

Views of St Paul's at night

10.58 The views of St Paul's at night are the result of a combination of illumination from surrounding buildings, the public realm and lighting of the Cathedral itself. In the close setting of the churchyard the illumination of the cathedral, in particular the peristyle and dome above is seen in strong contrast to the night or dark sky.



St Paul's at night from the Festival Gardens to the South-East. The dome and peristyle are seen contrasted against the sky, whilst the even light washing over the elevations below make the building appear calm and coherent in contrast to the scattered lighting of adjacent buildings (picture credit: copyright James Newton).

Experience of the setting from St Pauls: Stone Gallery

- 10.59 Part of the historic significance of St Paul's has been its role as a visitor attraction from the time of its completion. An important element of the experience was the ability to access the Stone Gallery and enjoy what were originally expansive views across London. The Gallery remains accessible today and provides extensive views across London, reaching as far as the wooded ridges that frame the London Basin.
- 10.60 The elevated viewpoint also enables direct visual connections to be made with other important heritage assets including the City Churches, The Monument and The Old Bailey. This enables an appreciation of the architectural influence of the Cathedral upon later buildings which amplifies their significance. The ability to see the dome of the Old Bailey from the dome of St Pauls is one example, but there are many others. The most significant historically are those between The Monument and the Cathedral, followed by those where the towers and spires of the Wren City Churches can be seen as a group. These include: St. Bride's, St Dunstan in the West and St Martin Ludgate to the west; St Mary-le-Bow, St Olave, and St Michael Cornhill to the east-north-east; and St Augustine, St Mary Aldermary, St James Garlickhythe and St Michael Paternoster to the east-south-east.



Views North and east from the Stone Gallery looking over Paternoster Square towards the wooded ridges of the northern heights. The Dome of the Old Bailey is prominent in the view which also includes the tower of Holy Sepulchre Church (picture credit: copyright Historic England)



Looking West: The west towers of the Cathedral with St Martin's Ludgate Hill with St Brides; but also, the tower of St Dunstan in the West; and the turrets and spires of the Royal Courts of Justice (picture credit: copyright Historic England).



Looking East-North-East: New Change and Cheapside with the towers and spires of Church of St Mary Le Bow; St Olave and St Michael Cornhill (picture credit: copyright Historic England).



Looking East-South-East: With the Tower of St Augustine; Tower of St Mary, Aldermary; Tower of St Michael Paternoster; Tower of St James Garlickhythe; The Monument; and the corner turrets of the White Tower (picture credit: copyright Historic England).

PART THREE:

Case Studies





Note for version v10:

The case studies will follow in the final version of the report. They will be selected to illustrate how the contribution of close, intermediate, and distant setting to the Cathedral's heritage significance, and to the ability to appreciate significance, can be assessed using the four step process recommended by Historic England in *Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2nd edition, 2017).

It is hoped that this will provide a useful toolkit for practitioners engaged in preparing and assessing development proposals within the setting of the Cathedral.

PART FOUR:

Appendices



Appendix 1: Distinction between setting and views

The distinction between setting and views is explained in two Historic England advice notes: *The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment; Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (2017)* and *Tall Buildings; Historic England Advice Note 4 (2022)*.

Setting is more comprehensive and can include contextual elements which deal with the relationship of an asset to its surroundings both in the present and in the past. This includes the way a heritage asset or place is experienced and perceived today. The contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset.

Views are a more defined element of setting, and not every heritage asset will have significant views associated with it. Nonetheless, views can make a vital contribution to appreciating the setting of heritage assets and constitute part of an asset's significance.

Views may be identified and protected by local planning policies and guidance for the part they play in shaping our appreciation and understanding of England's historic environment, whether designed to be seen as a unity or as the cumulative result of a long process of development. This does not mean that

additional views or other elements or attributes of setting do not merit consideration or do not make a significant contribution. The methodology in this report therefore includes reference to such designated views, but they are only used to illustrate a particular contribution made by an aspect of the setting. The identification of a positive contribution made by an aspect of setting does not rely on it being part of a designated view, either strategic or local.

Not all of the current views of St Paul's have been identified as part of the assessment of the contribution of setting both past and present and it is acknowledged that not all views make the same contribution to the significance of the asset, or indeed the ability to appreciate that significance. The views that are referenced in the report are generally those where the composition within the view was a fundamental aspect of the design or function of St Paul's; those with historical associations, including their viewing points; those with cultural associations and those where relationships between St Paul's and other heritage assets were intended to be seen from one another for aesthetic, functional, ceremonial or religious reasons.

