

## 4.0 Vision and principles for Kingston's Arcadian Riverside

**4.0.1** Hampton Court, Kew and Richmond Park, were developed as formal landscapes with specific functions. Kingston's Riverside has evolved organically over recent decades from a place of industry and private ownership to a vibrant, public space for the town's people to enjoy.

**4.0.2** The character of the Riverside at Kingston is not homogenous; the active urban centre is bookended by the green spaces of Canbury Gardens and Queens Promenade, a contrast in pace which is enjoyed by those travelling along the river.

**4.0.3** The vision for the riverside is for it to become a remarkable public space at the heart of Kingston, continuing its evolution and raising its quality of public spaces. Movement to, from and along the riverside will become an uplifting experience; easier and safer. An expanded range of cultural and sporting events will be accommodated and the qualitative uplift in open space provision will support the growth of the town centre's population. Balanced with this, is a recognition of the importance of providing connected habitats where wildlife can thrive. In this way Kingston's Riverside landscape will become an equally important component of the Arcadian Thames character areas as its neighbours, supporting the ambition to create an Arcadian World Heritage Site.

**4.0.4** There is much to improve: the formal Victorian gardens of Canbury and Queens Promenade are now faded and activity could be increased, sections of the route are unclear and the public realm is poor quality in parts, connections between the Riverside and the historic town centre are weak, and conflict and congestion between different types of user are poorly managed.

**4.0.5** The vision for Kingston's Arcadian Riverside is explored through the following five themes which establish principles to guide detailed design proposals. Where there is potential conflict between the aims of these principles, appropriate balance should be struck.

### KEY THEMES



REDISCOVERING  
KINGSTON'S MARKET  
TOWN



MAKING SPACE  
FOR WATER AND  
BIODIVERSITY



OPEN SPACE AND  
ACTIVE RIVERSIDE



IMPROVING  
CONNECTIVITY AND  
CREATING A COHERENT  
MOVEMENT NETWORK



THE RIVER PROVIDING  
A UNIQUE CULTURE  
FOR KINGSTON



## 4.1 Rediscovering Kingston's market town

**4.1.1 The vision is to connect the Riverside fully with the historic core and increase active use of the Riverside for eating and drinking, cultural and leisure uses, with these uses expanding to occupy the zone between Thames Side and Town End. This continues Kingston's historic role as a place of hospitality, including links to Hampton Court and the crossing point of the Thames and is in line with the boundary of the designated metropolitan town centre.**

**4.1.2** Recent investment in the public realm of Kingston's Ancient Market has reinvigorated the historic centre creating attractive public spaces and a high quality shopping experience. Development on the riverside to the south of Kingston Bridge has done much to re-orientate Kingston towards the river, with cafés and restaurants providing a complementary offer to the town centre. These areas become extremely busy at peak times. Despite this, the Riverside still feels disconnected from the retail core just one block away. Connecting alleys are clogged by parking and lack active frontage.

**4.1.3** To the north of Kingston Bridge and on the Bridge itself, the historic street network connecting the river to the Ancient Market has been

entirely lost to large urban blocks and highways infrastructure. The area feels cut-off and lacks activity.

**4.1.4** To the south of the bridge the focus is on improving existing east-west pedestrian links, and enhancing visual connectivity to the Ancient Market. By bringing the alleys and spaces between buildings into active use, pressure on the riverside walk itself will be reduced. This principle of spilling back takes precedent from the public spaces created around Charter Quay. Active frontage in the existing alleys could be utilised, for example by Kingston's growing creative industries sector. To the north of the bridge a more radical approach is required, to introduce active uses to the waterfront through new development, with reconfiguration of the highways network. This will assist in reasserting the historic street pattern and reducing the physical barrier of John Lewis.

**4.1.5** In line with the K+20 Kingston Town Centre AAP the SPD supports works to the setting of Kingston Bridge to create a positive point of arrival into Kingston, reconfiguring the junction of Horse Fair and Clarence Street to focus the eye away from the A308 / John Lewis tunnel and towards the historic core.

### Principles

- Between Thames Side and Town End, the riverside will be characterised by active, public uses including food and drink, cultural heritage and visitor attractions, connected and complementary to the retail core.
- A fine grained network of high quality pedestrian and cycling links will be established between the Riverside and the town centre reflecting the historic network of streets and lanes.
- Development close to the Riverside will be required to create a positive front to the water, with active ground floor uses and continuation of the public riverside walk.
- Exceptional design standards for new buildings and public realm will be required. Changes should conserve and enhance the quality of the built and natural environment as identified through the designated heritage status of the area, the architectural quality of its buildings, the riverfront as part of the Arcadian Thames and important strategic and local views to and from the study area.
- In line with the Kingston Town Centre AAP Policy K9, the design of development should respond to local context, scale and character, with a low rise scale appropriate at the river frontage, and a gradual increase in scale away from the river and the historic core.
- Opportunities to strengthen links between the river and the Ancient Market, All Saints Church and Guildhall will be sought to strengthen the diverse retail offer of the town.
- Gateways to the market town at Kingston Bridge and Town End are to be enhanced in line with Policy K10 of the AAP.
- Seek opportunities to reveal and celebrate the Hogsmill as it passes through the town.



## 4.2 Open space & active riverside

**4.2.1** The vision for the riverside walk is to create a connected, high quality, linear park which varies in character from the picturesque to the urban, yet has a coherent identity and is legible and accessible to all. Points of interest along the riverside walk will act as local destinations and encourage activity along its full length.

**4.2.2** Since the opening of Charter Quay in 2001 it has been possible to walk the length of the SPD area on paths and streets close to or at the River Thames edge. However, the route varies in quality and the section between the rail and road bridges is fragmented with direct access to the water limited by private ownerships. With the projected increase in town centre population over the coming years, there is a need to raise the

quality of the riverside open spaces to support this growth, particularly given the limited potential for new public spaces within the town centre itself.

**4.2.3** The green bookends of Canbury Gardens and Queens Promenade are to be enhanced as public green spaces, with new riverine planting creating a more naturalistic appearance and supporting increased biodiversity.

**4.2.4** The hard landscape of the central section will be softened where possible while still designed to accommodate a greater intensity of use appropriate to its town centre location.

### Principles

1. The Riverside walk is to have three distinctive character areas:  
A: Canbury Gardens – a formal park for relaxation and recreation. This character area is to extend past the current southern boundary of the park towards Thames Side  
B: Kingston's historic wharves and market town – an intensively used, urban promenade including a new public square adjacent to the proposed Gloriana mooring.  
C: Town End park to Ravens Ait – a green riverine, linear park
2. Public realm enhancements will improve the quality and safety (including lighting) of the environment in a way that strengthens the unique nature of the identified character areas.
3. The riverside will be characterised by a simple palette of materials is to be created and applied to the length of the riverside walk in a manner appropriate to localised character. With consideration given to the long term management and maintenance of public space to ensure its durability.
4. Connections between the western riverbank with the eastern riverbank will be sought, to encourage circular walks and connectivity towards Hampton Court.
5. Entrances to Canbury Gardens will be improved to encourage use of the park.
6. Opportunities will be sought to increase direct public access to the waterfront across the length of the Riverside, especially between Canbury Gardens and Kingston Bridge.
7. Opportunities to naturalise and green the Hogsmill River are to be sought forming a green/blue corridor into Surrey.
8. The design of new buildings or infrastructure will minimise the visual impact on heritage assets including the Grade II\* Kingston Bridge, avoid impact on navigational rights and biodiversity and be integrated seamlessly into the wider riverside environment.



## 4.3 The river providing a unique culture for Kingston

**4.3.1 The vision is to celebrate the river's unique contribution to Kingston by increasing opportunities for people to enjoy and directly interact with the river. An increased programme of unique sporting, arts and cultural events will build on the existing annual programme including the Regatta.**

**4.3.2** The River Thames is a defining feature of Kingston's cultural identity. It is used by a wide range of local organisations for sports and leisure activities including rowing, sailing, dragon boat racing, fishing and leisure cruises. It is equally important to individuals walking, cycling or running along its banks, enjoying the view, or engaging with the water directly through paddling or dipping their toes. The Queens Promenade section has less variety and interest and has potential to accommodate new facilities and attractions.

**4.3.3** With its west facing aspect the Riverside is an ideal place to take in the evening sunset and has long attractive views of the River which should be exploited. However, to fulfil its potential the riverside must function all year round and at different times of the day/week.

**4.3.4** The proposal to moor the Queen's Barge

'Gloriana' close to John Lewis and Turks Pier will increase the attraction of Kingston's riverside and highlight the Borough's royal patronage. Tourists will be encouraged to stay longer in Kingston and visit other attractions such as the Ancient Market by connection with the existing heritage trail. The history of the riverside is to be celebrated through new interpretation materials exploring its industrial past and the history of the river as a transport route.

**4.3.5** To support the increased programme of events and attractions, appropriate facilities will be required including coach parking and temporary events parking. Increased leisure use of the riverside must consider the impact on adjacent residential areas. Use of the river for transport by boat is a key element of its character and heritage. Appropriate facilities for commercial leisure cruises, plus high quality space for visitor moorings will support increased boat based travel. These facilities should only be considered in locations where they do not harm the character, openness and views of the river (by virtue or design), they do not interfere with the existing recreational use of the river or riverside, and that their development provides a benefit to the wider community.

### Principles

1. The cultural heritage of the river will be celebrated as an intrinsic part of Kingston's story and royal patronage. Riverside attractions including the proposed Gloriana mooring will be connected into the wider town heritage trail and linked to other destinations within the wider historic Thames Valley including Hampton Court.
2. Opportunities to celebrate the importance of the riverside within the town centre will be sought, including an expanded programme of annual public events will be developed using the river and riverside walk as a stage, working with existing institutions to encourage more cultural events on the river.
3. Sports use of the river and water-based leisure will be supported recognising the importance of these activities to the vibrancy and spectacle of the corridor. Opportunities to improve facilities and encourage further use of the river for recreation will be supported.
4. Opportunities for increased water based travel and use of the water for business will be supported in line with requirements of the London Plan.
5. Opportunities to enrich the experience of the river through public art and interpretation will be sought along the length of the Riverside, linked to the wider heritage trail initiative.
6. Queens Promenade will be the focus for new permanent and temporary attractions. The feasibility of developing a habitat based visitor attractions, including at Seething Wells, will be explored.
7. The green spaces of Town End/Queens Promenade and Canbury Gardens will become more riverine in character to support the cultural relationship between the river and the town.
8. All new visitor attractions will be compatible with and support the natural environment and habitats.



## 4.4 Making space for water & biodiversity

**4.4.1 The vision is to 'green' and naturalise the riverbank to support increased biodiversity along the length of the riverside, including within the green spaces of Queens Promenade and Canbury Gardens in particular taking on a more riverine character. This is particularly important to support the role of the Thames as a blue/green corridor connecting habitats across London.**

**4.4.2** The highly urbanised character of the riverbank at Kingston supports little Riverside vegetation and reduces the amount of available habitat for wildlife, restricting movement and distribution of some species. However, positive interventions such as those on Hogsmill have introduced new areas for wildlife to colonise.

**4.4.3** Physical continuity of habitat will be improved through the provision of continuous habitat or the provision of a series of green stepping stones along the wider Thames corridor such as pocket parks, private landscaped areas, public landscaped areas and green roofs. Green spaces should be multi-functional for example an ecology corridor can also operate as an element of a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS).

**4.4.4** There are multiple opportunities along the riverside to provide habitat for species which

have been recognised as being of importance for nature conservation. The aim of the SPD strategy is to provide more opportunities for target species to allow the expansion of the local populations of these species.

**4.4.5** Indirect barriers to wildlife movement include light pollution which should be reduced where possible and in particular light spillage onto the river itself. The Daubenton's bat roost, located within the Seething Wells Filter Bed site is known to be particularly light sensitive and forages primarily over water including the Thames. Increasingly, dark corridors are being identified to benefit wildlife in urban areas.

**4.4.6** The river ecosystems are affected by the quality of the river water which is influenced by a range of sources including run-off from roads and treated foulwater discharges. In line with the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive, every opportunity to increase water quality should be taken as this benefits not only wildlife but also human river users.

**4.4.7** Ecosystems are often susceptible to changes and disruption. Any works carried out in the riverside area need to ensure they are considerate to both local resident populations and wildlife.

