

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES VIEWS STUDY REPORT 2018



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This Views Study Report (VSR) forms part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan 2020-2041 for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames. It aims to identify views that will help inform and contribute to the borough's growth agenda whilst seeking to sensitively integrate new development into the unique townscape and historic built environment that make up the borough's urban identity.

The VSR identifies important views around the borough to better understand their importance in relation to townscape.

This study provides guidance to planners, developers and designers about what should be retained and respected in the views and that they are managed appropriately to protect their individual importance. The VSR is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Importance of views

Views are important as they include a variety of built and natural elements representing the layers of historic growth and placemaking in the borough. Identifying and preserving important views that capture the urban, architectural, historic and cultural context of Kingston promotes an appreciation of the borough's character and identity.

An in depth appraisal of 189 views looks at a defined criteria, which together rank their overall importance. Through a refined sifting of the views, the highest ranked views fulfilling all criteria are proposed as Very Highly Important Views. It is these views that help assess how physical change can be accommodated in the historic environment while protecting and enhancing the most important views of landmarks, their setting and backdrop, views of the historic fabric and skyline features.

The Views

189 views have been identified through a High Level Appraisal (HLA) and given individual HLA numbers. Through the study and engagement with key stakeholders these views have been ranked in terms of their importance. Each have been identified as one of the following:

- **Very Highly Important Views (VHIVs). These are defined as VHIVs 1 – 13 but also cross refer to their original HLA numbers.**
- **Highly Important Views (HIVs)**
- **Important Views (IVs)**

Structure of the report

The VSR is composed of 5 sections and 8 appendices as follows:

- **Section 1** provides an introduction to the scope of the study, explains why views are important, illustrates the urban fabric of the borough and provides an overview of the methodology.
- **Section 2** focuses on the environmental baseline, the heritage, townscape and character of the borough.
- **Section 3** provides an overview of the methods adopted to assess and rank the views, sets out the criteria adopted to carry out the High Level Appraisal and explains the level of importance attributed to each view.
- **Section 4** provides the assessment and presentation of the Very Highly Important Views.
- **Section 5** provides an assessment of the Highly Important Views.

- **Section 6** provides an assessment of the remaining Important Views.
- **Section 7** provides recommendations for future views designation and management.
- **Appendices from A to H** provide further detail on the methodology, the policy context, contextual maps, proformas and a table of the High Level Appraisal assessment for all identified views across the borough.

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VU.CITY has been developed by GIA, the UK's largest specialist advisor in rights of light and neighbourly matters, and award winning digital agency, Wagstaffs. The digital model is fully aligned with the draft London Plan and recently released draft NPPF in terms of the adoption and use of 3D models to understand how cities can be operated and the potential impact upon the use and experience of that environment.

The Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames (RBK) is one of the first Local Authorities to use VU.CITY. Using the city model, it is possible to overlay GIS data, sightlines, views of the LVMF, transport links and sunlight paths, therefore offering RBK an unparalleled method of digitally understanding development and infrastructure projects both in the context of the borough, but equally, as the model grows to cover the whole of the capital, in the context of London as a whole.

RBK actively encourages all development and infrastructure proposals that change the urban environment to use a 3D visualisation tool such as VU.CITY to support assessment of the views and viewing corridors across the Borough.

The collective vision is that all future developments will go into the VU.CITY model, creating a valuable tool that visualises proposed schemes in the context of the existing built environment and what has been consented.

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USER GUIDE

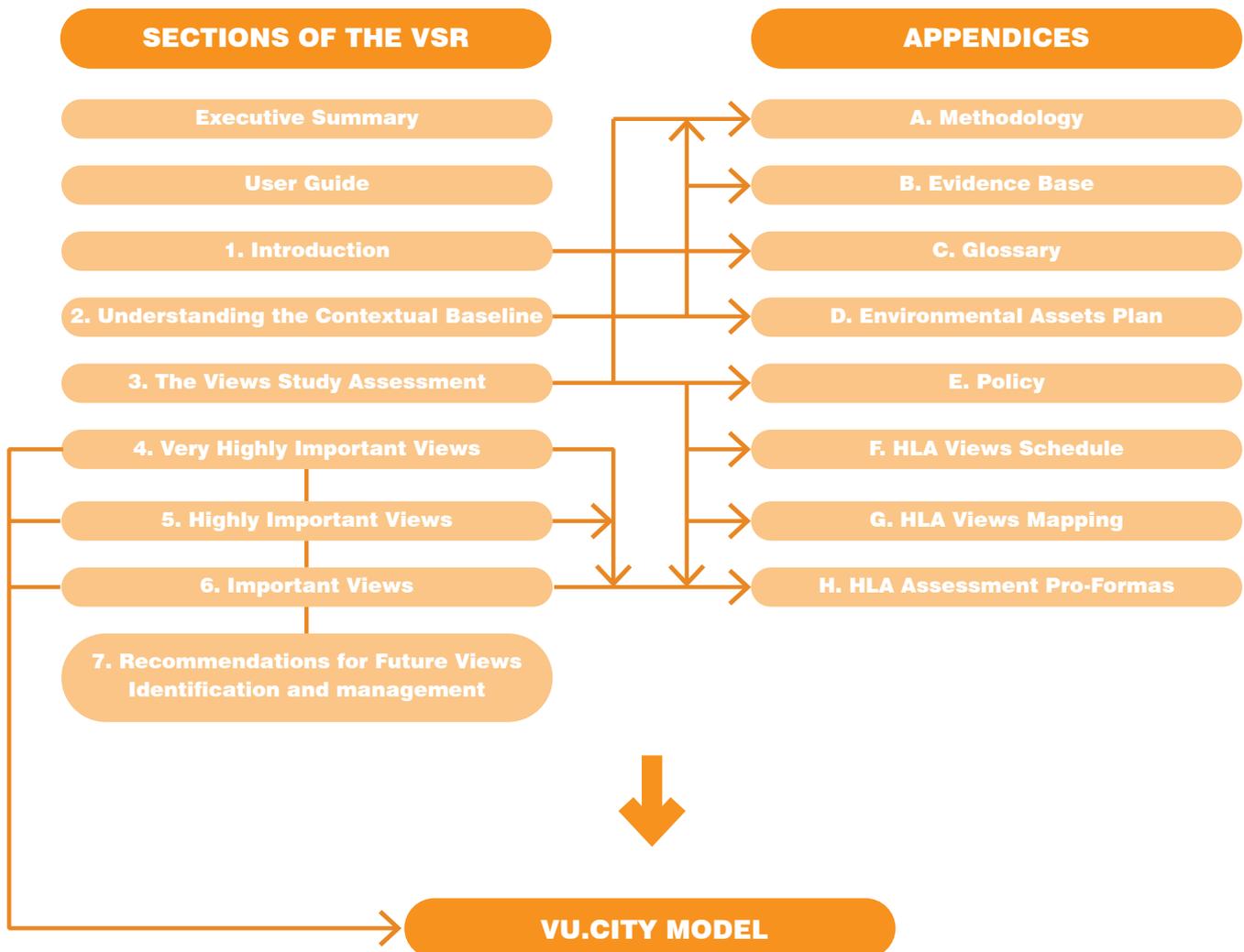
This guide helps navigate concepts and contents of the View Study Report to ensure effective use and inform: development proposals; visual impact assessments; planning decisions; and, future visual assessments of the borough.

How to use the View Study Report

1. Read the Executive Summary and the Contents to gain an overview of the scope, structure, contents and extent of the document.
2. Familiarise with the Glossary in **Appendix C**, which clarifies key terminology underpinning the document.
3. Identify all views located within your specific area of interest. The borough wide map in **Appendix G** provides a useful visual aid to understand views and their varying levels of importance across the borough.
4. Look at the environmental assets map in **Appendix D** to understand visual sensitivities which may arise from designated areas, landmarks and/or heritage assets.
5. Depending on the number and level of importance of the views affected by the proposed development, consult Section 4 which provides full description of the Very Highly Important Views. Each VHIV has a unique VHIV number (1-13) which links with VU.CITY. This numbering is not hierarchical. Each VHIV number is also cross referred to the original HLA number and corresponding HLA sheet in **Appendix H**.
6. For Highly Important and Important Views consult Sections 5 and 6 which illustrate location and level of importance of these views.
7. Highly Important Views and Important Views are described in Sections 5 and 6 and in the High Level Appraisal (**Appendix H**). This Appendix establishes the three levels of importance and provides a description and an assessment of value per view based on its three identifying receptors: the viewing location, the viewer, and the view.
8. All documents referred to throughout this report, including those forming an evidence base to the study, are referenced with an individual number and listed in **Appendix B**.