Evolution of setting: the Historic England advice states:

Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, to accord with NPPF policies consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset. Negative change could include severing the last link between an asset and its original setting; positive change could include the restoration of a building's original designed landscape or the removal of structures impairing key views of it.

Appendix 2: Legislation and policy for the management of heritage assets

Legislation

The legal context for the management of listed buildings and conservation areas is contained within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended):

Section 66(1) provides that in ‘considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Secretary of State (or decision taker) shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.’

Section 72(1) provides that in ‘the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area . . . , special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.’

Case law concerning the duties in the Act is conveniently summarised in Appendix 1 to the Judgment of Holgate J in the *Save Stonehenge* case at paragraphs 4 to 9. The *Barnwell*

judgement makes clear that “*preserving*” means “*doing no harm*” and that decision makers should give “*considerable importance and weight*” to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and the setting of listed buildings, and the character and appearance of conservation areas. A finding of harm to the setting of a listed building, or to the character or appearance of a conservation area gives rise to a strong statutory presumption against planning permission being granted.

Policy

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (*December 2023*) There are three dimensions to sustainable development and the planning system has an economic role supporting growth; a social role supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities by creating high-quality built environment; and an environmental role by contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

A decision-maker should identify and assess the particular significance of the heritage assets that are affected by a proposal. They should take account of this assessment

³ R (Save Stonehenge World Heritage Site Ltd.) v. Secretary of State for Transport [2021] EWHC 2161 (Admin)

to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage assets' conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.

Appendix 3: Current policy framework for the management of views

Planning Authority	View type	Number and Location
Greater London Authority LVMF	Strategic Panorama	View 1 Alexandra Palace
	Strategic Panorama	View 2 Parliament Hill
	Strategic Panorama	View 3 Kenwood
	Strategic Panorama	View 4 Primrose Hill
	Strategic Panorama	View 5 Greenwich Park
	Strategic Panorama	View 6 Blackheath Point
	Strategic Linear	View 8 Westminster Pier
	Strategic Linear	View 9 King Henry VIII Mound
	Strategic River Prospects	View 10 Tower Bridge upstream
	Strategic River Prospects	View 11 London Bridge

Planning Authority	View type	Number and Location
	Strategic River Prospects	View 12 Southwark Bridge
	Strategic River Prospects	View 13 Millennium Bridge
	Strategic River Prospects	View 14 Blackfriars Bridge
	Strategic River Prospects	View 15 Waterloo Bridge
	Strategic River Prospects	View 16 Southbank
	Strategic River Prospects	View 17 Golden Jubilee Hungerford Bridges
LB Lambeth	Local Panorama	C (i) Brockwell Park N and NE
	Local Panorama	C (ii) NNE Norwood Park
	Local Panorama	C (iii) N Gipsy Hill

Planning Authority	View type	Number and Location
	Local Panorama	C (viii) N and E National Theatre terraces
	Landmark Silhouette	D (xviii) NE from Queens Walk
LB Southwark	Local Panorama	View 1 One Tree Hill
	Local Linear	View 2 Nunhead Cemetery
	Local Linear	View 3 Camberwell Road
	Local River Prospect	View 4 Kings Stairs Gardens
LB Greenwich	Local	View 1 Shooters Hill
	Local	View 5 Eltham Park North
	Local	View 9 Docklands Panorama
	Local	View 10 King John's Walk
LB Islington	Local	LV1 Farringdon Lane Clerkenwell Road
	Local	LV2 St John's Street
	Local	LV3 Angel
	Local	LV4 Archway Road

Planning Authority	View type	Number and Location
	Local	LV5 Archway Bridge
	Local	LV6 Amwell Street
	Local	LV7 Dartmouth Park Hill
Corporation of the City of London	The Monument Views Study December 2020	
Corporation of the City of London	St Paul's Heights Study Parts 1-7 published 2015	
Corporation of the City of London	Protected views SPD published 2012	

Greater London Authority: London View Management Framework (LVMF, 2012)

Relevant Panoramas

View 1 Alexandra Palace (2 viewing places). St Pauls is the Strategic Landmark in the view and with a protected vista Relationship to the wooded hills and flatter land to the east is referenced.