### Principles

1. The variety and continuity of in-channel and riverbank habitats throughout the SPD area will be enhanced wherever possible to create a 'greened' riverbank. The aim of 'greening' the edge of the river is to provide habitat and opportunities for wildlife to live within and travel through the study area, supporting the wider functionality of the ecosystem of the River Thames corridor, protecting the green views from Hampton Court and the western river bank and providing an attractive setting for river activity.
2. Further measures to support the River Thames corridor include:
  - the control of light spillage into the Thames and Hogsmill River corridors by setting light limits to create a dark corridor. This will be applicable to both new development proposals and repair and maintenance programmes.
  - the creation of new habitats, green stepping stones corridors, and SuDS within the wider urban fabric.
3. Prevent existing and diffuse sources of water pollution and promote continued improvements in the quality of the discharges from the Kingston Sewage Works.
4. Support measures to manage excess water including the use of attenuation and permeable paving.
5. Support measures to:
  - Increase the extent and diversity of habitats for Species Conservation Concern.
  - Create habitats for native species, and prevent the spread and Introduction of Invasive Species through the removal and monitoring of species, including Himalayan Balsam.



## 4.5 Improving connectivity & creating a coherent movement network

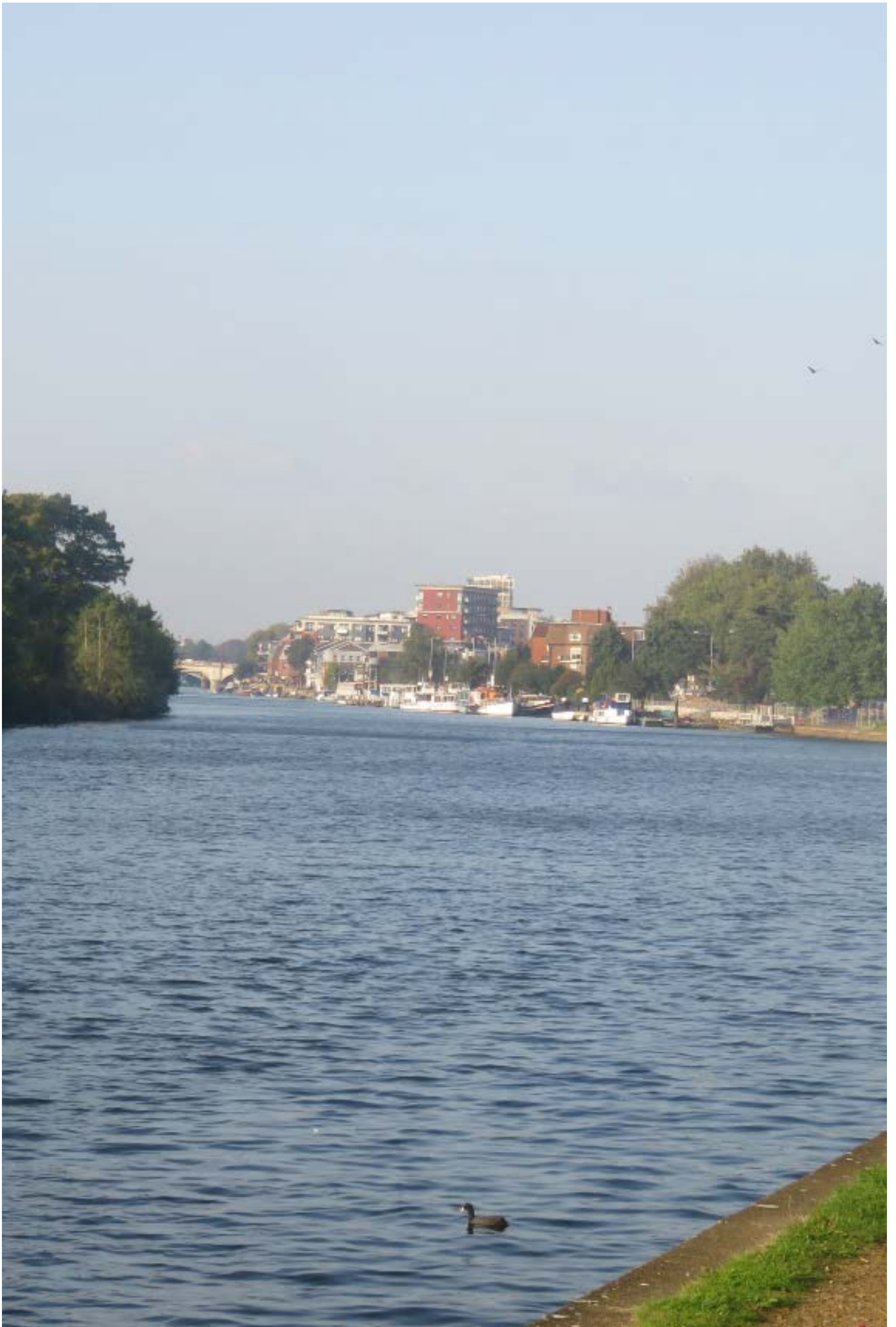
**4.5.1 The vision is to create a coherent and pleasant network of links that prioritises pedestrian movement along the river, introduces space for cycling, and connects the river, town centre and wider walking and cycling routes.**

**4.5.2** The riverside is an important corridor for movement by foot, cycle and boat and also accommodates cars, service vehicles and buses on adjacent streets. The range of movements can lead to congestion, particularly in the town centre section of the path where faster moving pedestrians can encounter crowds spilling out from bars and restaurants. Some of the alleys connecting the riverside with the High Street and Ancient Market are dominated by parked cars and service vehicles. Cycling is not permitted for much of the riverside walk south of Kingston Bridge although it does occur in these areas.

**4.5.3** Activities such as servicing, car and coach parking will be actively managed in the Riverside to minimise negative impacts, to rebalance spaces in favour of pedestrians, to ensure safety is maintained and to create a high quality public realm. Car and coach parking will be located outside of the riverside area, taking advantage of facilities across the town. The creation of a high quality public realm at the riverside will be key to encouraging its use by pedestrians and cyclists. Increased leisure use or events on the riverside must consider the impact on adjacent residential areas, and the river itself.

### Principles

1. Pedestrians will be prioritised in the Riverside.
2. Improved cycle routes will be provided in the town centre and increased cycle parking distributed within the town to allow cyclists to get to the riverside and then explore the area on foot.
3. Cyclists will only be encouraged to make use of the riverside walk where it is wide enough to be shared without conflict with pedestrians and other leisure users.
4. Existing alleys providing east-west links between the riverside and the town centre will be improved with public realm enhancements, cycle parking, events and new activities.
5. Coach parking will be consolidated into appropriate streets, with routing carefully planned to avoid cycle routes and areas of high pedestrian activity.
6. North-south links will be improved by enhancing the quality and coherence of the route between the bridges, and creating new public spaces to encourage access to the waterfront.
7. The riverside will be decluttered by removing or relocating nonessential servicing, signage and street furniture to release space for pedestrians. On-street parking, except for disabled parking, will be removed and consolidated into existing town centre car parks. Servicing activity will be better managed through close working with and between commercial tenants, targeted kerb-side controls, restricted hours of access and consolidated facilities as exemplified at Charter Quay.
8. A coherent movement network will be created in the riverside that will connect with the wider pedestrian and cycle networks towards Surbiton along Portsmouth Road and Richmond from Canbury Gardens and Lower Ham Road, and to the western bank.



## 5.0 Character of the Riverside

### 5.0.1 An evolving and varied character

The character of the riverside today - its landscape and townscape, level of activity and use - varies considerably along the corridor covered by this SPD. As a result of the spatial analysis undertaken to inform this SPD the area has been classified into six distinctive character areas (see figure 25);

- 1a** Canbury Gardens
- 1b** Entrance to Canbury Gardens
- 2a** Between the bridges
- 2b** The historic town centre
- 3a** Town End and Queens Promenade
- 3b** Ravens Ait

**5.0.2** There is an opportunity to encourage greater coherence in the character of Kingston's riverside and support the vision for Kingston's Arcadian Riverside. This will be achieved by combining the six different character areas into three:

1. Canbury Gardens: a reinvigorated Victorian pleasure gardens, forming a northern green bookend to the town centre.
2. Kingston's historic wharves and market town: an intensively used, urban promenade.
3. Town End Park to Ravens Ait: a linear, riverine public park forming the southern green bookend to the town centre.

**5.0.3** Sections 5.1 – 5.9 describe each of the three proposed character areas. The sections are organised as follows:

- A summary of the issues and opportunities of the existing character areas.
- A list of proposals for the future consolidated character area, describing how the overarching vision and supporting themes are to be applied to each character area.
- An accompanying proposals plan.

**5.0.4** Information to support the findings in this and the following sections has been taken from site surveys undertaken from September 2016 onwards.





Canbury Gardens



Entrance to Canbury Gardens



Between the bridges



The historic market town centre



Queens Promenade



Ravens Ait

Existing

Proposed



Canbury Gardens

Kingston's historic wharves and market town

Town End park to Ravens Ait

Fig 25 Existing and proposed character areas along Kingston Riverside

## 5.1 1a. Canbury Gardens: Issues & Opportunities

**5.1.1** At the northern end of the SPD area, Canbury Gardens is a formally laid out public park which runs directly up to the river's edge. It is particularly popular at weekends.

**5.1.2** The character of the Gardens varies. In the east is a cluster of recreational facilities: tennis club, children's playground and community pavilion buildings create an active character. Use of the grounds around the pavilion could be increased. Opportunities to improve the integration with the wider Gardens and surrounding street network should be explored. The proliferation of fences limits views to the rest of the park. These fences together with over grown planting and other elements that detract from the character of the wider park such as sections of wall could be improved to create a unified landscape.

**5.1.3** In contrast the river's edge is an idyllic space. Forming part of the Thames Path it is a pleasant corridor along which to walk or cycle under the avenue of mature London Planes, with an informality to the water's edge, and views to the characterful boat houses on the western bank. The banks have almost continuous vegetation however the vegetated edge is narrow which limits its potential as a wildlife corridor.

**5.1.4** Erosion of the river bank has occurred and the river path is disrupted as a result of deformation of the path and activities including fishing (large fishing tents are visually dominant in places). Viewed from the west bank of the river, the Gardens are a green break in contrast to the urban centre of Kingston to the south and the suburban development to the north along Lower Ham Road. However views into the Gardens and to the river from the streets to the east are limited by trees and shrub beds, and there is an opportunity to open up both connections and views.

**5.1.5** The northern section of Canbury Gardens is located within the functional floodplain, with an area of higher land around the pub and boat house effectively forming an island. There is an opportunity to increase the capacity of the functional flood plain at the north of the park and decrease it in the south to ensure the pub and boat house are better connected to dry land during a flood event.

**5.1.6** There is an opportunity to reflect and reinforce the different character areas of the park in the choice of planting, for example creating a new ecologically rich planted river edge and differentiating the floodplain character of the northern section.

**5.1.7** The gardens are flanked by Lower Ham Road and the Thames Path, which provide predominantly commuter and leisure cycle routes respectively. Although pleasant in character the narrow nature of the Thames Path (part of the national cycle network) and the varied activities that take place along it mean there is occasional conflict between cyclists and pedestrians (both using the cycle route or crossing it to access the river), fishing and boating particularly around focus points of activity, such as the Boaters Inn. The path is narrow to the south of the Boaters Inn, and due to the poorly quality of the surface makes for uncomfortable cycling.

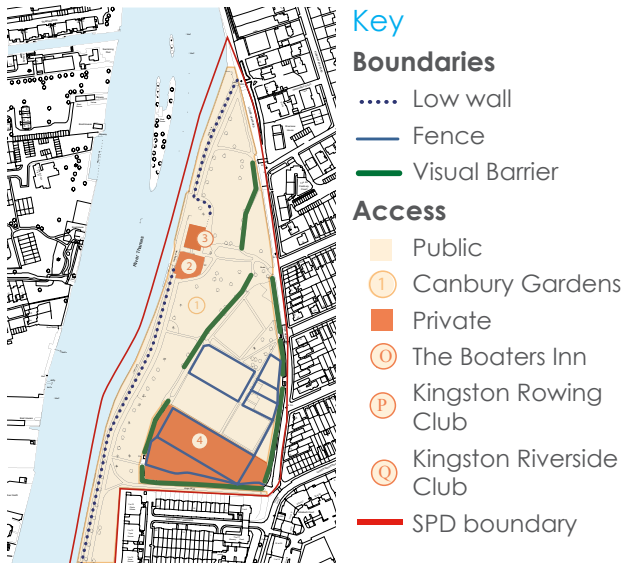
**5.1.8** Because of the poor quality of the Thames Path, cyclists occasionally use other paths which are wider, better lit and have better maintained surfaces. Opening selected paths up to cycling has the potential to reduce conflict on the Thames Path and improve safe and comfortable provision for cyclists.