The following page contains a visual guide to the VSR.

**Kingston Views Study Report
User flow diagram of report sections,
related appendices and VU.CITY**



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background, Need and Context to the Views Study

1.2 Why are Views Important?

**1.3 The Contextual Fabric of the Royal Borough of Kingston
Upon Thames**

1.4 Scope of the Views Study

1.5 Methodology for the Views Study Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background, Need and Context to the Views Study

- 1.1.1 Bradley Murphy Design Ltd and Wagstaffs were appointed by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK) in January 2017 to conduct a Views Study to form part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. In this regard, this Views Study Report (VSR) will inform the development of policies to assess the suitability of proposed development as part of the planning process, therefore forming an essential contributor to inform the Borough's growth agenda in a way which recognises the importance of the built environment whilst seeking to sensitively integrate new development.
- 1.1.2 The provision of appropriate growth in the Borough is a key element of the Council's objective in transforming the Borough for the better, forming the basis of an approach which will see focused effort through the development of a new Local Plan, which will replace the Core Strategy (2012) (14) and Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan K+20 (2008) (16). Alongside forming part of the evidence base for the Local Plan, this Views Study Report (VSR) will be also considered as part of the 'Call for Sites' assessment and the determination of planning applications.
- 1.1.3 The objective of the VSR is to specifically locate views which **contribute to the understanding and appreciation of Kingston Borough's unique townscape with its historic and cultural landmarks which make up the Borough's urban identity**. The VSR assesses the existing views included in the Core Strategy, the Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan (16) and the Borough Character Study (2011) (15) to identify views which are of borough-wide importance, along with those that form part of the London-wide views network, and views that cross the boundaries of the Borough.
- 1.1.4 The findings and guidance set out in the VSR is intended to be appropriately applied when complex issues involving important views need to be described and formally analysed. This includes forming part of a Local Development Framework and to help in determining complex planning cases often involving environmental impact assessment or as part of an understanding of base line views to be used when monitoring the condition of townscapes in the Borough. The VSR is to be used as part of the suite of other assessment and characterisation tools in order to understand the importance of a view.
- 1.1.5 The VSR seeks to identify the most important views in the Borough by identifying important assets which include unique townscape character and heritage assets as well as their settings. The VSR is a tool to assess how development proposals may impact upon these important views and guides the most appropriate development parameters and future management. Impacts of a development may be beneficial or adverse. For example, a development proposal that blocks, dominates, or detracts from a view by virtue of its scale, position in a view, or design is likely to result in an adverse impact on the defined assets within a view itself.

1.2 Why are Views Important?

- 1.2.1 The conservation of views that are unique in their historic and cultural context play an important cultural role. Views include a variety of built and natural elements as well as architectural history.
- 1.2.2 Views can teach us about history and placemaking and their conservation promotes respect for those who lived in different times and societies, along with an appreciation of what makes our townscape and landscape what it is today. Historical assets and architectural exemplars of design bring character to the neighbourhoods in which they now belong.
- 1.2.3 An important view can be an historical composite, the cumulative result of a long process of development, *“The existence of such views, often containing well-known landmarks and cherished landscapes, enriches our daily life, attracts visitors and helps our communities prosper”* (Seeing History in the View, A method for assessing Heritage Significant within views’ May 2011) (5).
- 1.2.4 In order to identify the importance of a view, it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider:
- who values the place, and why they do so
 - how those values relate to its fabric
 - their relative importance
 - whether associated objects contribute to them
 - the contribution made by the setting and context of the place
 - how the view compares with others sharing similar values.
- 1.2.5 Through this Views Study **Very Highly Important Views** are defined, as those which epitomise the importance of Kingston’s townscape and assets along with rich layers of character, which together form the unique identity of the Borough.
- 1.2.6 Their identification will enable the enduring protection and enhancement of views toward landmarks, historical assets, their setting and backdrop and skyline features.

1.3 The Contextual Fabric of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

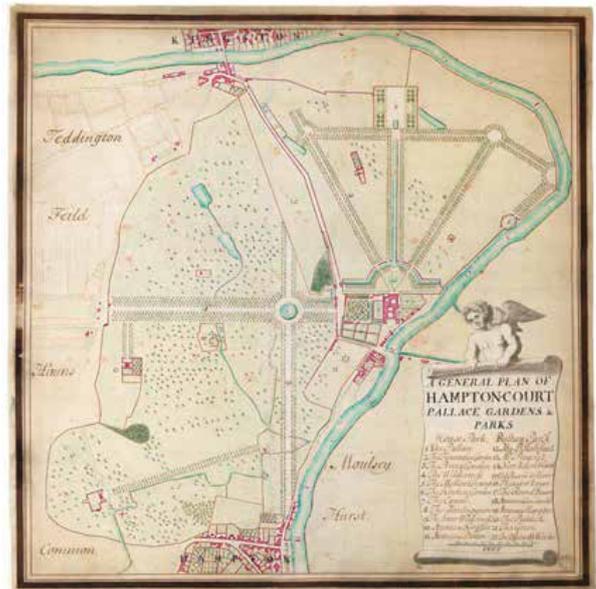
- 1.3.1 Kingston upon Thames was created as a Borough in 1965, amalgamating the Old Boroughs of Kingston upon Thames, Surbiton and Malden and Coombe. The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames is located on the south-western edge of London and is bordered by the London boroughs of Richmond, Wandsworth, Merton and Sutton. The southern half of the Borough shares boundaries with the Surrey districts of Epsom and Ewell, Elmbridge and Mole Valley. Kingston Town Centre plays a key role in the local economy and is also one of London's most successful metropolitan town centres.
- 1.3.2 Kingston has a rich historic legacy stemming from its role as a crossing point for the Thames. In medieval times Kingston developed into a thriving market town, particularly as Kingston Bridge formed the only crossing place over the river upstream of London Bridge. The Market Place and the Apple Market provided the focus for trade and the medieval town's prosperity. Local industries developed and inns and public houses flourished where Kingston formed a stopping-off point on the London to Portsmouth coach route.



Figure 1. Kingston Historic Map

- 1.3.3 By the mid-18th century, the Borough still largely comprised open fields, although Kingston Town lay at the hub of four major turnpike routes. The first of which was the ten mile stretch of road between Kingston and London which ran along London Road, Kingston Hill and Kingston Vale. The second, Portsmouth Road was the continuation of this route from the south side of Kingston to Portsmouth, running through Surbiton, Esher and Guildford. Special arrangements were made to provide a linking section of road from the bottom of Kingston Hill, via London Road and the High Street, south of Kingston Town Centre. Thirdly, a turnpike route ran from Kingston to Ewell and finally, a turnpike route ran between Kingston and Leatherhead. These historic routes into Kingston remain largely unchanged to present day.

-
- 1.3.4 The Borough was host to the coronation of seven Saxon kings, who sat on the Coronation Stone which is now located in Kingston Town Centre. Close Royal links have subsequently been maintained and enhanced through various charters and the proximity of Hampton Court, to the west of the Borough, and Kingston is one of only four Royal Boroughs in the UK.
- 1.3.5 Following its early beginnings as a Market Town, Kingston has undergone rapid transformation over the past 20 years. Kingston Town Centre is a thriving modern metropolitan centre with an extensive range of shops and services. The mix of attractive residential areas, large areas of green space, high quality retail, cultural and educational facilities, proximity to the Thames riverside and accessibility to central London and the Surrey countryside, make the Borough a popular place to live, work and study.
- 1.3.6 The most important aspect of the town's character is its retail and leisure function, witnessed by its evolution from a market town to a major regional shopping centre. This has played a key role in shaping its townscape. Other key aspects are its business and administrative functions which have had an increasing presence in the town centre during the 20th century. Residential development, after shifting to the periphery, has in recent years returned to the town centre, particularly the riverside area. Much of this has taken place on brownfield sites, such as former industrial sites and, as a consequence, this aspect of the town centre's character has changed.