View 2 Parliament Hill the summit. (2 viewing places) St Pauls and Place of Westminster are the two SIL in the view. In relation to view 2a it states *St Paul's Cathedral is set within a miscellany of buildings, in both its foreground and background. The dome and peristyle are visible, but some development in the background diminishes the viewer's ability to recognise and appreciate the landmark, particularly in poor weather conditions.*

View 3 Kenwood The Viewing Gazebo – view 3A St Paul's and Palace of Westminster are the 2 SIL in the view. States: *St Paul's Cathedral, to the west of the City of London, is seen in front of a cluster of taller buildings at London Bridge, including Guy's Hospital tower and the Shard. The views of the Cathedral dome benefit from an absence of development in the foreground but development behind the dome compromises the viewer's ability to appreciate the landmark.*

View 4: Primrose Hill St Paul's is one of 2 SIL in view. (2 viewing places)

4A1 is the relevant protected vista The cluster of tall buildings in the City of London is partially obscured by towers at Euston. St Paul's Cathedral is framed by two of these towers but a third, lower tower, reduces the viewer's appreciation of the dome and drum.

Background p 134 St Paul's Cathedral and its Western Towers are recognisable in this view largely because it is seen clearly against the sky and it is not dominated by development in its backdrop.

View 5 Greenwich Park (2 viewing places) 5A2 with the relevant protected vista-

St Paul's Cathedral and Tower Bridge are visible in the panorama. Adjacent to Tower Bridge, and to its right in the view, is The Monument to the Great Fire. The background of St Paul's Cathedral in the view is mostly unimpeded, with a clear silhouette of the dome above the peristyle, and the western towers. The sight line to the Tower Bridge and St Paul's Cathedral is unimpeded in the foreground, ensuring the two elements are seen as a composition. The ability to see sky between the upper parts of the various elements is crucial to the viewer being able to recognise and appreciate St Paul's Cathedral in this panorama.

View 6 Blackheath Point 6A1 *The dome and western towers of the Cathedral are visible, the former silhouetted against the sky, enabling clear recognition and appreciation of the landmark. Few buildings are visible immediately behind the landmark, such that the rising line of hills to the north are the dominant backdrop feature. The western towers of St Paul's Cathedral are integral to the viewer's ability to recognise and appreciate the landmark. Therefore, the Landmark Viewing Corridor of the Protected Vista from Assessment Point 6A.1 incorporates these features.*

The Tower of St Paul's Deptford is available in the view in combination with St Paul's.

Relevant Linear Views

View 8 Westminster Pier to St Paul's viewing place 8A *The two buildings that frame St Paul's Cathedral allow an unimpeded view of the peristyle, upper drum and dome, silhouetted against the sky. This is a key attribute of this view. The most southerly of the western towers of the Cathedral partially obscures the peristyle, while the northern tower is largely hidden behind the Royal Festival Hall.*

View 9 King Henry VIII's Mound Richmond.

Relevant River Prospects

View 10 Tower Bridge Upstream – St Pauls and ToL are the two SIL. There are visual relationships with The Monument, Churches of St Dunstan in the East, St Margaret Pattens and the Church of All Hallows.

View 11 London Bridge (3 viewing points). Viewing point 11A upstream is the relevant one focussed on St Pauls- and with St Bride's church spire in setting.

View 12 Southwark Bridge (2 viewing places) the relevant viewing place is 12A1 upstream. The view is the result of the St Paul's Heights and effective control particularly in the foreground and middle ground *The St Paul's Heights Limitations have played an important role in the development of the townscape setting around St Paul's Cathedral during the 20th Century. While respecting the Limitations, new development should also improve this townscape environment where possible.*

View 13 Millennium Bridge and Thameside at Tate Modern (2 viewing places both relevant)

The foreground of the view is dominated by the bridge and its structure, with buildings in front of St Paul's forming the middle ground. The south transept can be clearly recognised and appreciated, beyond the steps leading to the Cathedral. On the north bank

the dominance of the Cathedral in the townscape can be attributed to the effects on development of the St Paul's Heights Limitations, which ensure that the cornice line of the cathedral remains visible. The backdrop of the Cathedral is compromised by taller buildings including the Barbican towers.