**5.1.9** Lower Ham Road is a lightly trafficked street where cyclists generally outnumber vehicles in the peak periods. There are good connections to the town centre via Skerne Walk, which is traffic free. This encourages use of Lower Ham Road for commuter cycle trips as opposed to the more leisurely nature of the Thames Path.

**5.1.10** Pedestrian connections to the park and river from surrounding residential streets are generally good but the tennis courts as well as the overground vegetated boarder fronting Lower Ham Road create both a physical and visual barrier.

**5.1.11** The northern entrance to the park has an attractive informal character, however the surfacing is in need of repair and street furniture is poor quality and uncoordinated. Car parking here diminishes the attractiveness of the space.

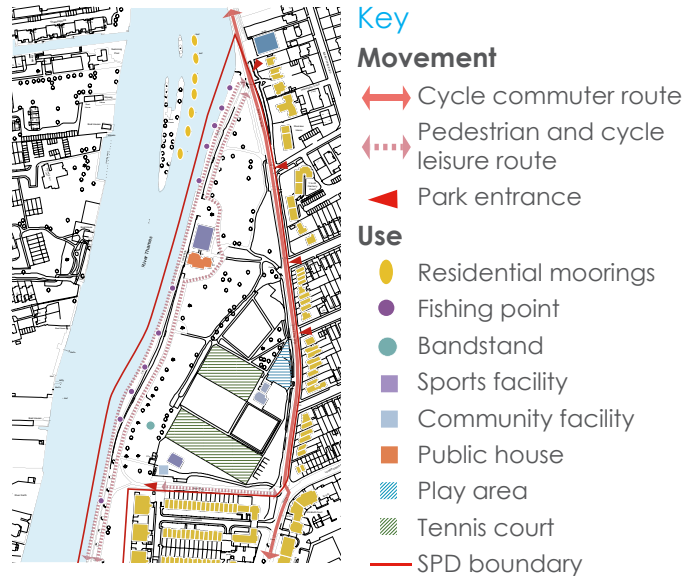
## Walls, fences, enclosures & access



**Fig 26**

Walls fences and enclosures will be rationalised to encourage users of facilities such as pavilions to spill out into the open space and to unify the landscape.

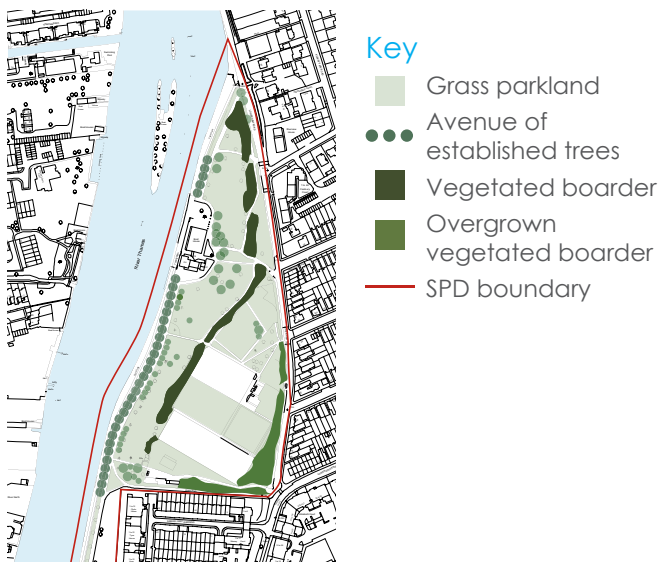
## Movement & use



**Fig 27**

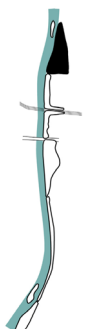
There is an opportunity to reduce the existing congestion on the river frontage by re-routing the cycle network to Lower Ham Road and opening up shared use by pedestrians and cyclists of the park.

## Biodiversity & vegetation



**Fig 28**

Currently, overgrown vegetation restricts views into and through the park. There is an opportunity to reinforce the character of different parts of the park by differentiating between different planting types for example creating a new ecologically rich planted river edge.





**Fig 29**

Active uses such as the public house and the rowing club animate the river front and add to the life of the park



**Fig 30**

The naturalised river edge in some areas of the park provides easy access to the water for wildlife and encourages biodiversity



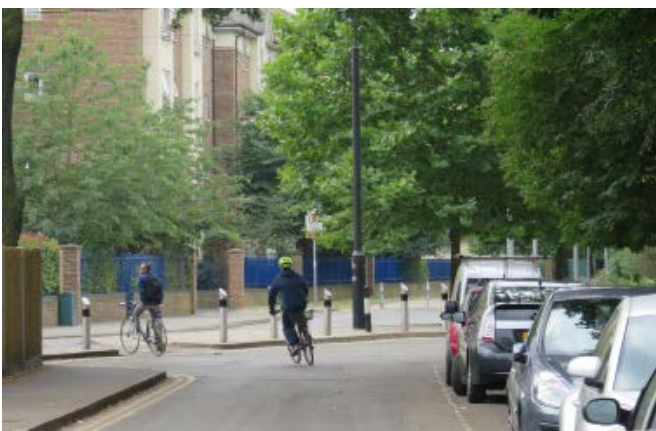
**Fig 31**

There are a number of fences throughout the park which segregate areas and prevent good visual and physical connections



**Fig 32**

Overgrown vegetation creates a visual barrier between the surrounding area and the Riverside



**Fig 33**

The cycle route along Lower Ham Road is well used by commuters



**Fig 34**

The footpath along the river front provides a more leisurely route for both pedestrians and cyclists

## Opportunities



**Fig 35**  
Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints diagram for Canbury Gardens

### Strengths

Idyllic green space

- (S1)** Informality of river edge
- Rich variety of leisure activities
- (S2)** Pleasant pedestrian/cycle routes
- (S3)** Characterful vernacular of boat houses
- (S4)** Row of established trees forming a 'corridor' walkway
- (S5)** Popular playground facilities
- (S6)** Community Garden and growing space

### Weaknesses

- (W1)** Conflict between cyclists and pedestrians and poor cycle route
- (W2)** 'No mans land' between the tennis clubs
- (W3)** Scruffy edge to the sports clubs facing both the park and the residential neighbourhood
- (W4)** Lack of visual connection between the residential streets and the river

Victorian park that has become less formal  
river edge planting has become eroded due to river edge activity

- (W5)** Intrusive lighting in private tennis courts

### Opportunities

- (O1)** Improve the edges of tennis club
- (O2)** Potential location for hosting annual river based event
- Have generous shared pedestrian/cycle paths with space for all users
- (O3)** Provide increased floodable spaces and revegetate the river edges
- (O4)** Improve the quality of the vegetation on the edge of the park to allow better visual connection between the residential streets and the river

Formalise fishing areas

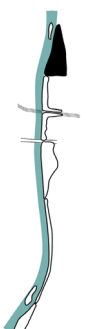
- (O5)** Maximise the use of the pavilion
- (O6)** Remove unneeded fences
- Possibility to create a SINC at Canbury Gardens
- (O7)** Intensify planning for pollinating species, at appropriate locations and work with Community Garden to increase productive use of gardens for growing

Provide nesting and roosting habitats for sparrows and bats

- (O8)** Provide natural play opportunities and improve existing playground facilities
- (O9)** Improve the quality of the northern entrance to the park

### Threats

- (T1)** Relationship between fishing, and vegetated edge and river users
- (T2)** Increased use of existing cycle route along the river edge



## 5.2 1b. Entrance to Canbury Gardens: Issues & Opportunities

**5.2.1** The Gardens narrow to the south and takes a linear character dominated by the established row of London Planes and an open stretch of grassland. Recent gated residential development at May Bate Avenue and the Kingston Riverside buildings form a large urban block which reduces access to the park from the east. Enhanced tree planting at the boundary of the park here, would provide a more robust, vegetated edge to the park, and offer greater screening of development to reduce the negative visual impact of large buildings.

**5.2.2** The southern entrance to the Gardens is underwhelming, with views south taking in the rail bridge and terminating in the unattractive service bay of the John Lewis building beyond. Public access to the river's edge is restricted, blocked by a car park, buildings and fencing. There is potential to make a big change here, creating a positive entrance to the park and a hub of activity by providing improved moorings and other day and evening active uses such as al fresco dining and extending the green character of the park further south, including into the car park.

**5.2.3** The functional flood plain is contained by a small retaining wall within the park. There is an opportunity to naturalise the flood protection in this area by planting vegetation to the river edge.

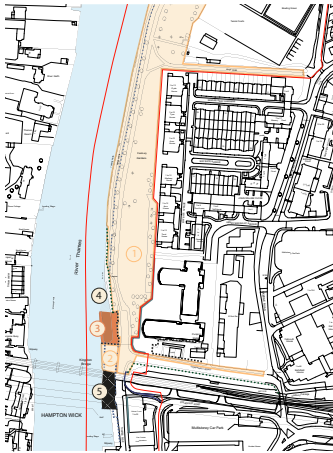
**5.2.4** Pedestrian routes through the newer residential developments to the south of the park are limited and indirect.

**5.2.5** As the Thames Path meets Thames Side cyclists can use Down Hall Road and Skerne Road to reach the town centre and from there are directed via Kingston Bridge to continue along the Thames on the western bank. However, many cyclists continue along Thames Side and there are a number of routes which disperse cyclists to make their way through the town centre and rejoin the river at the new High Street/Portsmouth Road route.



**Fig 36**  
Views to the river are blocked in part by the vegetated fence that marks the boundary of privately owned land.

## Land ownership & boundaries



**Fig 37**

There is an opportunity to integrate the unregistered land into the park and manage the moorings on the park edge to activate this end of Canbury Gardens.

### Key

#### Boundaries

- - Low wall
- - Metal fence
- - Wooden fence
- - Vegetated fence
- Low wall with fence

#### Ownership

- Public
- RBK
- Private
- Keyway Estates Ltd
- Unregistered land
- Inlet
- Thameside car park
- SPD boundary

## Movement & use



**Fig 38**

Creating a destination for outdoor SPD boundary eating and drinking and creating new moorings is an opportunity to create a new identity for Thames side car park.

### Key

#### Movement

- Cycle commuter route
- Pedestrian and cycle leisure route
- Vehicle Access
- Park entrance

#### Use

- Residential
- Hotel
- Car park
- Service
- Leisure
- Food and drink
- Mooring
- SPD boundary

## Biodiversity & vegetation



**Fig 39**

Because of the current unfiltered views of adjacent housing, there is an opportunity to plant more trees to filter views of housing and reduce its visual impact. Vegetation from the park could extend south into the wharf area to make a new park wharf.

### Key

- Grass parkland
- Line of established trees
- Vegetated Strip
- Ornamental trees
- Buildings dominate views
- SPD boundary





**Fig 40**

The established row of London Plane trees frames the promenade along the well used pedestrian and cycle route.



**Fig 41**

The promenade is a popular place for people to stop and view the activity on the river.



**Fig 42**

The residential development adjacent to Canbury Gardens overlooks the green space.



**Fig 43**

The existing entrance to Canbury Gardens from Thames Side is underwhelming and privileges vehicular movement with a predominantly asphalt surface.



**Fig 44**

Fishing is a popular activity along the river edge in Canbury Gardens although the river edge is often cluttered with fishing equipment.



**Fig 45**

The river bank has eroded in some areas providing shallow pools for birds to inhabit the river edge and for riverine vegetation to establish.