Character Overview

- 1.3.7 In order to gain a thorough understanding of the Borough's character, the Council has undertaken a Borough Character Study (15). Through an analysis of the Borough by area, the study identifies the essential components that combine to give Kingston its particular sense of place. It identifies those areas of the Borough where the existing townscape is of high quality as well as those areas that are lacking in identity, where the quality of the townscape has deteriorated over time and would benefit from regeneration in order to achieve a higher quality environment.
- 1.3.8 Kingston has an attractive character overall, with its riverside setting and distinctive historic core. Outside these areas, a large swathe of the town centre was affected by development in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, which cut across its historic grain. There are few high quality modern buildings and the quality of the environment and public spaces needs upgrading. There is potential for high quality contemporary architecture in key locations and improvements to the public realm, especially on approach routes. Protecting and enhancing the historic environment is key to maintaining Kingston's attractive character and distinctiveness, especially in the Old Town Conservation Area around the Market Place. There are four peripheral conservation areas; 50 listed buildings, including two Grade I and five Grade II*; and 34 Buildings of Townscape Merit (Locally Listed Buildings). The Clattern Bridge is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and the whole of the town centre is an Area of Archaeological Significance as defined in the Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan.
- 1.3.9 Historic England have prepared a Historic Area Study for the centre of Kingston (8). The study considers the historic growth, development and character of central Kingston Upon Thames, in response to emerging redevelopment proposals in the locality, in order to provide guidance to planners, developers and designers. Through expanding the appraisal of the Old Town Conservation Area (discussed below in Section 2.3) the study seeks to deepen the understanding of the historical development of the area and the identification of townscape and architectural qualities that could be used to inform new development. In consideration of the special areas and characteristics that make up the unique identity of Kingston, the appraisal looks in detail at Kingston Old Town Conservation Area, including Riverside; Station Quarter (Central Area), Station Quarter (East) including Old London Road, Eden Quarter, Eden Quarter (South) and Grove Area. Further detail on their analysis is provided in Section 2.2.



Figure 2. View towards All Saints Church from Kingston Bridge

- 1.3.10 The Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan (16) identifies significant opportunities to accommodate growth within the existing centre, many of which would benefit from major change, such as vacant, underused and poor quality sites which are suitable for redevelopment and intensification. Townscape analysis has resulted in the grouping of land uses and built fabric to form a series of ten character areas, each with its own attributes, with the potential to shape policies and proposals.
- 1.3.11 Key views to landmarks and wider panoramas, combined with local views, contribute variety and interest to Kingston's townscape. They reinforce its sense of place and are a valuable part of its built heritage. Kingston retains its unique historic character around the Market Place, which is the heart of the Old Town Conservation Area. The Old Town has a medieval street pattern and townscape and contains an impressive range of quality architecture contributing to the local vernacular, dating from the 15th Century onwards, including many Listed Buildings. It retains its trading role, with shops and the daily Ancient market and has important cultural heritage value. Primary landmarks include the towers to All Saint's Church, the Guildhall and Kingston Bridge, all of which need to be protected, along with important views and vistas towards and within the Old Town Conservation Area.



Figure 3. Kingston Old Town Conservation Area

1.4 Scope of the Views Study Report

1.4.1 The broad scope of the VSR has been prepared to achieve the following outcomes:

- **To be used as a basis of evidence and analysis that examines the importance of identified views in and around the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames;**
- **To define and protect the most important views in the Borough;**
- **The VSR will be used to play on the strengths of Kingston’s unique townscape and form an important evidence base for the Local Plan;**
- **To control and assess the impact and effects of new development proposals on the unique character and historic environment of the Borough; and**
- **To inform decisions in order to sustain the value of the views and their contribution to the identity of Kingston upon Thames.**

1.4.2 A variety of data sources have been reviewed to gain an understanding of the existing townscape character, key views and landmarks both within Kingston and wider neighbouring Boroughs. Topographical mapping has also been undertaken to understand the topographical variation across the borough and influence upon Environmental Assets. Environmental Assets have been reviewed in consideration of relevant published planning policy and guidance documents, along with existing published townscape character and conservation area studies, as listed in **Appendix B – Evidence Base Schedule**. Throughout the VSR where reference is made to a document in the Evidence Base this is accompanied with a corresponding number and all referenced documents are listed in **Appendix B**.

1.4.3 A detailed review of all relevant planning policy has been undertaken and is included in **Appendix E – Planning Policy**. The appendix considers:

- National Context – National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 and
- National Context – Draft Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018 (13)
- The London Plan 2011 (as amended), in particular Policies 7.11 and 7.12 and
- The London Plan, 2017 (draft for public consultation) in particular HC3 and HC4 (12)
- The London Views Management Framework (2)
- Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Core Strategy, Adopted April 2012 (14)
- Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames ‘Towards a Sense of Place’ Borough Character Study, 2011 (15)
- Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan, Adopted July 2008 (16)
- Merton Council Tall Buildings Background Paper LDF, 2010 (17)

- London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local Plan – Proposals Map, July 2015 (18)
 - London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Borough Wide Sustainable Urban Development Study, September 2008 (19)
 - London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames LDF Development Management Plan Adopted, November 2011 (20)
 - Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan, 2008 (16)
- 1.4.4 Throughout the VSR specific terminology has been carefully used to provide a technical assessment using accurately defined terms which have derived from the Evidence Base, specifically from:
- **Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition** (2013), (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (1)
 - **London View Management Framework, Supplementary Planning Guidance London Plan 2011 Implementation Framework** (March 2012) Mayor of London (2)
 - **Seeing the History in the View – A method for assessing heritage significance within views** (2011), English Heritage (now Historic England) (5)
- 1.4.5 It is recommended that when using the VSR it is read alongside the complete list of terms defined in the Glossary at **Appendix C**.
- 1.4.6 Information has been collated through desk study and has also been informed by field survey, undertaken from March to May 2017, in order to identify and describe townscape character and landscape/ townscape features (including landmark buildings, heritage assets and prominent vegetation. In accordance with the LVMF (2) and Historic England’s guidance (References 4,5,6), base line conditions describe and ascribe a value to: the viewing place; the history and any cultural associations attached to the view; and the heritage assets associated with each view. The baseline studies also establish the receptors who experience each view. Receptors considered as part of this study are the general public who experience the view and include tourists and users of recreational landscapes and visitors to heritage assets.
- 1.4.7 A preliminary study area has been identified by RBK, the extent of which has been defined by views from within the Borough, along with those from neighbouring Boroughs, including the London Boroughs of Richmond and Merton (see **Appendix D: Environmental Assets Plan**). This plan also includes the wider environmental and local planning policy designations, defining assets of importance when considering existing and potential new views. These include the mapping of Registered Parks and Gardens, Country Parks, Conservations Areas, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Local Areas of Special Character, Areas of Special Character and key Public Rights of Way.
- 1.4.8 Key to the transparency of the Views Study is the adoption of a logical and meticulous methodology, which enables a clear process for the identification of the most important views.

The fabrication of the methodology and the Views Study has been a collaborative approach, through engagement with key internal stakeholders at RBK and external stakeholders, with presentation and input sought at key stages of the project (as shown below on **Figure 4**). Not all of the Council's neighbouring local authorities were consulted on the methodology of the Views Study as it was deemed that there were no cross boundary issues to consider in the early stages of development. Key Stakeholders who have been engaged with are as follows:

- i. Greater London Authority (GLA)
- ii. Historic England (HE)
- iii. Royal Parks (RP)
- iv. London Borough of Richmond (LBR) and
- v. London Borough of Merton (LBM).

1.5 Methodology

- 1.5.1 The methodology for the VSR complies with and incorporates the principles of the London View Management Framework (LVMF) (March 2012) (2), which provides supplementary planning guidance to the London Plan (2011, as amended) and London Boroughs. Local authorities and other stakeholders should take its contents fully into account when preparing Development Plan Documents and policies. The VSR has been prepared to ensure it is consistent with the relevant existing London Plan (2011), including 7.11 London View Management Framework (LVMF) and 7.12 implementing London View Management Framework. Specifically Policy 7.12 states:-

“Boroughs should reflect the principles of this policy and include all designated views, including the protected vistas, into their Local Development Frameworks. Boroughs may also wish to use the principles of this policy for the designation and management of local views.”

