

# FITZROVIA PLACE AUDIT (DRAFT)

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Fitzrovia Village -  
Place and Public Realm Strategy 2022

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# Fitzrovia Village

## Introduction

The Fitzrovia Partnership (TFP) appointed Arup and Placemaking London to update the 'Fitzrovia Village – Feasibility and Concept Design' report, which was published in January 2020.

The updated report will focus on placemaking and be titled; **Fitzrovia 2022 Place and Public Realm Strategy** and will be launched towards the end of 2022.

In developing the new strategy for Fitzrovia, Placemaking London undertook:

- An assessment of the current character, function, issues and opportunities of the streets
- An assessment of the existing streets, lanes and mews
- A detailed research into character and history of Fitzrovia
- A review of policy for their contribution and relevance to improving Fitzrovia, specifically the strategies of the Mayor of London (MoL), Transport for London (TfL) and London Borough of Camden (LBC)
- Proposed improvement to the public realm and wider placemaking opportunities to promote and attract higher footfall, longer dwell, more return visits and increased spending in Fitzrovia; and to improve Fitzrovia's public spaces and routes for everyone who lives or works in the area.

Two audits took place, one during day light hours and one at night in order to understand the characteristics, functions, issues and opportunities of the streets at different times of days.

The report on the audit is split into the following sections:

- Gateways
- Warren Street
- Green spaces and routes
- West End Project:
  - Tottenham Court Road
- Dwell Spaces
  - Bedford Avenue
  - Capper Street
  - Whitfield Gardens
  - Alfred Place
- Mews and Lanes
- Character Areas and Historic Buildings



## Gateways

Two types of gateways were identified for the purposes of this study:

1. Station and bus gateways to Fitzrovia (Tottenham Court Road, Goodge Street and Warren Street Stations; and bus stops on Tottenham Court Road)
2. Side streets from Tottenham Court Road leading into Fitzrovia, primarily on the western side

Several of the gateways to Fitzrovia's network of streets have been significantly improved as part of The West End Project, which delivered better public realm and in particular spaces for people to rest and relax.

### Tottenham Court Road Gateway



**Tottenham Court Road Gateway** – the station heritage entrance, obscured by a utility cabinet, rubbish and inappropriately located planter



Lack of visual cues to Tottenham Court Road and the Fitzrovia area's offer from Tottenham Court Road station



At night the Tottenham Court Road gateway is lively and vibrant. Theatre goers and visitors are however drawn south to places such as the Outernet and Charing Cross Road, rather than to Fitzrovia, which does not have a night time economy



## Warren Street Gateway



**Warren Street Gateway** from Tottenham Court Road  
Cluttered footways  
Rubbish and bins  
Crime hotspot



No visual cues to the Fitzrovia offer (galleries, restaurants, museums) from Warren Street station to attract and retain visitors



Diminishing illumination along Warren Street contributes to perception of unsafe areas





Fly-tipping and litter blight the Warren Street area



A Warren Street business opportunity is its close proximity to the University College Hospital



Neglected planters could be painted, replanted and maintained as a quick win, affordable improvement

This gateway acts as a barrier, deterring footfall into Fitzrovia at all times of day

There is an opportunity to widen the footways, or create a shared surface gateway and restrict access

Opportunity to introduce trees and planting to complement the existing planting further west on Warren Street, creating a 'garden street'

Lighting could enhance the gateway, encourage exploration of the area by visitors, improve safety and reduce crime

## Goodge Street station (1907)



Centrally located gateway to Fitzrovia



The very popular fruit street stall at Goodge Street station (on Tottenham Court Road)



Example of a curated fresh food stall in Chiswick

The stall however takes-up two thirds of the footway width and all of the footway area that was extended as part of the West End Project, thereby contributing to footway crowding at this pinch-point  
The stall could be better designed, managed and its offer curated



**Goodge Street** station at night  
Well-illuminated



Litter and street cleansing are issues that detract from enjoying Fitzrovia at any time of day or night



## Goodge Street



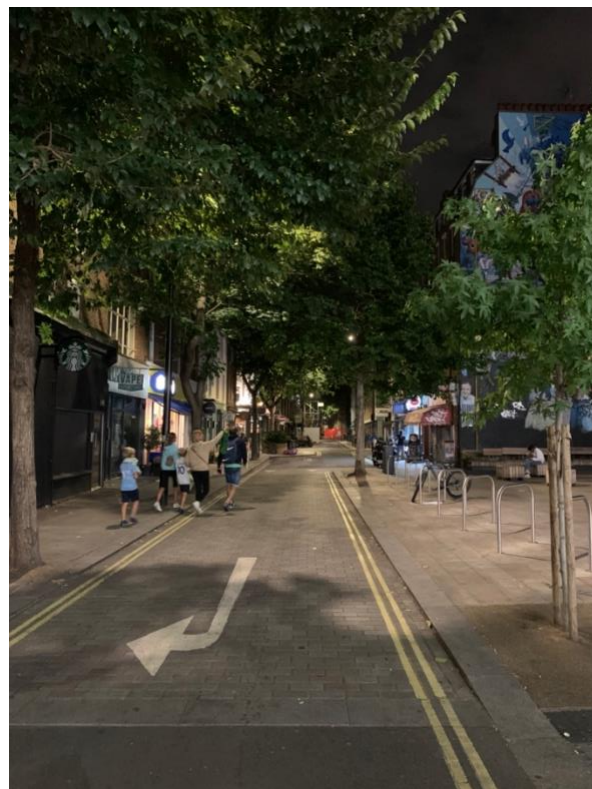
Goodge Street serves Fitzrovia as a vibrant high street  
**Tottenham Street**



Goodge Street's footways would benefit from street furniture declutter and rationalisation



**Tottenham Street** – the gateway area from Tottenham Court Road has benefited from public realm improvements as part of the West End Project



There are a few, if any, visual cues to indicate there is a museum, shops, cafes and restaurants within a few seconds walk from the junction with Tottenham Court Road

To encourage exploration of foot from Tottenham Court Road, the public improvements could be extended further west to Whitfield Street, which along with adding festoon lighting or simple banners to and across the junction, this could become an attractive, charming and human-scale' mini destination within the wider Fitzrovia area.