## Opportunities



**Fig 46**  
Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints diagram for Canbury Gardens entrance

### Strengths

- (S1)** Established row of London Planes  
Verdant green space in close proximity to town centre
- (S2)** Popular place for people to stop and view the river

### Weaknesses

- (W1)** Private residential development visually encroaches on Gardens
- (W2)** Poor visibility of the river to the south
- (W3)** Underwhelming entrance from Down Hall Road
- (W4)** Inaccessible river front due to private car park and building

### Opportunities

- (O1)** Link to forthcoming railway to river green link
- (O2)** Establish green entrance to Canbury Gardens
- (O3)** Open up access to the river where it currently dominated by car parking
- (O4)** Plant new trees along boundary with May Bate Avenue
- (O5)** Plant additional trees on corner of Down Hall Road and Thames Side
- (O6)** Careful management of trees in Canbury Gardens to ensure screening of large residential development
- (O7)** Potential to improve access to the Gardens
- (O8)** Animate existing inlet with boating uses to provide activity
- (O9)** Any building must be of high-quality and reflect the scale and character of local boathouse architecture
- (O9)** Extend pedestrian and cycle priority south along Thames Side

### Threats

- (T1)** Coach parking/turning circle associated with the arrival of Gloriana
- (T2)** Different land ownerships adjacent to the river
- (T2)** Retention of existing car park beneath railway bridge



### 5.3 Canbury Gardens Proposals



RIVER EDGE

SOUTHERN ENTRANCE

Proposals	Rediscover Market Town	Activate Open Space	Celebrate Culture	Support Biodiversity	Improve Connections
The public realm of the Thames Path/ National Cycle Network 4 is to be enhanced with cyclists allowed to share selected paths in the Gardens					
Creating space for a wide planted edge and naturalisation of the riverbank					
The designated cycle route adjacent to the water's edge is to be removed, with considerate cycling allowed to use selected paths within Canbury Gardens					
Sections of the riverbank are to be regraded and naturalised with the introduction of native marginal vegetation. Floodable spaces will be created reinforcing the informal character of the river edge					
Provision of fishing platforms at appropriate points along the riverbank, while avoiding conflict with river users					
Any building at the Barge Dock should reflect the scale and character of local boat house architecture. The building must support the leisure use of the Gardens (including potentially a cafe) associated with increased public access to and boat use of the adjacent inlet and the continued use of the dock, in line with the requirements of Policy P17.					
The entrance to the Gardens at Thames Side will be pedestrian and cycle priority, enhancing the legibility of north-south riverside walk. Vehicle access will be restricted to the north of the rail bridge except to access boats and wharfs.					
Waterfront spaces between Canbury Gardens and Turks Landing on Thames Side (currently carparking) are to be greened, forming an extension of the parkland character					
Encourage continued provision of river based education facilities					
Visual connection between Down Hall Road and the river will be protected					
Access for community buses to support water based facilities requiring access to the river front to be maintained. Coach parking for the town centre will provided elsewhere (e.g. Steadfast Road)					



IMPROVE CENTRE OF GARDENS

NORTHERN ENTRANCE

Proposals	Rediscover Market Town	Activate Open Space	Celebrate Culture	Support Biodiversity	Improve Connections
Enhance existing cluster of sports and play facilities adjacent to Lower Ham Road to form a recreation and community hub within the park					
Explore additional pedestrian access points (subject to an assessment considering impact on amenity of nearby residential properties)					
Planted new trees to fill in gaps in vegetation at the boundary of the park with May Bate Avenue and Down Hall Road, to increase screening of existing development from the park					
Review the use of the bandstand and possibly relocate to an appropriate location within the park to ensure its use is maximised					
Extend recreation/ play/ community uses into grassed area between the tennis courts and pavilions, creating a new space for events, or food growing. Introduce informal, natural play elements elsewhere in the park.					
Prepare a tree replacement strategy for the avenue of london planes to ensure the continuity of this distinctive feature					
Intensify planting for pollinating species, at appropriate locations					
Incorporate nesting and roosting habitats for sparrows and bats throughout park					
Improve the edges of the private tennis club. Upgraded materials and/ or planting to improve the appearance and impact of lighting on the park					
Improve entrance retaining informal character. Resurface paths and parking. Co-ordinate street furniture and signage with the rest of the park. Reduce the negative impact of car parking at this location.					
Visually reconnect the river and residential streets of Woodside Road/ Estbury Road with park by selective thinning of vegetation within the park on this boundary					

### **5.3.1 Vision for Canbury Gardens:**

The Victorian pleasure gardens at Canbury are to be reinvigorated, reinforcing the park's role for relaxation and recreation with a naturalised riverbank. The green character of the gardens will be extended south towards Water Lane / Thames side where the character transitions into the character area 5.10 Kingston's Historic Wharves and Market Town.







### Character Areas

-  Ecologically enhanced river edge
-  Floodable space
-  Active zone
-  Riverfront walk
-  Improved park entrance

### Vegetation






-  New tree and hedge planting to repair gaps in the existing vegetation
-  New tree and hedge planting to enhance existing vegetation screening
-  Management of existing vegetation required to maintain existing quality

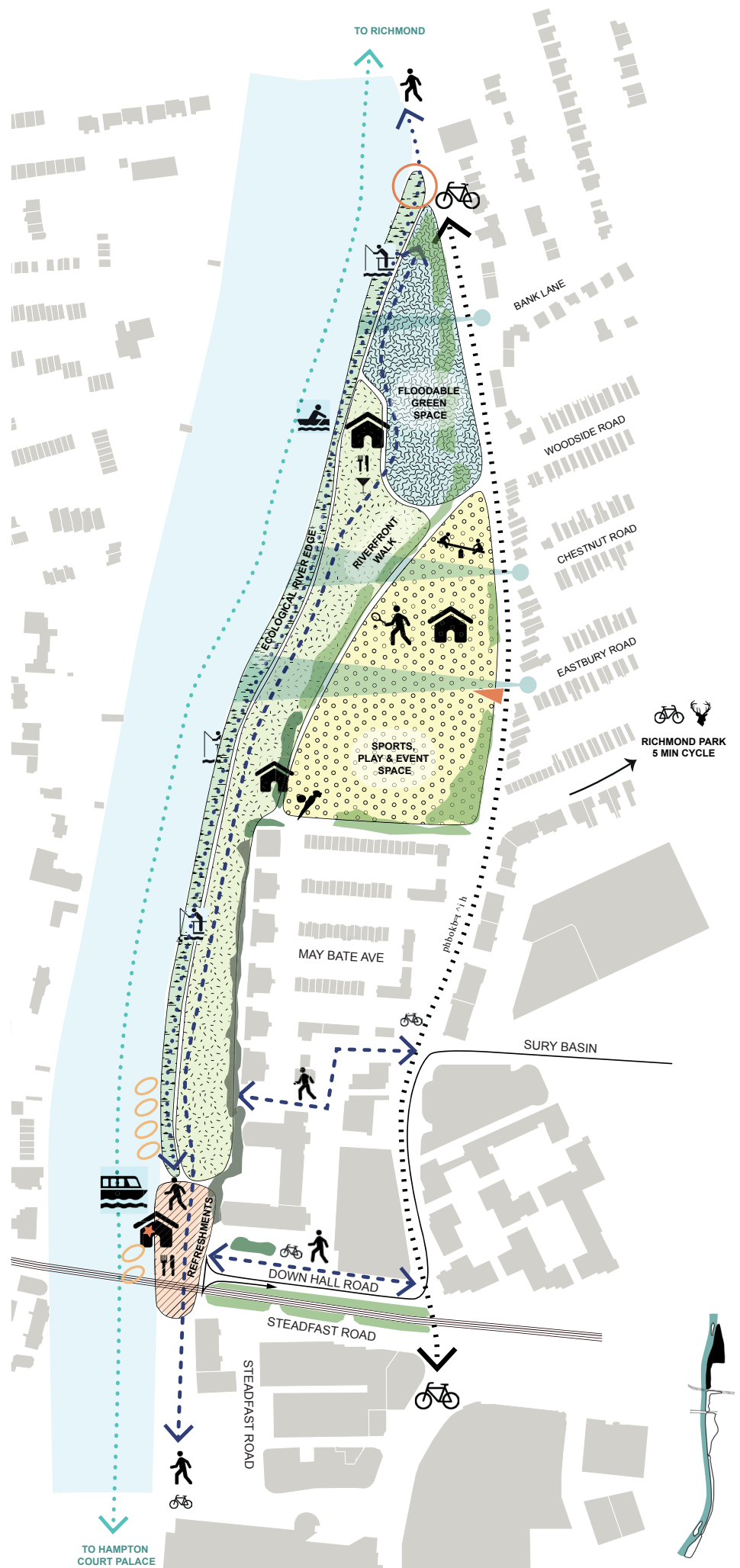
### Amenities

-  New café building
-  Fishing platforms
-  Commercial river boat
-  Moorings
-  Improved entrance
-  Proposed new park entrance
-  Opened up views to the river

-  Community Garden

### Movement

-  Pedestrian riverside walk
-  Pedestrian and cycle route
-  Cycle route
-  Restricted vehicular access
-  River boat route



**Fig 47**  
Proposals for Canbury Gardens

## 5.4 2a. Between the Bridges: Issues & Opportunities

**5.4.1** The urban character between the rail and road bridges is in sharp contrast with both the green oasis of Canbury Gardens and the vibrancy and fine grained townscape of the town centre river's edge to the south.

**5.4.2** This area was an important part of the medieval town with a wharf side character, long narrow plots and narrow lanes. Views towards the church in the centre of town were dominant and a primary wayfinding feature. The medieval street pattern and wharfside heritage have been lost, although the remains of the historic bridge crossing are preserved and visible in the John Lewis basement. The townscape is fragmented, overshadowed and cut off from the wider town centre by the large mass of John Lewis and Bentalls which block views and the four lane A308 which limits connections towards the historic core.

**5.4.3** The loss of historic townscape and poor quality is reflected in the lack of Conservation Area designation between the bridges. This is the only section of the Riverside SPD, not to be designated a CA.

**5.4.4** River front activity here is relatively limited but includes the Steadfast Sea Cadets and Turks Launches who operate from the landing beside the two storey white weatherboarded former pub building.

**5.4.5** The area offers considerable scope as location for the expansion of town centre activities. K+20 identifies site P12 for potential residential and hotel development, the design of which will have a significant impact on the character of the area and must be in line with K+20 Policy K9 and K10. Active frontages should be used to frame the waterfront streets and public spaces. The primary building line is to the east of Thames Side where residential development. To the north of Kingston Bridge, the inactive ground floor of John Lewis has potential to be opened up to the river to continue the town centre character found further south. Opportunities to locate and house the Queen's Barge Gloriana to this area of the river front are being explored.

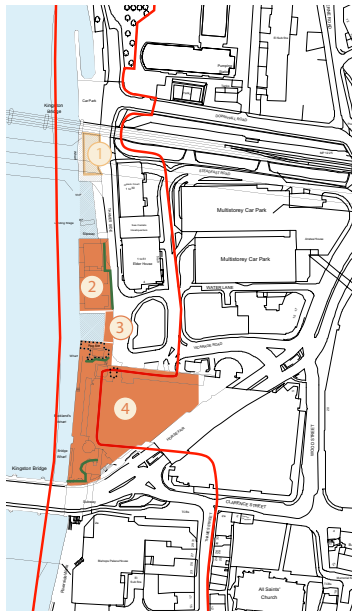
**5.4.6** Direct interaction with the water is limited; the river bank is concrete. The inlet adjacent to Turks Landing has a hard edge but has potential to become a hybrid wharf/green habitat space linked to the Gloriana proposal. Other sections of the river front could also be softened with vegetation.

**5.4.7** To the north there is no dedicated riverside walk, with pedestrians and cyclists making use of Thames Side, which is dominated by car parking. The street is nonetheless well used by pedestrians and cyclists, affords views of the river and operates as an informal shared space due to a combination of low traffic volumes and limited footways. There is an opportunity to formalise pedestrian and cyclist priority on this street so that it forms part of the riverside walk/cycle network.

**5.4.8** A dedicated Riverside walk recommences at John Lewis but at a higher level in relation to the river, from where there are attractive riverine views available. Ramped access to a lower level gives access to moorings and passenger boat services. The route of the Riverside walk around Kingston Bridge has poor legibility with pedestrians taken inland and through the bridge arch underpass, the view to which is blocked by the John Lewis stairwell. This reduces visual connectivity and breaks the continuity of the Riverside walk.

**5.4.9** At the upper level, Kingston Bridge provides the arrival point or 'gateway' into the town centre for many visitors. Unfortunately the view is dominated by the mouth of the dual carriageway relief road tunnel as it passes below the 4+ storey high John Lewis building and the associated highways infrastructure. Access between the upper level of Horse Fair and Clarence Street is via a lift and stairwell to the north and ramp to the south neither of which are attractive routes. The ramp is narrow and relatively steep creating congestion and conflicts, including between pedestrians and cyclists.

## Land ownership & boundaries

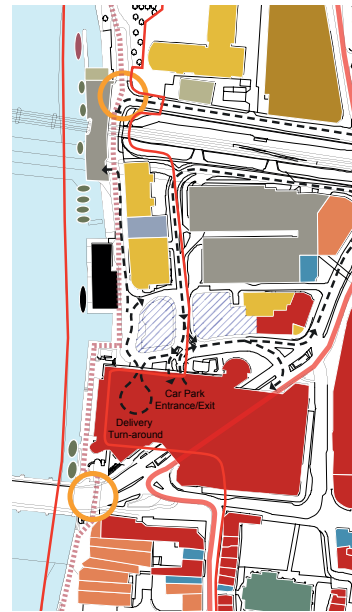


- Key**
- Boundaries**
- Visual Barrier
- Ownership**
- Unregistered land
- Car park area leased by Environment Agency (holding over on existing expired lease)
- 1 Environment Agency (holding over on existing expired lease)
  - 2 Dolomite Holdings Ltd leased from the Environment Agency
  - 3 Mayor and Burgesses of RBK
  - 4 John Lewis Plc
- Underlease of pumping station, outfall structure and control room only - John Lewis plc to Thames Water Utilities Ltd
- SPD boundary

**Fig 49**

Using Thames side as the pedestrian priority route does not disrupt private land on the river but still affords views of the water front.