Emerging Policy

The policy landscape is constantly changing and should be accounted for in this report. Of note, the draft new London Plan was published for consultation in December 2017, and is expected to be submitted later in 2018 and adopted in 2019. Upon adoption, this will supersede the existing London Plan. In relation to the VSR, policies remain similar in intent, though now have different references (HC3 and HC4 replace 7.11 and 7.12).

HC3 Strategic and Local Views

There are no strategic views in the draft London Plan that are relevant to the borough. Part G of the policy explains that boroughs should identify important local views in Local Plans and strategies that should be managed. This policy is now stronger than the existing Policy 7.12 (part J), as it now includes a reference to the importance of local views, which closely relates to this VSR.

HC4 London View Management Framework

The principles of this policy remain the same as the existing Policy 7.11, which relates to the assessment of the impact of development proposals on strategic views. The new draft policy fails to make the new link to the importance of local views as set out in HC3. Although this is not carried through, the assumption is that the principles in this policy apply to all views.

The draft revised NPPF (March, 2018) published for consultation is silent on strategic views.

- 1.5.2 The VSR applies the guidance provided by Historic England (*Seeing History in the View, May 2011*) (5) which recognises that the approach pioneered by the LVMF must be applicable outside London, as well as inside, and to rural as well as to urban landscapes. This approach considers: how a defined viewing place should ascertain the historical relationships between heritage assets to establish whether these contribute to the view; consideration of how the visibility and appearance of heritage assets may change as an observer moves around; and seasonal and diurnal changes.

- 1.5.3 In consideration of the Kingston Area Study prepared by Historic England (8) this study looks at buildings and/or areas that do not enjoy full statutory protection (such as the listed buildings around the Market Place or individual listed buildings) which have some historical and architectural merit that may have been overlooked, and which contribute to the special character of the historic built environment. The study looks in further detail at these buildings to understand their role and contribution. The VSR has incorporated these principles in the methodology to further understand the areas of distinctive character, architectural interest and which provide a contextual relationship with older elements of the town centre, as well as those buildings afforded statutory protection.
- 1.5.4 The overall approach for the VSR is summarised below, with the fully detailed Methodology provided in **Appendix A**:
- a) Undertake a desktop review to appraise and map all identified Environmental Designations and topographical analysis within the defined Study Area;
 - b) Undertake research as part of a desktop review for collation of the evidence base. Look at existing views identified in published documents including current policy, both within the Borough and those of neighbouring Boroughs. Consider heritage assets within the study area as well as identified strategic and local landmarks. This forms the 'High Level Appraisal' collated as a schedule of views and mapped at an appropriate scale;
 - c) Identify any additional views as part of the desktop study, through a review of existing environmental assets and their context within the landscape / townscape, to be added to the High Level Appraisal;
 - d) All views included in the High Level Appraisal have been attributed a value / sensitivity according to their location / viewer / view and a selection of those with the highest value / sensitivity will be carried forward as Very Highly Important Views for identification and management;
 - e) Detailed field assessments have been undertaken of the Very Highly Important Views. The VSR will provide:-
 - A detailed description of the view and the viewing location;
 - A verified photograph with all supporting data in line with the LVMF and Historic England Guidance; and
 - Long term management prescriptions for each view, which will ultimately assist the planning of growth within the historic environment and townscape of Kingston whilst protecting and enhancing the identified views.

Very Highly Important Views

1.5.5 Very Highly Important Views are those considered to contribute most to the appreciation of the Borough's identity, to be taken forward to support the evidence base for the Local Plan. These Very Highly Important Views accord with the London View Management Framework (LVMF) (2) criteria:

- **Views that are seen from places that are publicly accessible and well used.**
- **Include important buildings or urban landscapes that help to define the Borough at a strategic level.**
- **Within the designated views there may be landmarks that make aesthetic, cultural or other contributions to the view and assist the viewer's understanding and enjoyment of the view. This could be because of their composition, their contribution to legibility, or because they provide an opportunity to see key landmarks as part of a broader townscape, panorama or river prospect.**
- **Views that make an important contribution to people's ability to understand and appreciate Kingston as a whole. They are also highly valued because they allow a viewer to see important historic and cultural landmarks in their landscape or townscape setting and to understand the relationship between them.**
- **There may also be strategically important landmarks in the view. These are buildings or structures in the townscape, which have visual prominence, provide a geographical or cultural orientation point and are aesthetically attractive through visibility from a wider area or through contrast with objects or buildings close by.**

2. UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXTUAL BASELINE

2.1 Environmental Baseline

2.2 History and Heritage

2.3 Published Character and Townscape Assessments

2 UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXTUAL BASELINE

2.1 Environmental Baseline

- 2.1.1 Statutorily and non-statutorily designated landscapes, sites and features within the study area are illustrated on the **Environmental Assets Plan** in **Appendix D**. Each designated landscape with potential strategic views towards or within Kingston is considered in summary below as contextual background information.

Royal Parks and Gardens, Registered Parks and Gardens

Richmond Park

- 2.1.2 Richmond Park is the largest Royal Park in London covering an area of 2,500 acres. From elevated ground within the park, there are uninterrupted views of St Paul's Cathedral, 12 miles away to the north-east. Richmond Park has changed little over the centuries and, although it is surrounded by human habitation, the varied landscape of hills, woodland gardens and grasslands set among ancient trees are abound with wildlife.
- 2.1.3 In the 18th century, two planned vistas were created to allow important visitors the best views of the park and beyond. One looked down to the grand avenue of Queen's Ride to White Lodge, a hunting lodge built for King George I. The other looked out from King Henry's Mound - a high point, said to have used by Henry VIII to watch hunting.
- 2.1.4 The Isabella Plantation is a striking woodland garden which was created after World War II from an existing woodland, and is organically run, resulting in a rich flora and fauna. Richmond Park has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a National Nature Reserve.



Figure 4. View from Richmond Park towards Kingston Town Centre

Hampton Court Palace and Garden & Home Park

- 2.1.5 The Statement of significance taken from the Hampton Court Palace Views Management Plan (21) includes that *“The location and the setting of Hampton Court Palace is highly significant along with the juxtaposition of the surrounding park and gardens with the Palace. The vistas within and without give the impression of an even larger ensemble. Key prospects such as the Long Water, Ditton and Kingston Avenues, the view northwards into adjacent Bushy Park give the impression that this area is of historical, horticultural and ecological importance is peacefully unaffected by the development surrounding it.”*
- 2.1.6 Potential risks to the setting of Hampton Court Palace are pertained in section 2.7 of the Hampton Court Management Plan, which identifies the importance of the designated vistas and the potential risk of them being impacted by increased urban development and encroachment on the broader prospects around the park. The protection of the trees within the Borough is of great importance to the protection and setting of Hampton Court, since it is this tree cover that largely contributes to the illusion of a wooded landscape enclosing Home Park, when viewed from the Palace and Great Fountain Gardens.



Figure 5. *The Long Water at Hampton Court Palace*

- 2.1.7 Section 4 of the Management Plan identifies the key Vistas from Hampton Court Palace Gardens and Park. The setting of Hampton Court Palace is partly defined by the views out from the Palace, gardens and Home Park. Historically the Palace was a country retreat for the royal court and, although no longer rural, views out beyond Home Park remain dominated by the soft landscape setting, rather than becoming influenced by the surrounding urban character. Protecting these views against further urban encroachment is therefore critical to conserving the historic setting, and character of the Palace and Park.

