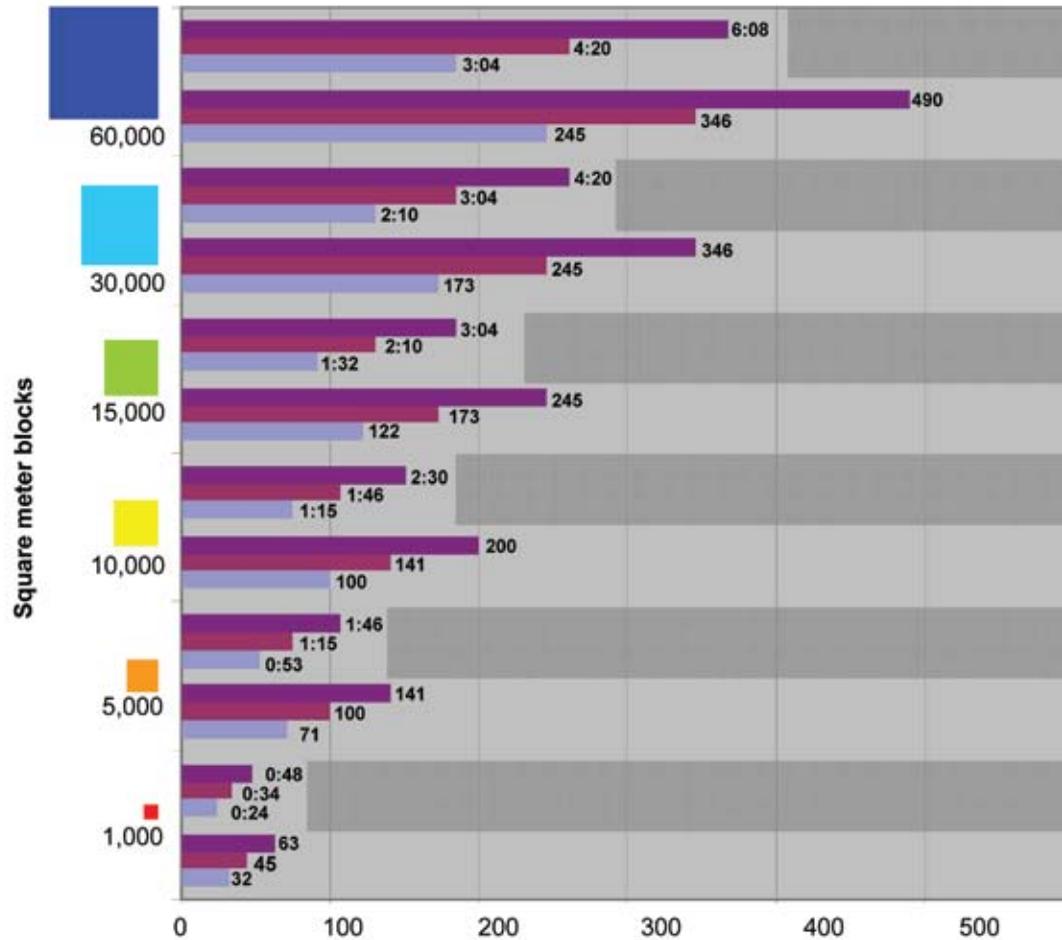
for a fuller discussion

The Cambridge handbook of Visuospatial Thinking. Edited by Priti Shah & Akira Miyake, 2005. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.

Wayfinding Behavior: Cognitive Mapping and Other Spatial Processes. Golledge, Reginald G., 1999. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

Space is the Machine. Hillier B., 1996. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

B Principles Urban Grain - Character, Block Size and Walking Time



Transport for London – Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) considers walking speed to be 4.8 km/h, or 80 m/min, or 1.33 m/sec. Cyclists are considered to be travelling, on average, twice the pedestrian speed.

The table on the left shows the relationship between block size and walking (distance) time.

As shown on the next pages, block size, shape and configuration interrelate to create a pattern of permeability, proximity and legibility.



- 32 m x 32 m = 1,000 m²
- 71 m x 71 m = 5,000 m²
- 100 m x 100 m = 10,000 m²
- 122 m x 122 m = 15,000 m²
- 173 m x 173 m = 30,000 m²
- 250 m x 250 m = 60,000 m²

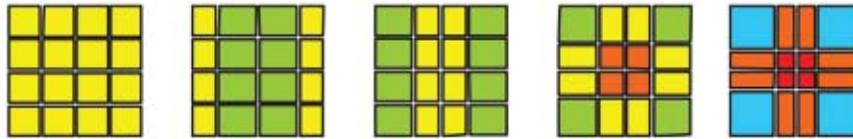
- Demi-perimeter
- Diagonal
- Side

- Metres
- Minutes

B Principles Urban Grain - Permeability, Size, Shape, Configuration & Proximity

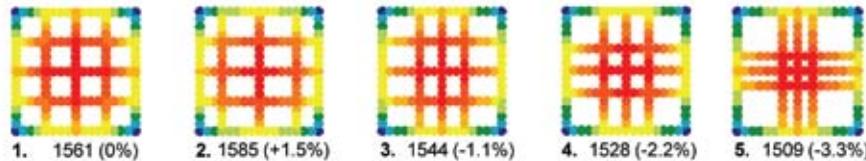
Case study A

from a regular layout to central intensification



The images to the left represent the impact block sizes and their permeability have on proximity and therefore on pedestrians' & cyclists' overall choice and proximity (distance/time), in urban areas.