## Movement & use

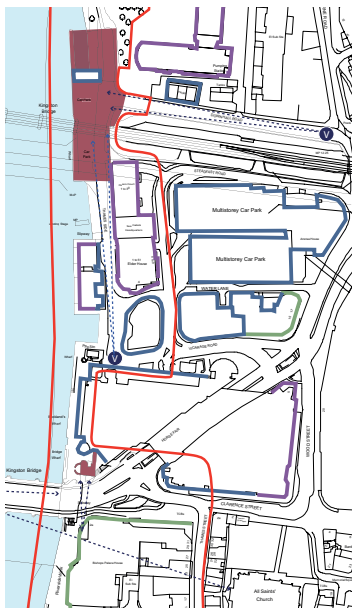


- Key**
- Movement**
- Point of conflict
  - Vehicular route
  - Cycle route
  - Pedestrian & cycle route
- Use**
- Retail
  - Residential
  - Commercial
  - Religious
  - Services
  - Food and Drink
  - Hotel
  - Car Park
  - Transport
  - Development Site
  - Boat Tours - Turks Pier
  - Thames Ventura - Charity mooring
  - Mooring
  - SPD boundary

**Fig 50**

Rationalising the current one way system opens up room for public open space on the river at Gloriana.

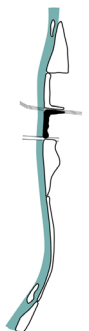
## Frontages



- Key**
- Active frontages
  - Passive frontages
  - Blank frontages
  - Key area for improvement
  - Viewpoint
  - SPD Boundary

**Fig 51**

Making more active frontages onto pedestrian routes and new squares creates an active water front.





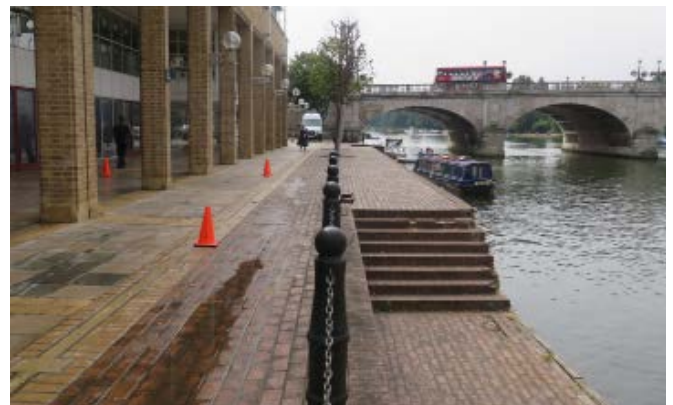
**Fig 52**  
The diagram above overlays the current urban grain onto a historic map from 1830. The historic fine grain that once existed in this area has been replaced with large scale development in the 20th century.



**Fig 53**  
In the late 19th and early 20th century, the wharfs between the bridges provided a wealth of riverside activity with a variety of industrial uses.



**Fig 54**  
Currently this area has a number of sites designated for development. There is an opportunity to define the emerging character of these new buildings spaces to transform this underused part of the town centre into a destination.



**Fig 55**  
Unlike the riverfront south of Kingston Bridge, the river front between the bridges lacks activity and vibrancy. There is an opportunity to extend the food and drink offer north of the bridge and make the most of the generous river front spaces available, and improving the feel of the area for pedestrians and cyclists.



**Fig 56**  
The Turks river cruises are a popular tourist attraction and the area around the current pier will become much more intensively used with the forthcoming arrival of the Gloriana.



**Fig 57**  
Access to the river is obstructed with car parking but there is an opportunity to use the river front space to join up the footpath from Canbury Gardens south to the town centre.



## Opportunities



Fig 58

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints diagram for Between the bridges

### Strengths

- (S1) Characterful historic bridge
- (S2) Sea Cadets and Turks ferry animate the river edge
- (S3) Pedestrians and cyclists currently using Thames Side as an informal shared surface

### Weaknesses

- (W1) Car parks and privately owned land obstruct pedestrian access to the river edge
- (W2) Poor connection north and south of Kingston Bridge due to the misalignment of the walkway and the underpass and the stair case to John Lewis
- (W3) Car park entrance to John Lewis is an eyesore
- (W4) Current lack of activity on embankment river edge outside John Lewis and the former nightclub
- (W5) Illegibility of All Saints Church and medieval heart of the town to the south
- (W6) Loss of industrial heritage – perpendicular sheds and river edge activity has all been lost
  - Privately controlled frontage to river
- (W7) Heritage assets hidden in the basement of John Lewis
  - Poor connection east and west from Clarence Street to the Riverside

Existing parking along Thames side

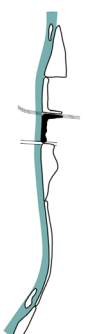
Low quality of recently delivered high density development that has little historic reference

### Opportunities

- (O1) Intensify boating activity
- (O2) Create new, high quality public space for the arrival of Gloriana
  - Activate frontage along ground level of John Lewis to animate river embankment akin to the activity south of the bridge
- (O3) Lift obstructive stairwell to John Lewis to allow views through the subway to the south of the bridge
- (O4) Celebrate historic bridge – make more visible and improve adjacent public space
  - Remove clutter at ground level
- (O5) Reconfigure the servicing and car park access to John Lewis to minimise visual and functional intrusion on public realm
- (O6) Reconfigure Steadfast Road to create better environment for cyclists and pedestrians
- (O7) Place coach parking on Steadfast Road
  - Transform the identity of the wider area to be a positive tourist destination and a gateway to Kingston Town Centre
  - Reconsider access and delivery to John Lewis
- (O8) Reinstating the historic industrial character of Thames Side
- (O9) Formalise the current use of Thames Side as a shared surface
- (O10) Create new green space beneath bridge in current car park to improve visual connections to Canbury Gardens
  - Work with existing institutions to encourage more annual cultural events on the river
- (O11) Establish reed beds within the inlets adjacent to Turks wharf
  - Ensure safe and attractive link for cyclists and pedestrians

### Threats

- Dominance of the one-way road system
- Restrictions on development due to below ground infrastructure



## 5.5 2b. The Historic Town Centre Issues & Opportunities

**5.5.1** To the south of Kingston Bridge, the character of the Riverside changes, and suddenly feels part of the bustle of the town centre with restaurants and café seating spilling out onto the riverside walk, and a continuous built frontage. The riverside walk has a handrail at the river's edge and feels relatively narrow as a result of the activity which spills out from the adjacent restaurants and leisure uses. It becomes particularly congested at weekends and in the evenings. As with other sections there is an opportunity to green sections of the waterfront with riverine planting.

**5.5.2** Occasional steps down to the water provide informal seating places from which to view river boats and the rural character of the western bank. There is inconsistency in the use of street furniture and materials which adds to visual clutter.

**5.5.3** There are simple mooring rings and ropes along the river wall near the bridge and pontoons for visitor and residential moorings adjacent to Charter Quay and Eagle Wharf. Due to the busyness of the Riverside in this section, there is potential congestion and conflict between boat users and users of the riverside walk. Further south the boat house of Minima Yacht Club is located on the river front.

**5.5.4** Built development although predominantly modern, is characterful, of a finer grain and generally up to three storeys in height with limited elements of up to 5 storeys. The exception is the 6-8 storey Charter Quay development. Numerous alleys connect the Riverside with the High Street and Market Place including the historic Bishop's Hall and King's Passage routes. The alleys take various forms from narrow passages to wider breaks in the buildings but they are generally not obvious from the town centre and are of variable quality. Direct visual links to the river from the town centre are limited, particularly further north. This means connectivity between the town centre and river is poor. Cycle and pedestrian access to the river adjacent to Kingston Bridge is narrow, creating a significant pinch point and congestion.

**5.5.5** The historic town centre is typified by buildings of 3-5 storeys which protect the dominance of the church in the overall roofscape. The lower rise of buildings here in comparison to the north of the river limits overshadowing of the walkway and the scale of buildings sits well with the scale of the Thames. It is important that future

development respects this scale and historic grain.

**5.5.6** The alleys are a mix of public highway and private land, which creates problems of management. Many are dominated by car parking and servicing and are poor quality connections for pedestrians and cyclists. Bishop's Hall in particular is a poor quality space, dominated by parking bays and servicing activity with the view to the river blocked by the first floor bridging development. Other alleys such as Kings Passage are narrow with limited active frontages. Emms Passage is wider but has limited activity. Routes along the Hogsmill River and to Charter Quay are of higher quality, including generally active frontages and outside dining, though they are narrow in places and some lack level access. There is a major opportunity to link the historic town centre and market place to the river by activating these alleyways and adjacent public spaces and by managing servicing, parking and cycling movements.

**5.5.7** Eagle Wharf, to the rear of The Ram public house, is a hard landscaped public space within Council ownership which provides a space to sit and enjoy the river front. It is well used, but has the potential for enhancement, to improve the interface with the High Street which is dominated by car parking and servicing and to green and increase the attractiveness of the space for visitors.

**5.5.8** The other open public area on the otherwise linear walk is Charter Quay where the Hogsmill River meets the Thames. The Hogsmill River is also an important space for wildlife, with the path bridging through areas of habitat giving views into wildfowl nests.

**5.5.9** Residential development on the river front has increased in recent years and there has been some reported conflict between residential amenity and the use of the Riverside for public events. Additional activities should acknowledge and be responsive to the needs of town centre residents.

**5.5.10** The pedestrianised town centre with its fine grain of streets creates a high quality and permeable environment for pedestrians. The Ancient Market in particular provides an excellent quality public realm.

## Heritage



### Key

#### Heritage

- Conservation area
- Listed buildings
- Historic alleyways
- SPD boundary

**Fig 59**

Linking the historic town centre and market place to the river via a series of activated alleys and open spaces will support a vibrant old town and Riverside.

Information taken from on site survey in September 2016

## Movement & use



### Key

#### Movement

- Vehicular route
- Cycle route
- Pedestrian and cycle route

#### Use

- Service access and parking with some pedestrian access
- Car park
- Pedestrian route
- Outdoor dining area
- Residential moorings
- Visitor moorings
- SPD boundary

**Fig 60**

Managing deliveries and refuse collection and separating cycling movement allows the riverside sitting out areas to expand back into the historic urban area.

Information taken from on site survey in September 2016

## Building Height



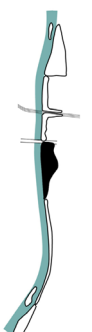
### Key

- 1-2 Storeys
- 3 Storeys
- 4 Storeys
- 5 Storeys
- 6 Storeys
- 7 Storeys
- 8+ Storeys
- SPD boundary
- Protected view

**Fig 61**

Respecting the building heights of the historic grain will support a cohesive character for the historic town centre and Riverside.

Information taken from on site survey in September 2016





**Fig 62**  
The mouth of the Hogsmill River is ecologically rich with gabion planted beds although the invasive species Himalayan Balsam is present.



**Fig 63**  
The success and vibrancy of the river front in the town centre has resulted in some conflict between the many users along the narrow stretches of the footpath.



**Fig 64**  
There are many passages and alley ways which lead to the river front from the market place which have poor quality of public realm and wayfinding.

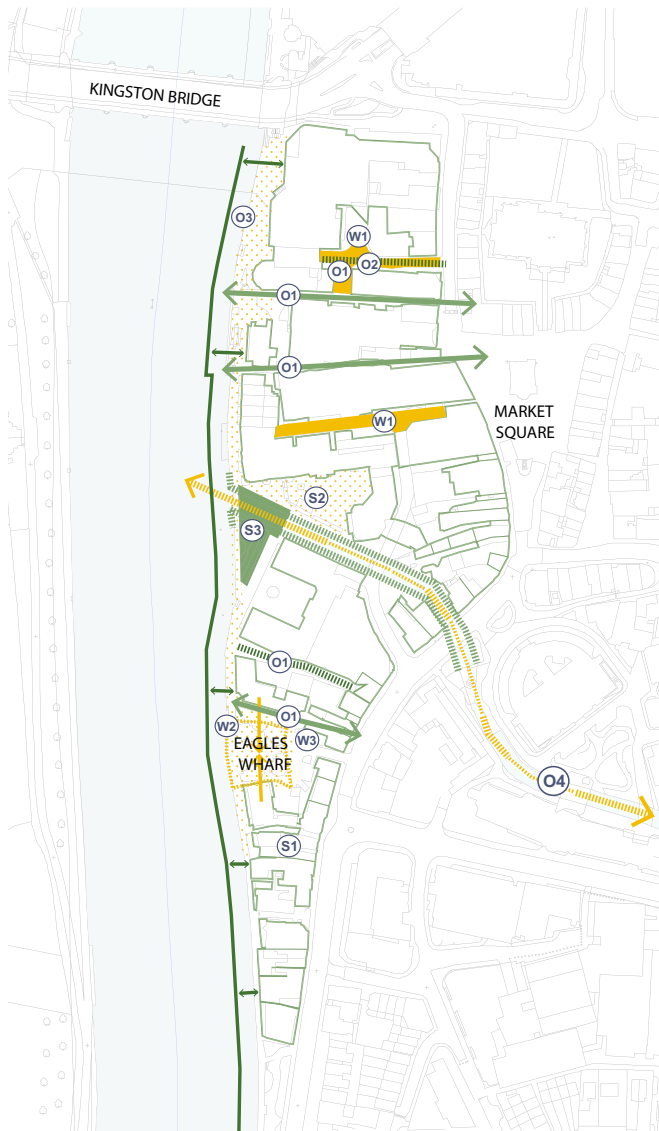


**Fig 65**  
The fine grain of the built fabric of the alongside the Hogsmill and the Thames provides a distinctive and characterful town centre.