2.1.8 The following three vistas and three broad prospects across the River Thames have been identified for consideration as part of this VSR, with reference to Plan 8 of the Management Plan:

Vistas from Hampton Court Park

- All Saints Church Vista
- Long Water Vista
- Talman Vista

Broad Prospects from Home Park

- East of the Stud House looking NE, SE
- The end of Long Water looking E, SE
- At the northern end of the Golf Club, south of the Rick Pond, looking SE, SSE

2.1.9 The Management Plan (4.7.1) identifies that views out from the principle apartments on the first floor of the East façade of the Palace are highly significant and are also vulnerable to encroachment. The plans overall policy for this character area confirms the historic importance of an open relationship with and views between the Palace and Home Park. The existing views requiring protection are those along the three avenues radiating across Home Park. 4.7.5 states that “*when considering the views out from the Palace, the assessment has been mindful of the eventual loss of the yew trees and the possibility that these may not be replaced. In this eventuality, the key views of the Palace would remain limited to the three avenue vistas, due to the semi-circular lime avenue within the Great Fountain Gardens.*” Recommendation R4.6 includes for the distant tree skyline to be protected from encroachment and further erosion of the foreground trees, which in summer allude to an extensive landscape beyond. On clear winter days, there is a greater level of encroachment from the surrounding urban setting and the impression of the historically extensive landscape of the Palace is compromised.

Bushy Park

2.1.10 The flat site of Bushy Park has been settled for at least 4,000 years. A Bronze Age barrow & burial mound was excavated near Sandy Lane and the contents are now housed in the British Museum.

2.1.11 Chestnut Avenue is a mile long avenue, conceived by Sir Christopher Wren as a formal approach to Hampton Court Palace in the reign of William III & Mary II. Flanked on both sides by a single row of horse chestnuts and four rows of limes, it marks the park's zenith in terms of royal ambitions and sophistication. The view from Teddington Gate provides the most striking view of the Avenue, with the Arethusa 'Diana' Fountain and the Banqueting Hall as the backdrop.

- 2.1.12 Bushy became a royal park in 1529 when Cardinal Wolsey gave it to King Henry VIII as part of a gift that also included Hampton Court. Until then, the park had been agricultural land. On the edge of the Woodland Gardens, you can still make out the line of a medieval track and ditch, with rows of tangled hawthorns are the remnants of ancient field hedges. There are traces of ridge and furrow ploughing - and the area between Lime Avenue and the Woodland Gardens has the most extensive evidence of a medieval field system in Middlesex.



Figure 6. The Diana Fountain at Bushy Park

2.2 History and Heritage

- 2.2.1 Kingston has a rich and varied built heritage dating from Saxon times when it was an important river crossing point and royal coronation place. After becoming an important medieval market town it went through many centuries of suburbanisation and now has its own distinct local identity, which is protected in a number of ways.
- 2.2.2 Archaeological evidence confirms prehistoric human activity and Saxon settlement and its emergence as a strategically important town-cum-inland port and gateway to the south and west from the mid-to-late 12th century. There is some architectural evidence of its long

existence as a market town, trading and industrial centre, particularly around Market Place but also along the historic route ways servicing the town (Portsmouth Road, Clarence Street, Eden Street). The great majority of buildings date from the last two centuries, a consequence of its growing importance as an industrial centre, with a core trade of brewing, and as a regional shopping centre. Residential development around the town centre followed the arrival of the railway in the 1860s. During the 19th century Kingston also became a centre for two tiers of local government, the county and the borough. From 1910 Kingston was a major centre for the aeronautical industry, with many plane factories located north of the railway line. Production ceased in the early 1990s. Kingston experienced an important phase of development in the inter-war years of the 20th century that helped maintain its commercial pre-eminence. Post-war redevelopment around the historic centre has been shaped by highways infrastructure, industrial decline, increasing retail provision and educational expansion.

Kingston Scheduled Monuments

- 2.2.3 These are historically important sites or monuments which are given legal protection by being placed on a list or 'schedule', kept since 1882. Scheduled Monuments are identified as; Castle Hill Earthwork, Clattern Bridge, Coombe Conduit at junction with Lord Chancellor Walk, Gallows Conduit in grounds of Hampton Springs, Gallows Tamkin and the Ivy Conduit in grounds of Coombe Ridge House/Holy Cross School.



Figure 7. Clattern Bridge, Kingston Town Centre

Kingston Conservation Areas

2.2.4 These are areas of special architectural or historic interest whose appearance and character are to be conserved or enhanced. Kingston now has 26 designated conservation areas as shown below, which are also mapped in **Appendix D**:

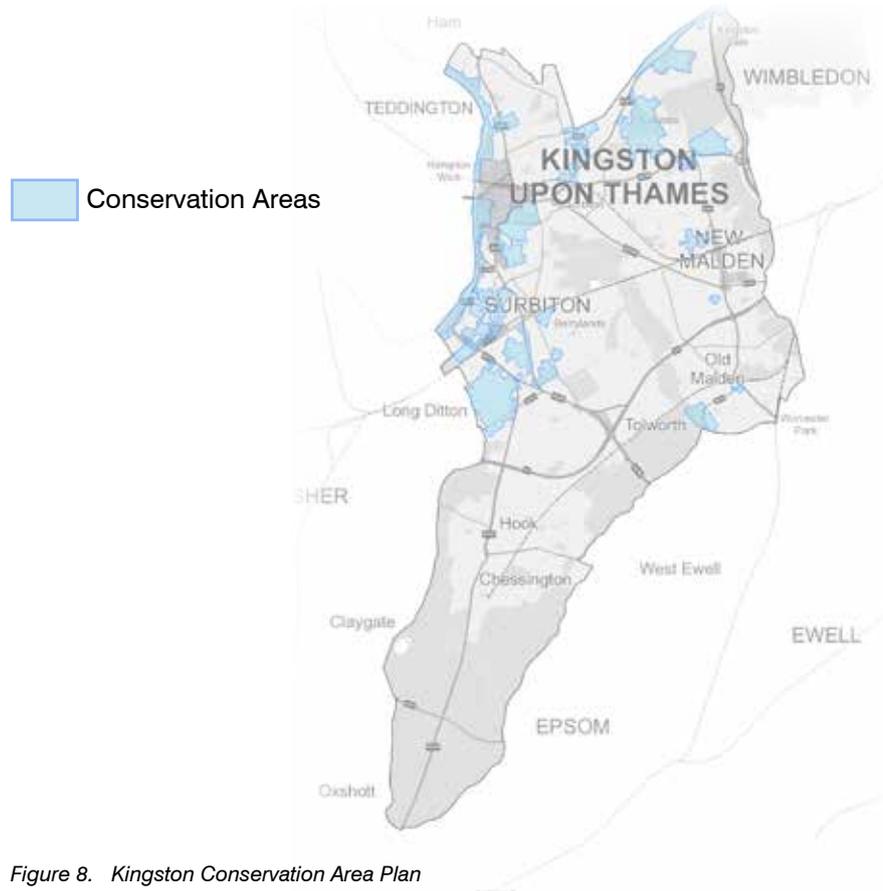


Figure 8. Kingston Conservation Area Plan

Kingston Listed Buildings

2.2.5 These are buildings of special architectural or historic interest that make a major contribution to the borough's heritage. They are graded to show their importance - in Kingston there are over 160 listed buildings with 9% being Grade I and II*. Their locations are shown on the **Environmental Assets Plan at Appendix D**.



Figure 9. All Saints Church, Guildhall and Kingston Bridge

Kingston Buildings of Townscape Merit/Locally Listed Buildings

- 2.2.6 These are groups of buildings or structures of historic and architectural interest which make a contribution to the character of the town and the local environment, but are not of high enough quality to be designated as 'listed'. There are approximately 700 in Kingston.



Figure 10. The Spring Grove Public House, Building of Townscape Merit

Strategic and Local Landmarks and Views

- 2.2.7 The Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan (K+20) (16) identifies Key Views and Landmarks and wider panoramas (shown on Plan 6 of the document) together with local views. These features contribute to the variety and interest of Kingston's townscape, they reinforce its sense of place and are a valuable part of its built heritage. Primary landmarks within the Old Town Conservation Area include the towers to All Saint's Church and the Guildhall and Kingston Bridge which views to and from need to be protected, along with the important views and vistas towards and within the Old Town Conservation Area. Protection should include sensitive control of height and massing of any new development.



