

DRAFT
WASHINGTON AS COMMEMORATION
Capital Cities Case Study Research Study

APPENDIX G LONDON, ENGLAND

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With a population of 7.5 million, London is the largest metropolitan area in the United Kingdom and one of the largest urban zones in the European Union. The ancient City of London occupies one square mile at the center of the city with the rest of the metropolis divided into 32 boroughs. The Greater London Authority, headed by the Mayor, is the strategic authority for citywide initiatives, while the administration of most public services is carried out by the boroughs.

This case study focuses primarily on the City of Westminster, the only borough with city status. It contains the bulk of Greater London's central area and has proactively developed policy guidance regarding new commemorative works. Relevant information about monuments in Westminster maintained under other authorities is included where possible.

Commemoration Planning in London and Westminster

Westminster is home to the most important royal and government buildings and famous parks in London, including:

- the Palace of Westminster (Houses of Parliament)
- Buckingham Palace (official London residence of the British monarch)
- Whitehall (government precinct where many government offices are located)
- the Royal Courts of Justice
- Trafalgar Square
- four Royal Parks: Hyde Park (350 acres), Kensington Gardens (275 acres), St. James Park (58 acres), Green Park (47 acres), and Regents Park (410 acres).

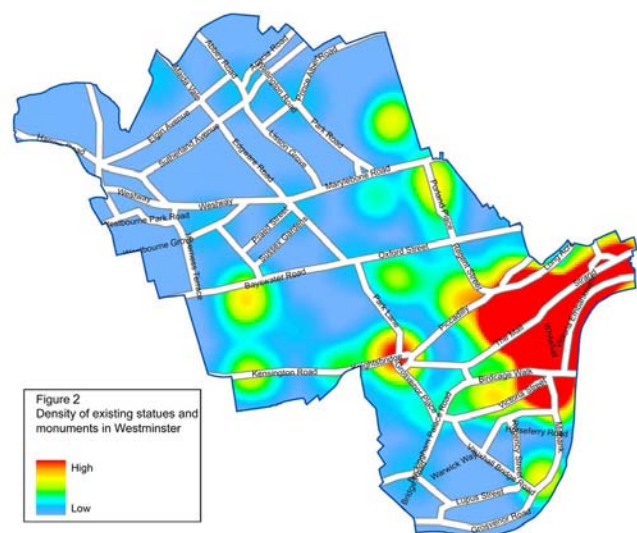
As the symbolic heart of the nation's capital, Westminster has been the traditional location for commemorative works. The city hosts more than 300 statues and memorials today with several major works added in recent years. The Royal Parks, for example, have developed the following memorials in Hyde Park alone:

- the Diana Princess of Wales fountain (2004)
- the 7 July Memorial (2009, dedicated on the fourth anniversary of the London subway bombing)

English Heritage secured the Australian War Memorial (2003) and the New Zealand Memorial (2006) as part of a wider strategy for the area around Hyde Park Corner.

Responding to increased public pressure for new monuments, particularly in Royal Parks, and recognizing that “new sites for free standing memorials have been diminishing rapidly,”¹ the Westminster City Council approved the [*Statues and Monuments in Westminster*](#) report in 2008 to articulate its policy and procedures for new establishing new commemorative works. The policy updated a set of less detailed instructions for monument proponents.

The *Statues and Monuments* policy explains that nearly half (47%) of the existing memorials are situated on or near Whitehall, which is also the location requested by 70% of applicants for new works. The map at right shows the hot spots where commemorations are currently located.²



Density of existing statues and monuments in Westminster

In light of these trends, the policy creates a “monument saturation zone” for Whitehall, the St. James area, and the Royal Parks where monuments will not normally be permitted. While this policy sets expectations for these areas, the interviewee from English Heritage notes that it has not diminished the intensity of interest in these locations.³

Commemorative Subject Matter and/or Thematic Analysis

While English Heritage, the government’s statutory advisor on the historic environment, and other historical organizations maintain extensive records on individual works, a comprehensive thematic analysis of the commemorative landscape in London or Westminster has not been performed. *Statues and Monuments* notes that works in Westminster primarily honored individuals until the late 1800s, but following WWI, there has been an increase in the number of memorials dedicated to heroic events or groups of individuals.

The *Statues and Monuments* policy requires proposed commemorative subjects to have “a clear and well defined historical or conceptual relationship with the proposed location” noting that many past proposals have sought a location in Westminster “for reasons of prestige only.”⁴ The City also reserves the right to relocate works to better conform to their historical context. For example, the Sir Walter Raleigh statue was relocated in 2001 from its site on Whitehall to the grounds of the former Royal Naval College (now the University of Greenwich) because the location has clearer maritime associations.

The policy also establishes a “10 year principle” following an event or death of an individual before approving a permanent commemoration in order to “allow partisan passions to cool and enable sober reflection, allow time for the careful selection of a site, for the raising of funds, and for commissioning of the best possible piece of work.”⁵ Although exceptions have been granted (e.g. the Ronald Reagan monument approved in 2009 for location in front of the U.S. Embassy⁶), the City typically prefers a temporary memorial, such as an event or planting within an existing garden, until ten years have elapsed.



Model of Ronald Reagan statue to be installed at U.S. Embassy

Process to Establish New Works

At the inception of an idea for a new monument, the Westminster City Council’s Public Art Advisory Panel reviews the concept and provides recommendations about the design, location and other organizations that need to be contacted for consultation or permission (although the Panel has now been discontinued as a result of recent spending cuts). The United Kingdom Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) also approves monuments on public land and English Heritage reviews works that impact the setting of historic buildings or are located in a conservation area.