**Fig 66-67**  
Historic images of the passages in the town centre show a much more attractive environment. There is an opportunity to improve the quality of the urban realm along these pedestrian routes to make them safer, more attractive and celebrate the heritage of the built environment.

## Opportunities



**Fig 68**  
Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints diagram for Kingston's historic town centre

## Strengths

- Ⓢ1 Characterful fine grain of the built environment
- Ⓢ2 Lots of river front activity
- Ⓢ3 Mouth of the Hogsmill River is ecologically rich

## Weaknesses

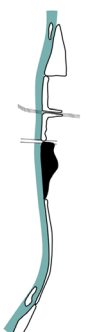
- Ⓦ1 Prominence of car parking in yards and streets approaching the river
- Ⓦ2 Poor quality of Eagle Wharf public space  
Apparent conflict with residents and public events in the space at Eagle Wharf
- Ⓦ3 Car parking dominates the rear of Eagle Wharf open space  
Incoherent furniture, lighting, signage etc. along the river front  
Disconnection of North/South movement and ecological corridors

## Opportunities

- ⓪1 Provide shared and managed space in passages, alleyways and yards to intensify activity along historic routes to the river front  
Establish a managed service environment to the rear of Riverside
- ⓪2 Provide shared surfaces on alleyways  
Remove parking from Bishops Hall and take down the wall between Bishops Hall and adjacent service alley  
Increase the alleyways capacity to host active uses which complement the riverside and the historic market place
- ⓪3 Widen river frontage to alleviate the current overcrowding of the river front and allow better north south movement  
Install high quality and characterful street furniture and signage along the river walk
- ⓪4 Improve the water meadows upstream of the Hogsmill to reduce extreme fluctuation in river water level and facilitate ecology and access to the river

## Threats

- Potential conflict between commercial activity, leisure use and residents as well as residential/visitor moorings
- Himalayan Balsalm – invasive species in the Hogsmill River mouth
- Hogsmill River fluctuation in water levels



## 5.6 Kingston’s Historic Wharves & Market Town Proposals



CONNECTIONS TO THE RIVERSIDE

Proposals	Rediscover Market Town	Activate Open Space	Celebrate Culture	Support Biodiversity	Improve Connections
Redesign and declutter public realm at the junction of Kingston Bridge/ A308 (Horsefair) and Clarence Street to provide an improved gateway to the town centre; direct views along Clarence street, and remove highways barriers and signage which block views					
Manage vehicles in alleys and lanes connecting the riverside to High Street and Ancient Market to enable ease and attractiveness of use for pedestrians and cyclists. Active frontages to be introduced to alleys through redevelopment or temporary use of space					
Develop arts projects alongside public realm improvements along passages and alleys					
Developments along Bishops Hall will improve physical and visual connections to the river					
Remove visual clutter and improve wayfinding from town centre to existing alleys, lanes and streets.					
Enhance quality of National Cycle Network Route 4					
The water meadows upstream of the Hogsmill river are to be improved to reduce extreme fluctuation in river water level and facilitate ecological networks and greater access to the river					
Provide quality connected cycle routes for commuters away from the riverside walk					
Enhance pedestrian access between Clarence Street and the riverside walk at Kingston Bridge, through the redesign of ramps and stairwells to create accessible and attractive routes					



← FULL EXTENT OF THE RIVERSIDE — NORTH OF KINGSTON BRIDGE —

Proposals	Rediscover Market Town	Activate Open Space	Celebrate Culture	Support Biodiversity	Improve Connections
Create new Heritage destination, permanently housing the Queen's Royal Barge 'Gloriana' with adjacent complimentary public space. Consider introducing reed beds by Turk's Landing creating a verdant setting for Gloriana					
Reconfigure vehicle movement to prioritise space for pedestrians and cyclists: Rationalise carriageway space and formalise Thames Side as shared surface.					
Expand food and drink, cultural, leisure and heritage uses. Reactivate John Lewis riverside terrace, Turk's landing building and the former nightclub under Kingston Bridge with active uses and spill out spaces to better support an active public realm					
Buildings proposed forward of the established building line must be of exceptional quality, responding to the special circumstances of their site (use, scale and urban design)					
New development must be appropriate in scale and character to support attractive public spaces, with microclimate, including levels sunlight and wind to support their use.					
New development immediately adjacent to the river, should be low rise, respecting scale and historic associations of the town with the river. Ground floor, and where accessible the upper floors, should have active uses to support safe routes to the river					
Intensify activity and access along the historic routes to the river front. Manage spaces to increase movement capacity and active uses, including introducing shared spaces for pedestrians and cycles where vehicles are not permitted. Activity should acknowledge the needs of existing town centre residents.					
Support boating activity through the provision of short stay visitor moorings and increased tourist trips					
Develop annual programme for cultural and sporting events on the river					



FULL EXTENT OF THE RIVERSIDE CONTINUED

Proposals	Rediscover Market Town	Activate Open Space	Celebrate Culture	Support Biodiversity	Improve Connections
Development should not overshadow the external public realm and routes along the river, have a fine grained street pattern to reassert historic connections between the town centre and the river, and include ground floor active uses facing public spaces, the riverside walk and alleyways. Any building visible from the riverside must be of an exceptional standard with a strong sense of local distinctiveness					
Taller development will most likely only be appropriate on the fringes of the town centre, which should be located so as not to negatively impact on views from the riverside walk and protected view corridors and panoramas					
Review the potential to deliver additional space for movement along the riverside walk between Town End and Thames Side, to create additional space for movement and enjoyment, subject to impact on biodiversity and operation of the river					
Support the creation of a heritage trail linked to the wider tourism offer of the Arcadian Thames, by boat, coach and cycle. The arrival of Gloriana, improvements to the setting of the historic bridge, Ancient Market and the Coronation Stone will enhance the tourism offer					
Trees are to be planted in key locations to provide greenery, shade and enhanced habitats within the town centre					
Marginal planting should be added to existing pontoons and future infrastructure to enrich biodiversity and provide visual amenity					
Enhance legibility of riverside walk with high quality material palette including street furniture					



### 5.6.1 Vision for Historic Wharves and Market Town




The central section of the Riverside from Water Lane / Thames Side to Town End will be an intensively used, urban promenade with strong connectivity to the town's Ancient Market and medieval street network. Expansion of the existing food and drink, cultural and heritage uses will provide an active frontage to the riverside walk and support the wider town centre offer. Additional space will be created by the removal of nonessential activities and redesign of the riverside walk.

#### Key






##### Character Areas

-  Shared pedestrian and cycle space
-  Active leisure space
-  Large scale development set back from Riverside







##### Vegetation

-  Ecologically enhanced river edge
-  Roof gardens (indicative locations only)
-  Management of existing vegetation required to maintain existing quality

##### Amenities

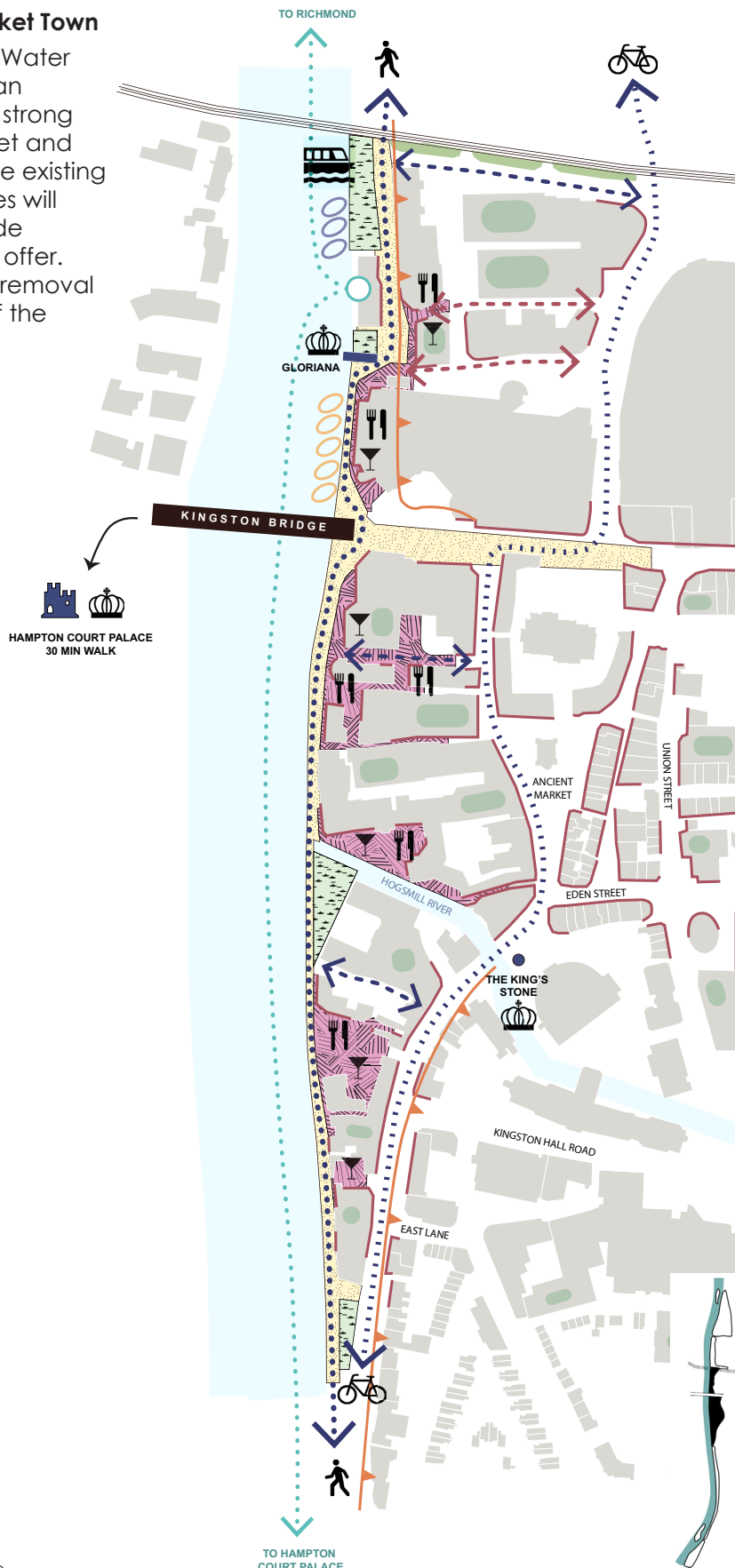
-  Places to eat and drink
-  Proposed active frontages
-  Commercial river boat
-  Enhanced visitor moorings
-  Sea Cadets moorings

##### Movement

-  Pedestrian riverside route
-  Pedestrian and cycle routes to the river
-  Cycle route
-  Reinstated historic routes to the river
-  River boat route
-  River boat pier

**Fig 69**

Proposals for the historic market town centre



## 5.7 3a. Town End and Queens Promenade: Issues & Opportunities

**5.7.1** At Town End, at the southern end of the High Street, the direct built frontage to the river's edge ends, with buildings instead set back behind Portsmouth Road and taking a more suburban character with 2-4 storey villas and apartment blocks of up to 6 storeys and large front gardens.

**5.7.2** The riverside walk widens and is set with the linear gardens of Queens Promenade, which has a planted edge including trees and sits at a lower level than the road. The floodplain is contained by the small retaining wall within the park. The buildings of Portsmouth Road are visible from the Promenade although the tree canopies screen views to some extent.