Figure 11. Tolworth Tower, the Market House and Surbiton Clock Tower

Kingston Local Areas of Special Character

2.2.8 Local Areas of Special Character (16) recognise particularly good examples of environmental and historical interest and importance. There are 18 Local Areas of Special Character within Kingston upon Thames which are considered as part of this VSR (as illustrated on the **Environmental Assets Plan at Appendix D**).

Kingston Town:

- Albert and Victoria Roads
- Grove Lane
- Tudor Estate
- Wolverton Avenue (also partly within Maldern and Coombe)
- Woodside Road, Eastbury Road
- Wyndham Road, Bockhampton Road
- Borough Road, Princess Road and Arthur Road

Maldern and Coombe:

- Elm Road
- Lime Grove (The Groves LASC)
- The Berg Estate
- The Drive
- Thetford Road (Presburg Road LASC)

Surbiton:

- Berrylands Road
- Cleaveland Road, The Mall
- Cranes Park
- Grand and Elmbridge Avenues
- St. Matthews Avenue
- Walpole Road (Oakhill LASC)

2.3 Published Character and Townscape Areas

Kingston Upon Thames

- 2.3.1 Kingston has an attractive and distinctive character stemming from its riverside location and rich blend of old and new. A large swathe of the town centre was affected by development in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, which cut across its historic grain. There are few high quality modern buildings and the quality of the environment and public spaces needs upgrading. There is potential for high quality contemporary architecture in key locations, supported by improvements to the public realm, especially on approach routes. Protecting and enhancing the historic environment is key to maintaining Kingston's attractive character and distinctiveness, especially in the Old Town Conservation Area around the Market Place.
- 2.3.2 The Old Town has a medieval street pattern and contains an impressive range of good quality vernacular architecture dating from the 15th Century onwards, including many Listed Buildings. It retains its trading role, with shops and the daily Ancient market and has cultural heritage value. Outside the historic core, it is also important to retain and where possible re-establish the town's fine urban grain, in relation to historic streets, frontage lines and plots. The four peripheral conservation areas are: Fairfield/Knights Park; Grove Crescent; Riverside North and Riverside South. The Conservation Areas are subject to Conservation Area Appraisals as referenced in Appendix B, References (32), (33), (51) and (50) respectively.
- 2.3.3 The Kingston Town Centre K+20 AAP (16) identifies ten separate character areas. The attributes of each of these character areas have been analysed in terms of built fabric, experience, frontage quality and public realm. New development is proposed in this AAP up to 2020 and it is important that proposals are considered as part of an overall townscape framework, in order for appropriate linkages, access, environmental and infrastructure improvements are provided. Development, design, movement and environmental objectives are set out for each character area to help ensure that new development reinforces or improves their quality and identity. The objectives aim to build upon the positive qualities of each area and to improve any negative aspects. The ten character areas of the AAP are illustrated on Figure 14 below, extracted from K+20 (16).

Land Use and Character Area Descriptions (taken from K+20 (16))

Character Area 1: Prime Shopping

The primary shopping area is focussed on Clarence Street and includes the Bentall Centre, John Lewis department store, Marks and Spencer stores and the Eden Walk shopping centre. It extends into the Market Place and along secondary frontages in Fife Road, Castle Street and Eden Street.

Character Area 2: South East

This mixed use area between Eden Street and the relief road (Wheatfield Way) has retail and related uses, offices, a nightclub, parking, cafés/restaurants and a little residential. There are many poor quality buildings, routes and spaces. Only the listed former Post Office and sorting office/telephone exchange buildings are noteworthy.

Character Area 3: Eastern Approach

The eastern approach to the town centre extends from the railway line southwards across housing, Old London Road and the relief road to the Cattle Market car park, Kingfisher leisure centre and the listed Kingston Library and Museum.

Character Area 4: Kingston Station and its approaches

Kingston Station and its approaches have a poor quality environment on the busy relief road. There are offices along Wood Street completed in the late 1980's. The area is one of the hubs for evening entertainment with the Oceana nightclub and the Rotunda leisure development. With the exception of the Rotunda, the other corners around the station have poor quality buildings and are designated as Proposal Sites.

Character Area 5: Riverside North

This area includes the Bentalls car parks, the Vicarage Road and Turks sites. The area has a riverside frontage, but currently presents a negative image, with vacant sites and the Bentalls B car park awaiting redevelopment. The sites have development potential to provide high quality buildings and spaces to comprehensively upgrade the area.

Character Area 6: Historic Core – Old Town Conservation Area

The historic core of the OTCA around the Market Place is an exceptional example of a largely intact Medieval street pattern and has an impressive range of good quality vernacular architecture from the 15th century onwards. The Market Place historically provided a focus for trade, local government and hospitality and although this has changed, it retains its role as Kingston's premier public space, with its daily market and shops. The Market House, one of Kingston's primary landmarks, now houses the award winning Tourist Information Centre.

Character Area 7: Riverside South – Old Town Conservation Area

This part of the OTCA fronts onto the Thames and stretches from Kingston Bridge south to Town End Gardens and High Street. It has experienced the greatest degree of change over the past century, as trade and industry declined, and was replaced with redevelopment for residential and recreational use, including Bishops Palace House in the 1970s and Charter Quay in 2001. The area has a mix of uses with offices, residential, restaurants and bars, and the Minima Yacht Club and a mix of architectural styles.

Character Area 8: High Street – Old Town Conservation Area

This area includes the full extent of the High Street and the Guildhall area. The High Street is a secondary frontage with shops, restaurants and pubs, plus offices, flats and the theatre building. It has a

range of building styles from 16th century vernacular through to the recent theatre. There are five listed buildings, plus the 12th century Clattern Bridge, a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The High Street acts as the southern gateway to the OTCA and the town centre from the Portsmouth Road.

Character Area 9: Civic and Education

This area extends southwards from the Guildhall to Kingston University, taking in the Courts, Kingston College, Surrey County Hall and car parks

Character Area 10: North Kingston

This area extends from the riverside and Canbury Gardens across to Richmond Road and from the railway northwards to Lower Kings Road. It has been the subject of major regeneration over the last 10 years, with the redevelopment of the former Power Station, gas works, station yard and factory sites for housing (900+ units), a supermarket, health and fitness club and multi-storey car park, with associated new roads and environmental improvements.



Figure 12. Kingston Town Centre Town Character Areas

Historical Area Study

2.3.4 The Historic England Kingston Town Centre Study Area (8) considers the following character areas and their important characteristics which are summarised below:

Kingston Old Town Conservation Area, including Riverside

- The historic centre of Kingston is clustered around the ancient parish church of All Saints and the Market Place, which has the Kingston Market House (1840) listed Grade II* at its centre.
- Heritage assets and around the Market Place is vulnerable to the intrusion of very tall buildings. The skyline comprises buildings both listed and unlisted and can still clearly be read; which contribute to the understanding of the medieval scale and grain.
- Good public realm/landscaping at Charter Quay make this a very successful pedestrianised area which animates the river front.

Station Quarter (Central Area)

- Castle Street was created in 1939 as a new route between Clarence Street and Fife Road, and as a single-phase speculative development.
- It comprises a development of three-storey brick terraces of ground floor shops with maisonettes above accessed from the rear (some now in office use), bookended at the north and south ends by larger stores, also of three storeys.
- Castle Street is an attractive piece of inter-war town planning. The parades have a suburban quality that suits the scale of surrounding development (particularly towards Fife Street).

Station Quarter (East) including Old London Road

- The listed Bentalls repository building of the 1930s survives and now incorporates the Odeon cinema. An enclave of mid-to-late 19th -century terraced houses survive along the south side of Cromwell Road and in Hardman Road - unusual and distinctive semi-detached houses of two storeys with narrow frontage, side entrance and long thin plots, in yellow stock brick with red brick dressing.
- Old London Road has historic wealth and diversity in the eastern portion of the town centre, far from the ancient market place. As a whole, the street acts as a high quality setting for some of the borough's most important heritage assets and oldest built fabric.
- There is no unified historic character per se; instead, interest is primarily derived from the diversity of the buildings which are nevertheless constructed on a similar scale and with the intimacy of a relatively high density corridor street.