### **Dwell Spaces**

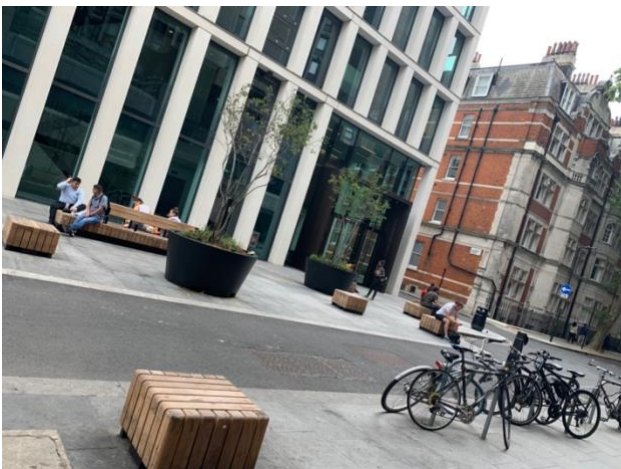
- **Bedford Avenue**
- **Capper Street**
- **Whitfield Gardens**
- **Alfred Place**

The **West End Project** has delivered better public realm and in particular new spaces to rest and relax.

These have a distinctive palette of materials and design consistency, which could be applied to future public realm improvements in order to enhance Fitzrovia's distinctiveness as a place

The investment in the public realm is however undermined by street cleansing to a poor standard and there is a predominance of waste collection issues, specifically lots of bags on street

### **Bedford Avenue**



**Bedford Avenue** – the widened and decluttered footways, introduction of seating and planting, either side of a shared surface, could be a model for re-designed Warren Street gateway



## Whitfield Gardens



**Whitfield Gardens** – remains a popular and unique space throughout the year. Its mural, island single building and street market give this space a unique feel, unlike anywhere else in London.



Uplift to street cleansing is required and could be a quick win to improve Fitzrovia's public realm

## Tottenham Court Road

Tottenham Court Road has benefited from transformed public realm, widened footways, better crossings and a day time cycle and bus only street, now with noticeably less traffic. However, it is suffering from low footfall.

Tottenham Court Road ground floor offer lacks distinctiveness, although it remains a furniture and homes retail district.

There are some notable vacant retail units, although some recent new arrivals too reflecting the ongoing economic uncertainty.

There has been a recent introduction of experiential to replace retail, specifically Monopoly Lifesized.

The southern section benefits from their proximity to Tottenham Court Road station and the Elizabeth Line, while the northern stretch benefits from NHS staff, visitor and patient trade to supermarket and take-away food and beverage stores.

Kerbsides on the north part of Fitzrovia is often used for ambulance overspill parking.

Waste and bags on street detract from attractiveness of the area, in contrast to neighbouring districts.







Vacant properties and place management challenges

## Green Spaces

One of the characteristics The creation of Alfred Place Park, replacing a road, has increased access to green and play spaces for residents and workers.

Fitzrovia offers other opportunities to reallocate road space on quiet roads to create new garden places for people.

Residents, businesses, community groups and The Fitzrovia Partnership have introduced and maintain planting, which is a distinctive (un-curated) characteristic of the Fitzrovia area. A coordinated approach could intensify the green aspect of Fitzrovia, enhancing its attractiveness and attracting footfall. The creation of gardens on footways could also enhance the appeal of alfresco dining areas, thereby increasing footfall and customers for local businesses.

Some green spaces are private - Fitzroy Square, rooftop gardens.



**Goodge Place**



**Goodge Place**, high quality public realm with feature tree  
Opportunity to create a public square

**Tottenham Street** mature trees



Warren Street resident-led greening could be extended to adjacent properties as part of a placemaking scheme for the street





Pavement planting provided by businesses and cultural institutions



Example of resident-lead planting of public spaces





Opportunity Spaces in Fitzrovia for more planting



Basement planting in Mayfair





Examples of very mature landmark trees in Fitzrovia

### Mews and Lanes

The main mews identified in Fitzrovia are:

- Hanway Street
- Percy Mews
- Stephen Mews
- Goodge Place

- Tottenham Mews
- Charlotte Mews
- Conway Mews
- Bromley Place
- Richardson's Mews
- Warren Mews
- Midford Place
- Fitzroy Court
- Howland Mews east
- Cypress Place

Mews are a distinctive characteristic of Fitzrovia's streetscape, a retained feature from the 18th and 19th century's development of the area, often with original or replacement stone sett paving.

### Goode Place



Opportunity to change ground uses, or potentially rebuild to create active frontages; and create a 'town square'

### Tottenham Mews



### Bromley Place

### Conway Mews



Gated, retained stone setts



Opens up to offices





### Fitzroy Mews



Largely redeveloped residential mews, with cobbles and planting, off Cleveland Street

### Warren Mews



Residential mews, stone setts, intensively planted by residents

### Fitzroy Court

An elegant court, currently used for bin storage, which could become a retail arcade



### Midford Place





### Colville Place

Residential, traffic free and intensively greened street



### WARREN STREET