**5.7.3** St Raphael's Church on Portsmouth Road is a notable landmark and there is potential to strengthen views towards its attractive tower. However, in general, there is a feeling of disconnection between the built form of the town and the water from this point on.

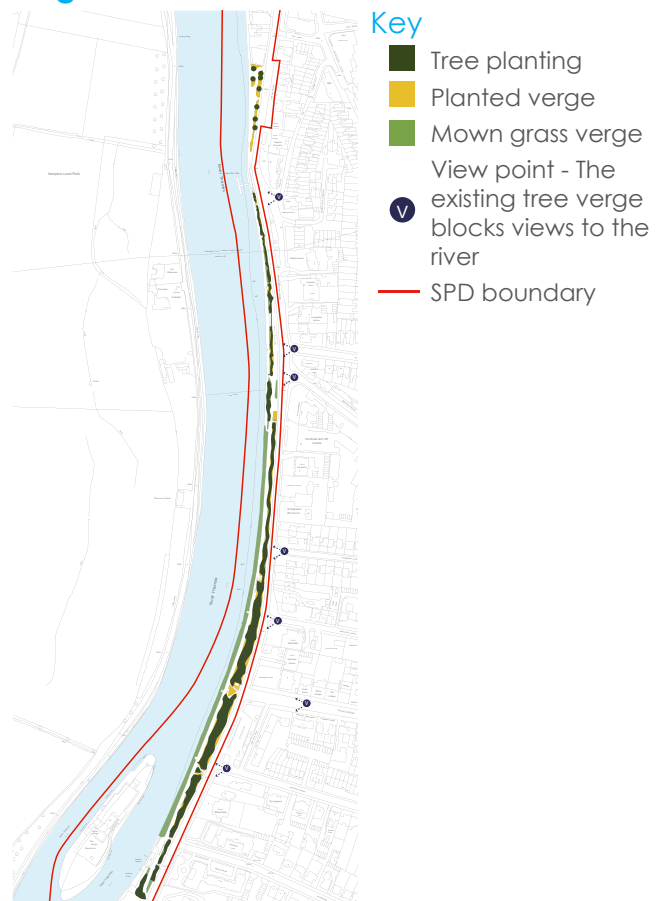
**5.7.4** The formal ornamental planting set out in the Victorian period is now looking tired, particularly at Town End and is in contrast to the informal landscape of Home Park and Barge Walk on the western Bank. The ecological diversity of habitats along this stretch of the Riverside is poor and does not reflect the riverine setting (see fig 70).

**5.7.5** Queens Promenade contains the largest specimen of *Saphora Japonica* (Japanese Pagoda tree) outside Kew, and the Riverside Café but otherwise there are few points of interest or facilities. Despite this the route appears to be well used for walking. Cycling is not permitted along the route, although it is wide and continues to be used by leisure cyclists. Segregated cycle routes have been provided on Portsmouth Road as part of the Go Cycle programme for cycle trips and these have provided new ramps down to the promenade.

**5.7.6** There are limited places for pedestrians to access the Promenade from Portsmouth Road. Additional access points could be provided to improve connectivity and address concerns regarding personal safety along the route in the evening.

**5.7.7** There is an opportunity to increase the range of activities and facilities along the route including additional residential and commercial moorings to activate the river frontage. The moorings could potentially be relocated from the town centre where conflicts with other uses occurs.

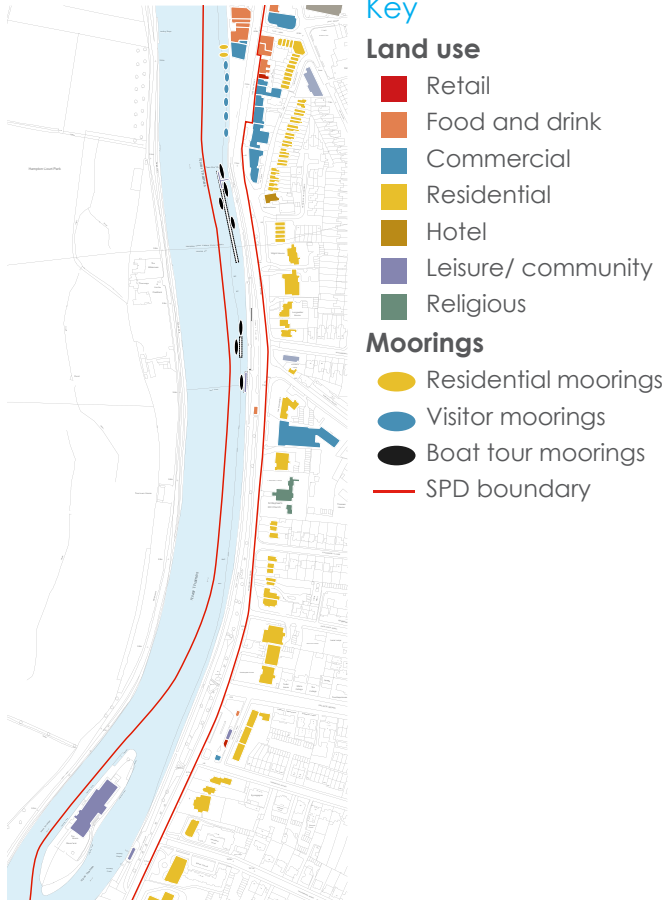
### Vegetation



**Fig 70**

New planting can reinforce the two different edges of this character area: riverine planting on the rivers edge and an arboretum of trees and screening on the road frontage.

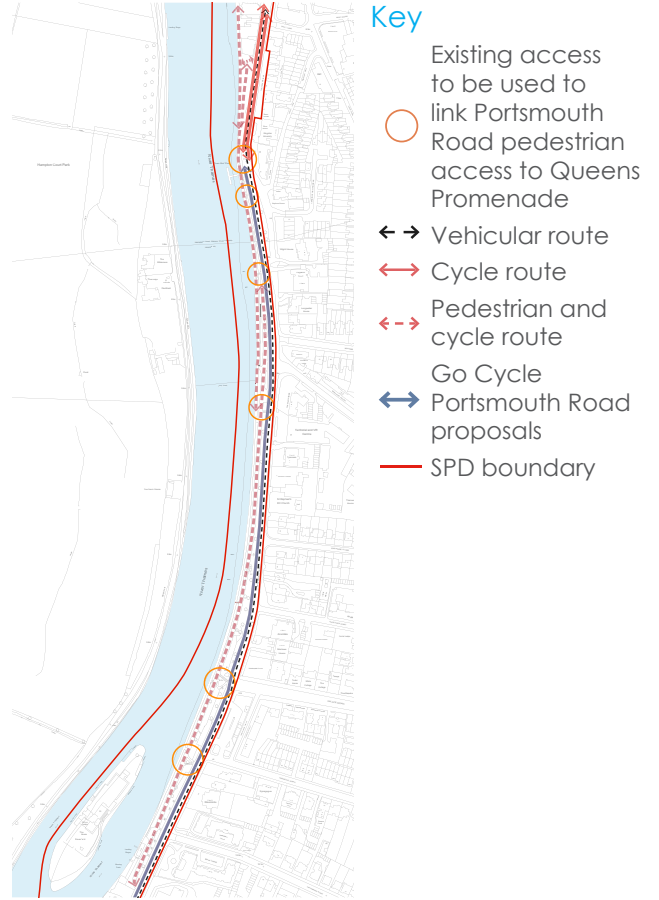
## Land use & moorings



**Fig 71**

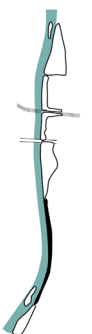
There is an opportunity to increase moorings in this location and introduce commercial moorings to activate the river and river frontage.

## Movement & access



**Fig 72**

Increasing access to Queens Promenade ensures that it is safe to use at night





**Fig 73**  
Historic photograph illustrating the popular use of the river for boating and leisure activities.



**Fig 74**  
There are some residential and visitor moorings along the river edge in this area although some visitor moorings have been removed in recent years.



**Fig 75**  
The quality of the public realm at Town End is currently poor with an awkward level change, particularly for cyclists. There is an opportunity to improve this space as an entrance to both Queens Promenade and the town centre.



**Fig 76**  
In some areas the promenade becomes very narrow and there is a level change between the pavement and the river front.



**Fig 77**  
The Promenade is lined with memorial benches and the formal Victorian planting is now looking tired.



**Fig 78**  
The river edge is stepped for much of the Queens Promenade with the main walkway at a higher level. The largest specimen of Saphora Japonica tree outside Kew Gardens (pictured above) is on the southern stretch of the promenade.

## Opportunities



**Fig 79**  
Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints diagram for Town End and Queens Promenade

### Strengths

- (S1)** Well used walking and cycling route
- (S2)** Attractive views across the river to Home Park
- (S3)** Saphora Japonica is the largest species outside Kew Gardens

### Weaknesses

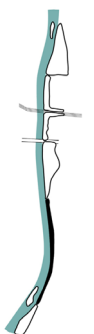
- Victorian formal landscaping along Queens Promenade is now looking tired
- (W1)** Poor quality of landscaping at Town end
- (W2)** Vehicular traffic along Portsmouth Road divides the residential area from Queens Promenade
- (W3)** A long walking stretch with no facilities
- (W4)** Confusion for pedestrians heading south and access to lower paths to avoid conflict with dedicated cycle lane
- Levels of lighting affect feelings of safety

### Opportunities

- Divide the continuous suburban sprawl of Kingston and Surbiton when viewed from Home Park and the river
- (O1)** Create a new water edge habitat along Queens promenade
- (O2)** Repair the planting between the promenade and Portsmouth Road to mitigate the suburban sprawl and emphasise the Arcadian Thames landscape
- (O3)** Plant forest scale trees along river edge
- Create a high quality introduction to the riverine landscape at Town End
- (O4)** Join the cycle way to the river walk
- Explore options to reopen toilet block
- Encourage river based cafés and restaurants
- (O5)** Encourage the establishment of another destination at the end of Queens Promenade
- Add to the diverse species of trees which currently exist on the road edge of the promenade

### Threats

- (T1)** Address potential conflict between cycles and pedestrians at the river front at Town End
- The potential for lack on ongoing maintenance to affect the quality of the riverside'



## 5.8 3b. Ravens Ait: Issues & Opportunities

**5.8.1** The southern end of Queens Promenade takes in views to the island of Raven’s Ait. This is a popular private space for corporate events and weddings. The middle of the island is dominated by buildings and hard standing and the southwestern end is dominated by amenity grassland with semi mature trees. The Ait has a rich history having been used to grow osier for weaving and this character could be re-established through osier planting, bringing ecological benefits.

**5.8.2** On the land side, the Promenade terminates at the London River Yacht Club where barriers and level changes restrict access south.

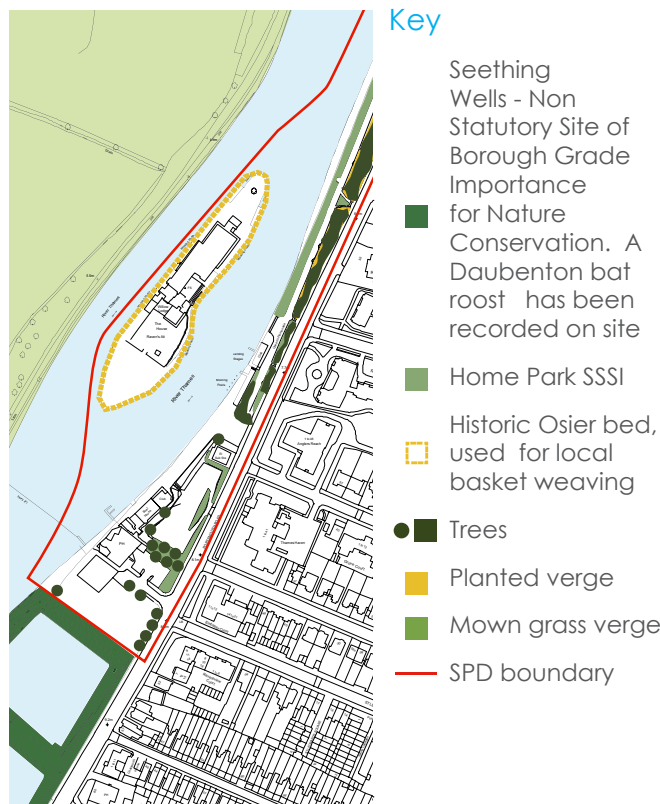
**5.8.3** Further south the river front is occupied by the Thames Sailing Club and The Harts Boatyard public house, from where boats can be hired. There is potential to extend the Promenade character and open up access to the waterfront in this area, providing a greened edge to the water where possible.