Eden Quarter

- The northern part of Eden Quarter has considerable and possibly under-valued architectural interest. The interwar single development of shops and offices which flank Castle Street, and a number of bank or building society buildings around the junction of Clarence Street and Eden Street are of intrinsically high architectural quality. These are: the HBSC Bank, the Halifax Building Society, Santander and Skipton Building Society.
- They are good examples of their type for the period, highlighting the status of this town centre with its long history of shops and shopping, also evident in the bigger developments of the Guildhall and the Bentalls store.
- As design cues they show the quality of place and contextual relationship with older elements of the town centre that can be gained from working on a smaller plot size.
- The middle section of Eden Street is lined with buildings developed in a piecemeal fashion. The buildings are taller, the footprint is bigger and the multi-storey car park and shopping centre, planned in the Council plan of 1963, have been realised in built form.

Eden Quarter (South)

- Because of its proximity with the Kingston Old Town Conservation Area and the Market Place, this site is sensitive site in terms of height and massing.
- This site bound by Eden St, Ashdown Street, Wheatfield Way and Brook Street has seen much erosion in recent years. The only surviving historic assests – both listed – are the former Post Office (1875) and the Sorting Office/Telephone Exchange (1907).
- The relationship with the old town centre and the low-lying residential area directly to the east and now part of the Fairfield Conservation Area, i.e. the mediation between two strong character areas, is an important consideration for development in this part of the town centre.

Grove Area

- Milner Road, Woodbines Avenue and The Bittoms are residential streets lined by early 20th century suburban houses that edge the block occupied by Surrey County Hall on Penryhn Road. The area lies to the east of Portsmouth Road and the Riverside South Conservation Area.
- Surrey County Hall is a multi-phase complex, partially listed Grade II, situated between two conservation areas (Grove Crescent CA and Riverside South CA).
- The Milner Road houses form an interesting foil to the classical stone elevation of the County Hall's eastern range.

The Wider Borough

- 2.3.5 Kingston upon Thames was created as a Borough in 1965, amalgamating the Old Boroughs of Kingston upon Thames, Surbiton and Malden and Coombe. The streets of the Borough have a character that reflects their past form and use. A borough wide character study (RBK 'Towards a Sense of Place' Borough Character Study') (15) has been undertaken to support the LDF (14). The twenty-two borough character areas are illustrated below:



Figure 13. Kingston Borough Character Areas Plan

- 2.3.6 The 2011 study considers each character area with regards to its origins and general character, land use, movement, built form and open space. Within each character area a plan is provided for 'Key Area Characteristics' which identifies 'Strategic and Local Landmarks', 'Key Views to Open Space', 'Potential New Views' and 'Significant Views to Protect'. It is from these borough character areas that views have been identified and appraised to form the basis of the High Level Assessment for this views study.

Character Areas

The following summary descriptions have been influenced by the Borough Character Study (2011) (15).

1. Tudor

This area grew around the popularity of its setting of rural charm, open riverside and its proximity to Kingston Town and the road to Richmond. Only some estate walls and cedar trees along Lower Ham Wall remain of John Nash's 'Bank Grove', set in grounds designed by Humphrey Repton c1797. The bulk of housing and industrial development occurred in the inter-war years, with the Tudor Estate completed in the mid-1930s. The strong sense of community and the adaptability of the Tudor houses has made the area very popular.

2. Park Road North

This is a residential area that benefits from its eastern neighbour, Richmond Park, as well as a council-run, and a council-leased allotment. The leased allotment is nestled beneath the rising ground to Richmond Park, and sheltered from the north and east winds, partly sur-rounded by trees with long views to the Park. There are two layers to the character of the buildings and streets of this area. Park Road North is approached from either of two strongly coherent adjacent areas. After the unity and solidity of the largely Victorian Canbury area, and the architectural flourish and coherence of style of the Tudor area, the disparate, shifting styles, layouts and architecture here can appear to give the area an incoherent feel.

3. Canbury Gardens

The Canbury Gardens Area is centred around the first bend of the river Thames as it runs from Kingston to Richmond. It is a low density housing area with some local shops and cafés, and is characteristic of North Kingston. It contains three, high quality street blocks of late Victorian housing built on sloping side roads between the busy Richmond Road to one side and the riverside park called Canbury Gardens to the other. Canbury Gardens was created by a visionary Mayor in 1890 from an area of drained land, once a tract of marshes and osier beds with a towpath and barge cottage. After the building expansion that followed the arrival of the railway in 1863, the site became a tar factory and rubbish dump before being transformed into parkland.

4. Canbury

Canbury developed following the extension of the railway line from Twickenham to Kingston, completed in 1863. Until then the area was open fields, with Kings Highway connecting Richmond Road to Queen's Road. The kinked Elm Road (originally Hog Lane) is visible on 1868 maps twisting around hedge lines, while Acre Road was only a lane. The line was extended in 1869 via a new station at Norbiton to terminate at Ludgate Hill. Until then, Acre Road (known as 40 acres) was regarded as the end of town. Developers keen to profit from the opportunity the railway would bring, bought up Lord Liverpool's farm with 103 acres, 33 acres next to Kingston Station, and 44 acres of pasture and arable land on the estate of the Earl of Dysart (fronting Richmond Road and King's Road). The rich variety in house design and detail visible today is a result of the spasmodic sale of land and development.

5. Coombe

The character of Coombe today is a bi-polar one. In the heart of Coombe and Coombe Hill there is a stately revealing of the many layers of history; of road development, of fine houses and lodges, of planted woods and fine gardens; and an array of textures of old buildings with beautiful detailing, remnants of estate walls, spring-fed lakes, old manors, and large houses set

in a majestic green, mature and unconstrained parkland. This palimpsest-like landscape adds a special dimension to the character of place.

6. Grove

In 1850 most of what is now the heartland of Grove was covered by farmland and open meadows. In 1860, Victorian villas were built on Orchard Road. Following the opening of Kingston railway station in 1863, the value of land increased rapidly and, during the 1860's and 1870's, houses were built on Fairfield North, Knights Park and Mill Street. The Fairfield Recreation Ground was established and opened in 1889.

7. Norbiton

A coherent urban swathe to the north is cut by a car-dominated, depressing approach road to the town, where townscape quality has been gutted'. It hides a copious, green and visually open hinterland to the south. This green oasis, save the cemeteries and the town tip, have restricted access. Through it runs the Hogsmill River, a valuable natural asset which has been largely secured against the enjoyment of people.

8. New Malden North

The southern part of this area was farmland with open fields between Coombe Road and New Malden which began developing in 1880 around the topographical highpoint of Mount Pleasant. Building was slow, with just 4 houses completed by 1884, until the Kingston by-pass (the first road of its kind in Britain) opened in 1927. Within 3 years the population of Maldens and Coombe had increased by 25% to 25,000. Development began in the south and west of the "village", with the focal point of "The Green" centred on the existing 21m highpoint (for comparison, 12m above the level of The Hogsmill). More development post World War II completed the street layout visible today.

9. Maple

The Maple area is bounded by the River Thames to the west and Maple Road to the East. The Seething Wells area, the former water treatment works, marks the southern boundary of the area. This area straddles two council neighbourhood areas. However, as set out in the introduction, the rationale behind the definition of areas in this study is not an administrative one. The Portsmouth Road has a strong riverside character with larger scale development directly relating to the river edge. Maple Road has a distinctive, tree lined character with views to the river. Many of the late Victorian properties still remain today creating an area with a generally strong, cohesive character.

10. St Marks

This area includes the town centre of Surbiton and with the Maple area, formed the heart of Surbiton. The new town was largely attributed to Thomas Pooley who conceived the idea, drew up initial plans and commissioned architects and builders. Towards the end of the Victorian era, the eastern part of the area was still open fields with Albury House and The Cranes occupying large plots. Victorian villas from the establishment of Surbiton occupied the central part of the area.

11. Langley

The northern part of the area formed a substantial part of Surbiton as it was in the 1860's where large villas on generous plots occupied the land south of the railway line. Further south, Southborough Park and Southborough Farm made up the majority of the area. Around the 1860's Lovelace Road and Gardens, Corkran Road and Langley Avenue were being laid out as formal avenues with substantial houses on large plots.

12. King Charles

The area is one of contrasts with large scale Victorian villas predominantly to the east of the area with more incremental development occupying the Alpha Road area. The Ewell Road has a distinctive, generally larger scale character with a number of important landmark buildings at its northern end.