226 The St Paul's Heights Limitations have also led to an unrelenting horizontal emphasis to the buildings in the middle ground, although this is relieved by the spires and towers of the City's churches, which can also be seen in the view.

View 14 Blackfriars bridge - Blackfriars Thameslink Station-

View 15 Waterloo Bridge (4 viewing places 2 upstream and 2 downstream – but kinetic more appropriate) 15B 1 and 2 relevant viewing points. *The location provides important views east towards St Paul's Cathedral and the City of London. The river frontage buildings on the Westminster and Southwark sides of the Thames frame the middle ground views and the river dominates the foreground. The viewer's eye is drawn towards Temple Gardens, St Paul's Cathedral and the City's financial district. Both river banks are softened by trees in the foreground of the view. From the north end of the bridge, St Paul's Cathedral appears above the trees on the Embankment, with only the river and tethered boats also in the foreground. While the principal cluster*

of tall buildings in the City remains to the right of the Cathedral in views from Waterloo Bridge, recent developments close to the north-east edge of the City, have begun to create a second cluster on the left side of the Cathedral. Dome and towers seen against clear sky

View 16 South Bank (2 viewing places) Most relevant is 16B 1 and 2 looking upstream from Gabriel's wharf St Paul's is centre of the view with clear sky. *The three-dimensional form of St Paul's Cathedral can be fully appreciated in this view, with the main cornice and western towers both prominent. The dominance of St Paul's Cathedral and the visibility of its principal features are safeguarded by the St Paul's Heights Limitations, which prevent inappropriately high developments close to the Cathedral. Some existing tall buildings in the backdrop have started to damage the clarity of the Cathedral's overall form, and reduce the viewer's ability to appreciate it.*

View 17 Golden Jubilee/Hungerford footbridges. (4 viewing places 2 up and 2 downstream) More relevant ones are 17B 1 and 2 towards Westminster end of bridges. *St Paul's Cathedral and its western towers rise above the general townscape, although recent development reduces the quality of its setting in the view from the south-east side of the bridge. Either side of the Cathedral are the east and northern clusters of tall*

buildings in the City of London. The spire of St Brides and the dome of the Old Bailey are distinctive vertical elements seen against the sky.

Townscape Views

None

Local Plans

LB Lambeth 2020-35. Adopted 2021

10.125 Lambeth's topography plays an important role in dictating local views. The elevated land of the Norwood Ridge to the south of the borough and the relatively flat topography to the north means that most distant views are northerly; a number looking out across low-lying Southwark to the city beyond.

Policy Q25 A LVMF Views

The council will resist harm to the significance of strategic views (Panoramas, Linear Views, River Prospects and Townscape Views defined in the LVMF and listed in Annex 6) and secure improvements within them in accordance with London Plan policy HC4.

and

Policy Q25 B Views of local Interest including (C) Panoramas and (D) Landmark silhouettes

The council's views of local interest are set out in part's c and d below. In assessing proposals, the council will seek to protect their general composition and character from harm. Particular regard has been paid to the identification of views of the Westminster World Heritage Site. The following views are considered to be of local interest:

Q25 A views of relevance:

- See LVMF above

Q25 B views of relevance:

C Panoramas: The objective in identifying these views is to ensure that no foreground or middle- ground development is intrusive, unsightly or prominent in relation to the panoramic view as a whole, or landmark buildings within:

- C i. (c) views from Brockwell Park N and NE to the City- St Paul's identified as a landmark of note
- C ii. View NNE from Norwood Park (across LB Southwark) to the city- ability to appreciate the dome of St Paul's should be maintained
- C iii. View N from Gipsy Hill (across LB Southwark) to the city – St Paul's identified as an asset of high value and requirement is to maintain the ability to "fully appreciate" it
- C viii. View N and E from National Theatre terraces to the North Bank of the Thames including St Paul's Cathedral- St Paul's is identified as a landmark alongside St Clement's Danes. Value of the view comes in part from the background of clear sky that forms (sic) their silhouette

D Landmark Silhouettes: The objective in identifying these views is to ensure that no development obscures or is intrusive, unsightly, visually dominates or competes with, and no background development harms, the silhouette of the assets in:

- xviii. View NE from the Queen's Walk to St Paul's Cathedral between Waterloo Bridge and borough boundary with Southwark. The dome and towers are identified in the description and the building as described as having a "true landmark quality"

Details of the views are in a Draft SPD consultation closed (January 2021) check status