This first step is crucial considering that significant elements must be completed before proponents make official application to construct the work. Since the City Council prefers an open or limited design competition, it must be conducted before submitting the official application which requires site plans, scaled elevations, photographic montages, materials, inscription details and an estimate of associated construction costs. *Statues and Monuments* recommends proponents to allow at least one year to develop the idea before submitting the application.

Monument proponents must fundraise the entire cost of the work before the City Council approves construction. If the monument is to be gifted to the City of Westminster, the City Council requires an upfront, one-time payment equal to the estimated maintenance cost over 33 years using current prices. The policy advises that “the minimum cost for the future maintenance of a simple bronze life size figure would be in the region of £40,000” (64,000 U.S.).⁷ A number of other agencies may accept maintenance, however, including DCMS, the Greater London Authority, English Heritage, Royal Parks or the landowners of the site. In such cases, the maintenance contribution must be negotiated.

Selected Commemorations in London

a. Fourth Plinth

The Fourth Plinth in London's Trafalgar Square was originally constructed in 1841 to display an equestrian statue, which was never completed due to insufficient funds. For the next 150 years, the plinth remained empty amidst public disagreement about an appropriate subject. In 1998, the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) commissioned a series of three contemporary art sculptures to be displayed temporarily on the Fourth Plinth. When the responsibility for Trafalgar Square was transferred to the Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority (GLA) in 1999, the program continued under the guidance of the Fourth Plinth Commissioning Group (FPCG). The FPCG, made up of nine outside art professionals and artists, is now responsible for commissioning works to be installed on the plinth.

For the two upcoming commissions, the Mayor's office and the FPCG developed an international list of approximately 30 artists capable of delivering artwork of the highest quality for the Fourth Plinth. Following initial submissions, a short list of six artists was selected to produce a maquette (scaled model) of their proposal. At present, the six candidate works are available on the Fourth Plinth [website](#), which includes video interviews with the artists and an opportunity for public comments which are automatically displayed. Two winning artists will be selected for commissions.

GLA budget documents estimate future plinth costs for the next two commissions as follows:⁸

- Up to £1,000 (~\$1,500 US) for each of 30 artists to develop initial submissions;
- £6,000 (~\$8,880) for each of six artists to produce a maquette;
- Two winning artists will receive a prize of up to £32,000 (\$47,300) and a grant of up to £140,000 (\$207,000) to assist in the fabrication of the artwork and decommissioning expenses

Total: £410,000 (\$606,400 US). Note that this estimate does not include administration or publicity. The GLA expects to apply to Arts Council England for £80,000 (\$118,200 US) to defer some of the costs.

Since the RSA commissions, four new works have appeared on the plinth:



Alison Lapper Pregnant
Disabled artist who resides in London
September 2005 – November 2007



Model for a Hotel
Glass architectural model
November 2007 – May 2009



One & Other

2,400 individuals were given one hour on the plinth for an activity of their choice, broadcast online in real-time, July – October 2009



Nelson's Ship in a Bottle

Commemorates the Battle of Trafalgar
May 2010 - Present

b. Nelson Mandela

While there was little controversy or public interest during the development of *Statues and Monuments* in 2008, earlier intense debate over a statue of Nelson Mandela was a key factor in pushing the Westminster City Council to update the policy.⁹

The Nelson Mandela statue was originally proposed for the top of the stairs on the north terrace of Trafalgar Square in 2003. The historical justification for this location was that South Africa House, the diplomatic mission from South Africa, is on the east side of Trafalgar Square and the square has been the site of many anti-apartheid demonstrations.

By the time English Heritage and Westminster City Council became involved in the review process, the sculptor had nearly completed the work. The review authorities were concerned that the statue's informal design was not appropriate in the formal context of the Square.

In the face of the Mayor's strong support for the Trafalgar Square location, there was substantial opposition from a range of other parties, including English Heritage, which led to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government calling in the application for his own determination following a public inquiry. The inquiry effectively elevated the final decision-making authority to the central Government rather than remaining at city level. The Secretary of State determined that the statue was inappropriate in Trafalgar Square and permission was refused. Subsequently, planning permission was granted by the City Council for a site in Parliament Square on the northwest side of the Palace of Westminster, amongst statues of Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Disraeli and other British statesmen.

Photo Credits

Ronald Reagan statue – London Evening Standard,
<http://i.thisislondon.co.uk/i/pix/2009/05/regan-statue-415x565.jpg>

Alison Lapper Pregnant – Synergy Sponsorship,
<http://www.synergy-sponsorship.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/alison-lapper-pregnant.jpg>

Model for a Hotel – The Guardian blog, http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/art/category/politics_v_the_arts/

One & Other – The Guardian,
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2009/jul/10/fourth-plinth-one-and-other>

Ship in a Bottle – PropertyWeek.com,
<http://www.propertyweek.com/nelsons-ship-in-a-bottle-to-sit-on-fourth-plinth/3145711.article>

Endnotes

¹ *Statues and Monuments in Westminster*, p. 10.

² *Statues and Monuments in Westminster*, p. 11.

³ Davies, personal interview.

⁴ *Statues and Monuments in Westminster*, p. 20.

⁵ *Statues and Monuments in Westminster*, p. 22.

⁶ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1186833/Ronald-Reagan-statue-erected-London--U-S-Embassy-unimpressed.html>

⁷ *Statues and Monuments in Westminster*, p. 25.

⁸ <http://static.london.gov.uk/mayor/mayor-decisions/docs/20100527-md523-4th-Plinth-Programme.pdf>

⁹ Davies, personal interview.