Relationship between urban layout & travel performance (distance/time)

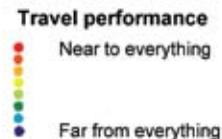
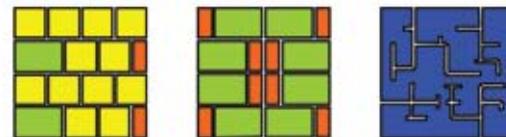


The set of diagrams "A" and "B" represent systems with identical area and road width. What changes is their geometry.

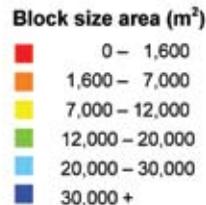
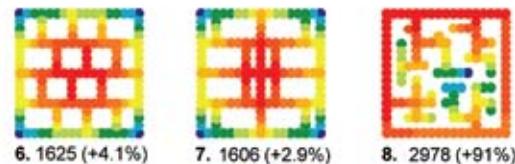
Case study A shows the effect of grid intensification on travel performance for regular grids. In relation to option 1, which is used as a base, option 5 shows the most noticeable improvement in proximity efficiency, through grid intensification towards the centre.

Case study B

From a connected & distributed grid to a disconnected grid



Urban layout travel performance



Case study B displays the effect that the complexity of the spatial layout has on performance of proximity. In comparison to figure 1, figure 8 increases dramatically, meaning that the pod configuration has a strong impact on proximity.

Accessibility has two major components impacting on peoples' path selection behaviour: proximity and legibility. In the next page we review the effects of urban grain permeability resulting from urban block size, shape and configuration on legibility.

D Urban grain Option 2 (preferred option)



Block Size (m2)

64,000 to 1,000,000	Dark Blue
32,000 to 64,000	Light Blue
16,000 to 32,000	Green
8,000 to 16,000	Yellow
2,000 to 8,000	Orange
0 to 2,000	Red

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Chinatown TPF

Spatial Analysis Report

Newport Market History

Appendix 4



History of Newport Market

Newport Market was an historic location, dating back to Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries in the mid-sixteenth century, when abbey lands were ceded to the crown. An abbey in Cheshire, ("Vale Royal"), contributed what was to become the site of Newport Market, which was to stand on the site of what we see today as the municipal waste depot.

The name Newport refers to the Newport family, the original landholders in the 17th Century. Newport House, along with Newport Market, was officially opened in 1685 by the Earl of Newport; the site traded continuously as a marketplace for 300 years.

It occupied several acres of land (see historic map, left) and was the main meat market of central London with over 1000 animals being slaughtered and sold daily according to contemporary London histories. It also housed a country market and grew to offer all forms of provisions.

As the market expanded, money was raised by various landowners, resulting in individual properties often having as many as twenty or thirty different interested parties.

By the late 19th century, the area had fallen into complete disrepair, as a result of the

confusion and lack of responsibility caused by this multiplicity of tenancies.

Various philanthropists embarked on a campaign of slum clearance and the end result was the opening of Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road.

On the site of the Market itself, it was felt important to provide housing accommodation for local artisans and workers in the area.

The then Prince of Wales, the future King Edward VII, was the eldest son of Queen Victoria and consequently the longest heir apparent in royal history.

The Prince was held in huge affection during his lifetime, chiefly for his ability to treat all those he met, low and high born, rich and poor, with the same charm, he also took a guiding interest in social housing; this interest culminated in the Housing of the Working Classes Act 1890.

Cajoling government supporters into action, The Prince encouraged bodies such as the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company Limited, which paid for and completed part of the redevelopment of the Newport market area with a building designed to house 2,000 persons displaced from the market area. It was in 1884, that The Prince and Princess of Wales unveiled The Sandringham building, so named after the beloved Norfolk country retreat which The Prince of Wales had recently acquired and from where he had diligently argued for the state to make provision for its lesser citizens, leading to an early example of council housing.

The Sandringham building, a new mild gothic tenement block on Charing Cross Road provided upper floors of, on average,

three bedroom dwellings and a ground-floor street frontage as a parade of retail shops, in echo of the historic Newport market.

The names Newport and Sandringham were combined and kept when the entire site was rebuilt in the 1970s and 1980s, with the present edifice fronting Charing Cross Road and stretching back to the historic Newport Place.

Workshop Study

This exploration into the area and the workshop studies of the existing Newport Sandringham building, identified that an arcade link through from Gerrard Street to Charing Cross Road would significantly enhance the area by drawing people from the north east; Cambridge Circus and Oxford Street.

Further analysis for a north-south link, connecting Greek Street to Newport Court, indicated that an increase in activity would affect the vitality of the area as a whole. This link would also permit the reinstatement of the historic Newport Market and old routes of Rose Street and Princes Row.

The east-west Arcade link-through would require technical research to establish whether the access to the multi-storey car park and refuse collection point can be relocated to Shaftesbury Avenue.

It is anticipated that a link-through will alleviate the feeling of division that is currently created by the building and help to further attract people into Chinatown by creating a new pedestrian entrance to the area. It would also provide the potential for additional retail frontages within the building complex and break down the sheer

mass of the block which is currently out of scale with the surrounding context.

With reference to an early 17th-century map (shown) it can be seen that some historic streets still exist; for example, Newport Place, Newport Court and Little Newport Street.