13. Berrylands

The Area is bounded by the railway line in the north, the Hogsmill River in the east and the A3 to the south. The western edge of the area abuts the older, Victorian areas of Surbiton around the King Charles Road area. Regent Road and Seymour Gardens now occupy the site where Regent House, built around 1890, once stood. It was the first important building within the Area. Berry-lands Road was extended into the Area around 1890, and Berrylands Farm, formerly Berry Lodge Farm, stood on the site of the present Manor Crescent.

14. New Malden South

Until 1836, the area was a stretch of open country, separated from Kingston by Norbiton Common. With the coming of the railway, the centre of the town, now the high street, was called “the Village”. The station was opened in 1846, seventeen years before Kingston railway station was built. The first part of the new town to be laid out was the six Groves west of the High Street; Acacia, Chestnut, Elm, Lime, Poplar and Sycamore, planted with trees to match their names. The coming of the Kingston by pass in 1927 accelerated the growth of New Malden, with its population rising from 20,000 in 1928 to 25,000 in 1931.

15. Tolworth

Formal retail parades edge the Broadway with housing developed predominantly in the 1930's in Princes and Hamilton Avenues and the surrounding streets. A curved street pattern and relatively low densities with semi-detached houses and short terraces characterise this area. The landmark status of the Tolworth Tower and the area's location on the A3 identify the area as a key gateway to Kingston and the borough generally. This green transition to the south of the A3 is of mixed character with potential for significant improvement. Tolworth Broadway is an established retail area and glimpses of the Tower can be seen from many of the surrounding streets, identifying them with the Tolworth and giving the area a strong identity.

16. Sunray

The area is bounded by the A3 to the north, the Hogsmill to the east, the railway line to the south and Kingston Road to the east. The southernmost boundary of the area defined by the railway line marks the urban edge of the borough.

17. Old Malden

Old Malden is bounded to the north by the A3, to the west by the Hogsmill River, and to the south and east by the borough boundary. The name Malden originates from the name of the village of Malden recorded in the Domesday Record of 1086. Before this, as revealed by archaeological investigations, there has been settlement in the area since the Iron Age. The linear village followed the line of Church Road, which still exists. At the western end of Church Road lies the original centre of the village, with the Saxon foundation church of St. John the Baptist and the adjacent Manor House, both listed as Grade II.

18. Hook

The northern and southern boundaries of the area are marked by the Ace of Spades shopping area and the shops at the Mansfield Road roundabout respectively, with Hook Parade being

the central node which forms the heart of the area. Hook was originally a small settlement on the route for farm carts going to Kingston market with their produce, with sheep and cattle being driven along the road. Hook was an agricultural area, famous for orchards, strawberry fields and farm produce.

19 Chessington North

This area today consists of areas of well defined residential development, built as pockets of development over a relatively short period of time between the late 1930's and 50's and then the 1970's.

20. Jubilee Way

This area contains a range of uses which, with the exception of the area around the King Georges recreation ground, north of Jubilee Way, are mostly hidden behind heavily landscaped edges. Kingston Road, divides the area in two and this road combined with Jubilee way generate heavy traffic throughout the area. The large industrial estate on Cox Lane marks the western edge of the area

21. Chessington South

This is a residential area predominantly 1930s semi-detached and short terraces. Distinctive "Arts and Crafts" style short terraces with clay pantiles around Compton Crescent area. Curved and spacious street pattern with distinct areas of particular housing styles. Large area of more contemporary housing in Merrit Gardens area and smaller areas at Hunting Gate Drive and Chessington Hall Gardens with tight curved street and cul-de-sac layout and open plan frontages.

22. Malden Rushett

Although the area consists mainly of open countryside, there is little visual access to the open space beyond Leatherhead Road. Malden Rushett has a relatively cohesive character due to its compact layout and there are opportunities to reinforce this character to mitigate the impact of the road.

- 2.3.7 The 2011 Borough Character Study (15) judges the potential for future enhancement/change in the area, on the basis of the extent to which there was a degree of cohesive quality. Ten separate criteria were developed, based on urban design guidance relating to the creation of successful places.

The Thames Landscape Strategy – Reach 04 Kingston

- 2.3.8 The Thames Landscape Strategy (TLS) (81) describes the historic character and evolution of this reach of the Thames. The Kingston Reach covers the historic waterfront of the town, running along the Surrey bank from the end of the Queen's Promenade to the Kingston Railway Bridge. On the Middlesex bank, there are two distinct landscapes. South of Kingston Bridge, mature trees and parkland stretch right to the edge of the Barge Walk. The Kingston reach has undergone a dramatic change over the past 15 years. This is the result of a combination of factors – the town centre's status as a regional centre, and the survival into the fourth quarter of the 20th century of its traditional industrial base, much of it based on the river that has now largely been redeveloped.

- 2.3.9 There is a great contrast between the built-up waterfront on the north of Kingston Bridge and the tree'd parkland to the south. The Barge Walk is lined by a row of mature and rounded horse chestnuts and backed by a rank of columnar poplars. The trees and open parkland beyond create a rare London view from the built-up town waterfront on the opposite bank. A colony of houseboats has domesticated the river bank with enclosed private gardens - this shouldn't be allowed to extend any further as this would compromise the essentially open and public nature of the river bank.
- 2.3.10 The strategy statement includes that there has been a concerted effort with projects and strategies to reverse the historic impression of Kingston 'turning its back on the river', through joint action by the Borough and the TLS (81) to improve landscaping and street furniture, and integrate wildlife and boat activity with the recreational uses. This has helped to balance the intensity of development, so that the river plays an increasingly large part in the life of the town.

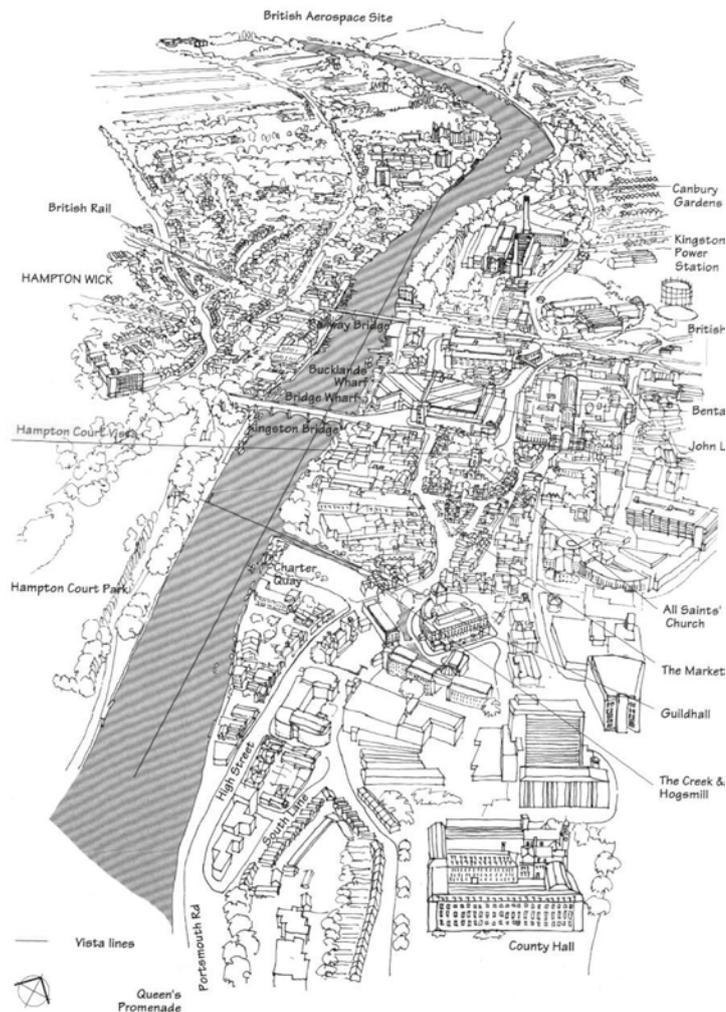


Figure 14. Hand drawn sketch of Kingston Town Centre and the River Thames taken from the Thames Landscape Strategy 2012