**5.8.4** These uses are surrounded by car parking reflecting its more suburban location and poorer transport links (PTAL level 3), although Surbiton station is only 11 minutes walk away. To continue a riverside walk visitors must retrace their steps; the waterfront is not publicly accessible again until near to Hampton Court and there is no river crossing.

**5.8.5** To the south of the sailing clubs is Seething Wells Site of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC). This extraordinary landscape of disused filter beds are not currently publicly accessible and contain a maternity roost for the Daubenton’s bat, with surrounding grassland and scrub supporting grass snake and breeding birds.

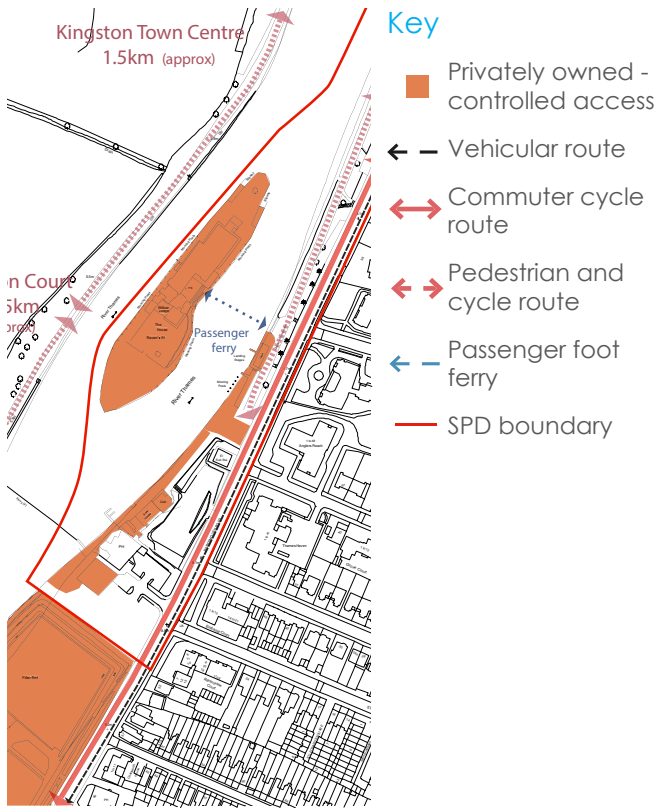
**5.8.6** There is a cluster of taller apartment buildings (6-8 storeys) to the east of Portsmouth Road which overlook the park and dominate the views in this section.

### Ecology



**Fig 80**  
Reinforcing riverine planting on Ravens Ait and link it to its osier bed past will create a stronger riverine and ecologically rich identity to the island.

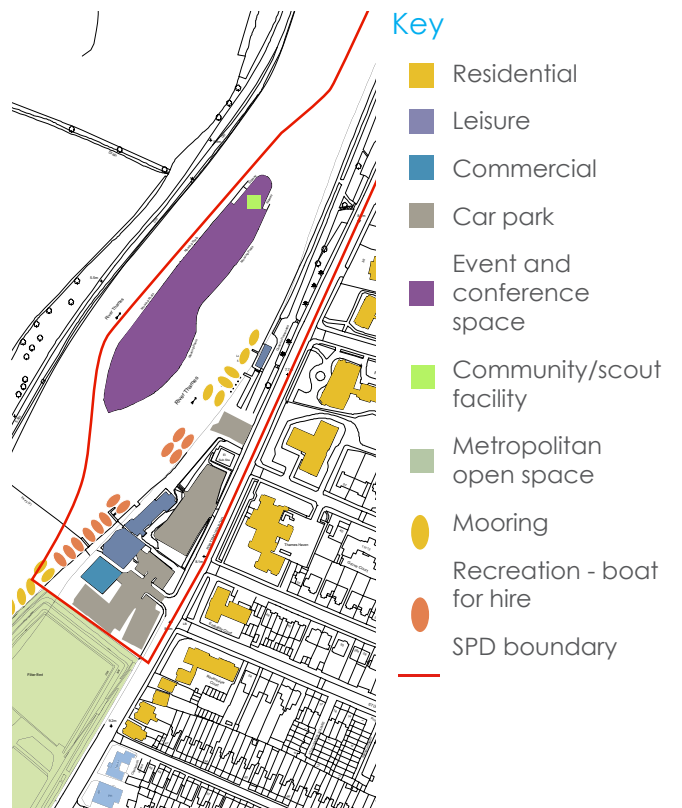
## Land ownership & movement



**Fig 81**

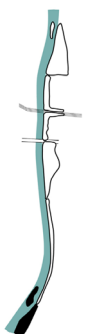
There is an opportunity to create pedestrian access behind the private frontages to the river and link Queens Promenade to Seething wells.

## Land use



**Fig 82**

There is an opportunity to create new development on Portsmouth road to activate this end of the promenade and create new open space and access by reducing car parking.





**Fig 83**  
1900-1910 The Thames at Surbiton Promenade Archive Image



**Fig 84**  
Today, Ravens Ait is still a popular boating, rowing and canoeing destination with the Thames Sailing Club nearby. Access to the island is via a foot ferry from Queens Promenade.



**Fig 85**  
There is some industrial activity with a number of small businesses based at the boat yard at the southern end of Queens Promenade



**Fig 86**  
Ravens Ait was historically used for its osier beds which provided weaving material. Today the edges of the island are heavily embanked and it is used as a venue for conferences, weddings, events such as an outdoor cinema, and an annual beer festival.



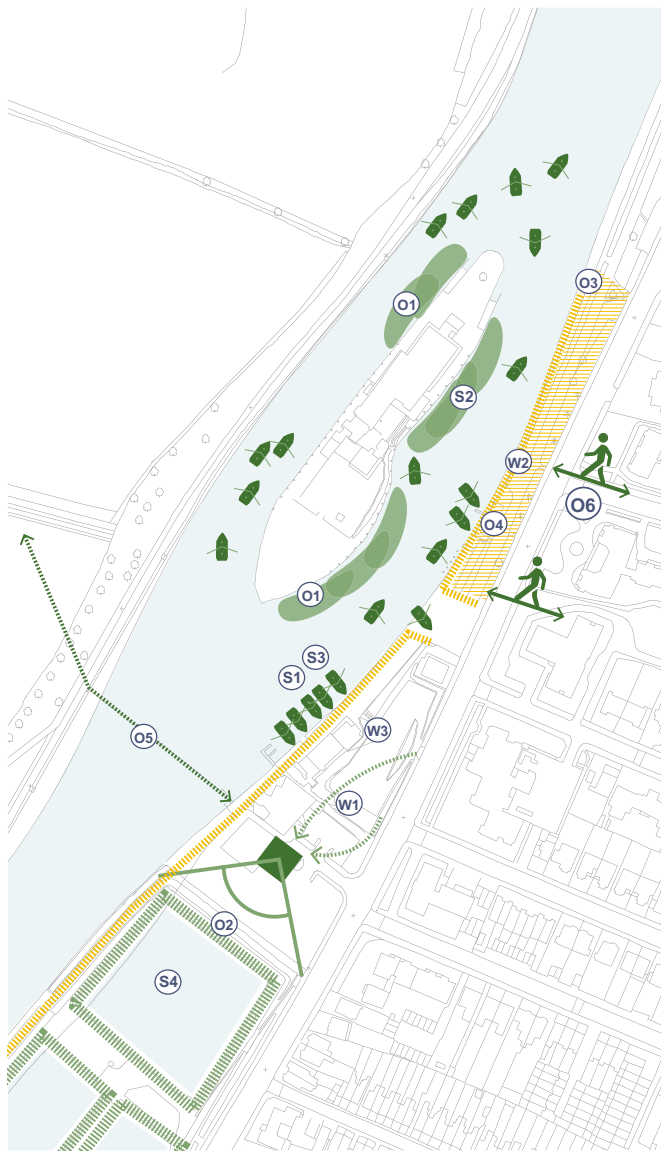
**Fig 87**  
There is no public footpath along the river at Ravens Ait and pedestrian access to the river from Portsmouth Road is obstructed with a number of car parks for the sailing club, the pub and restaurant, the boat yard and private mooring car parking.



**Fig 88**  
The extraordinary landscape of Seething Wells filter beds are to the south of the area and are currently inaccessible. There is an opportunity to increase visibility and possibly controlled access to this area.



## Opportunities



**Fig 89**  
Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints diagram for Ravens Ait

## Strengths

- (S1)** Popular leisure destination and event space
  - (S2)** Rich history of osier beds for weaving
  - (S3)** Boat hire
  - (S4)** Adjacency to extraordinary landscape of Seething Wells
- Community facility on Ravens Ait

## Weaknesses

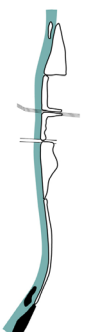
- (W1)** Visitors predominantly arrive by car
- (W2)** River front is currently not publicly accessible
- (W3)** Car parks are unattractive and block access and views between Portsmouth Road and the river

## Opportunities

- (O1)** Replant reed beds on island where conflict with river uses is minimised
  - (O2)** Provide sensitive public interface with filter beds
  - (O3)** Provide pedestrian connection to Queens Promenade
  - (O4)** Support the success and growth of a destination at the end of Queens Promenade
  - (O5)** Explore opportunity for accessible foot ferry connections to the opposite bank to provide route to and from Hampton Court (indicative location)
  - (O6)** Improve wayfinding to Surbiton Station
- Commercial spaces and synergy with riverside commercial e.g. boatyard/chandler
- Cotinue Riverside Walk by extending pathway south to boundary with Seething Wells
- Reveal the historic interest of the substation at Westfield Landing

## Threats

- Interface between private use and increased public access



## 5.9 Town End Park to Ravens Ait Proposals



TOWN END

QUEENS PROMENADE

Proposals	Rediscover Market Town	Activate Open Space	Celebrate Culture	Support Biodiversity	Improve Connections
Enhance Town End as a gateway to the town centre, creating positive arrival point.					
Redesign open space as beginning of riverine landscape character, creating it as a destination					
Introduction of a food and drink uses to activate space					
Develop coherent cycle connection from Portsmouth Road cycleway to riverside walk					
Existing formal landscape to be reshaped to provide a riverine, informal green space in keeping with the west bank, creating a strong green link with visual interest					
Formal planting between promenade and Portsmouth Road to filter views of housing and emphasise the Arcadian Thames character					
Implement naturalistic river edge planting at lower bank with intermittent access points to the water edge, and submerged baskets and ledges within the river to increase habitats and species movement					
Create safe environment day and night, with multiple access points, appropriate lighting and visibility					
Implement arboretum planting to be located between Portsmouth Road and the Promenade, with consideration on impact on sailing, and associated visitor interpretation					
Improve existing moorings					
Develop management strategy for memorial benches					
Promote long distance and circular riverside walks through an accessible foot ferry connecting the riverside walk to Barge Walk					
Enhance connections from the river edge of Portsmouth Road to adjoining streets					
Create appropriate neighbourhood destinations to encourage longer walks and evening use of open space					
Incorporate children's play features including opportunities for natural play					



— RAVENS AIT/ SEETHING WELLS —

Proposals	Rediscover Market Town	Activate Open Space	Celebrate Culture	Support Biodiversity	Improve Connections
Improve public access to the river around the boat clubs and pub at southern end of Queens Promenade. Improve quality of open space between buildings					
Commercial and retail opportunities at Parr's pier and Ravens Ait for small business initiatives or food and beverages uses					
Potential hide or viewpoint over Seething Wells habitat with visitor interpretation					
Retain public access to Ravens Ait to take advantage of long river views					
Improve signage from the river to Surbiton Station					
Replant traditional osier beds where conflict with river users is minimised					
Raise awareness and support Daubenton's bat habitat at Seething Wells.					

### **5.9.1 Vision for Town End Park to Ravens Ait**

Queens Promenade offers a distinct environment from the busy activity of the town centre. The existing promenade will be redesigned to become a green public park with a natural riverine character, acknowledging its role as a local park for the local neighbourhood as well as for visitors, extending from Town End along Queens Promenade to Raven's Ait. A series of new activities will provide interest along the route, while complimenting the more restful character of this portion of the riverside, and long circular walks will be encouraged by the introduction of new foot ferry crossings.

## Key

### Character area

- Ecologically enhanced river edge
- Arboretum on upper tier of Queens Promenade
- Riverfront walk
- Active zone
- Destination

### Amenities

- New café building
- Places to eat and drink
- Enhanced visitor moorings
- Residential moorings
- Improved entrances to the promenade
- Seating/play wall
- Play facilities
- Pontoon
- Viewing platform to Seething Wells
- River boat leisure facilities

### Movement

- Pedestrian Riverside Promenade
- Potential accessible foot ferry river crossing

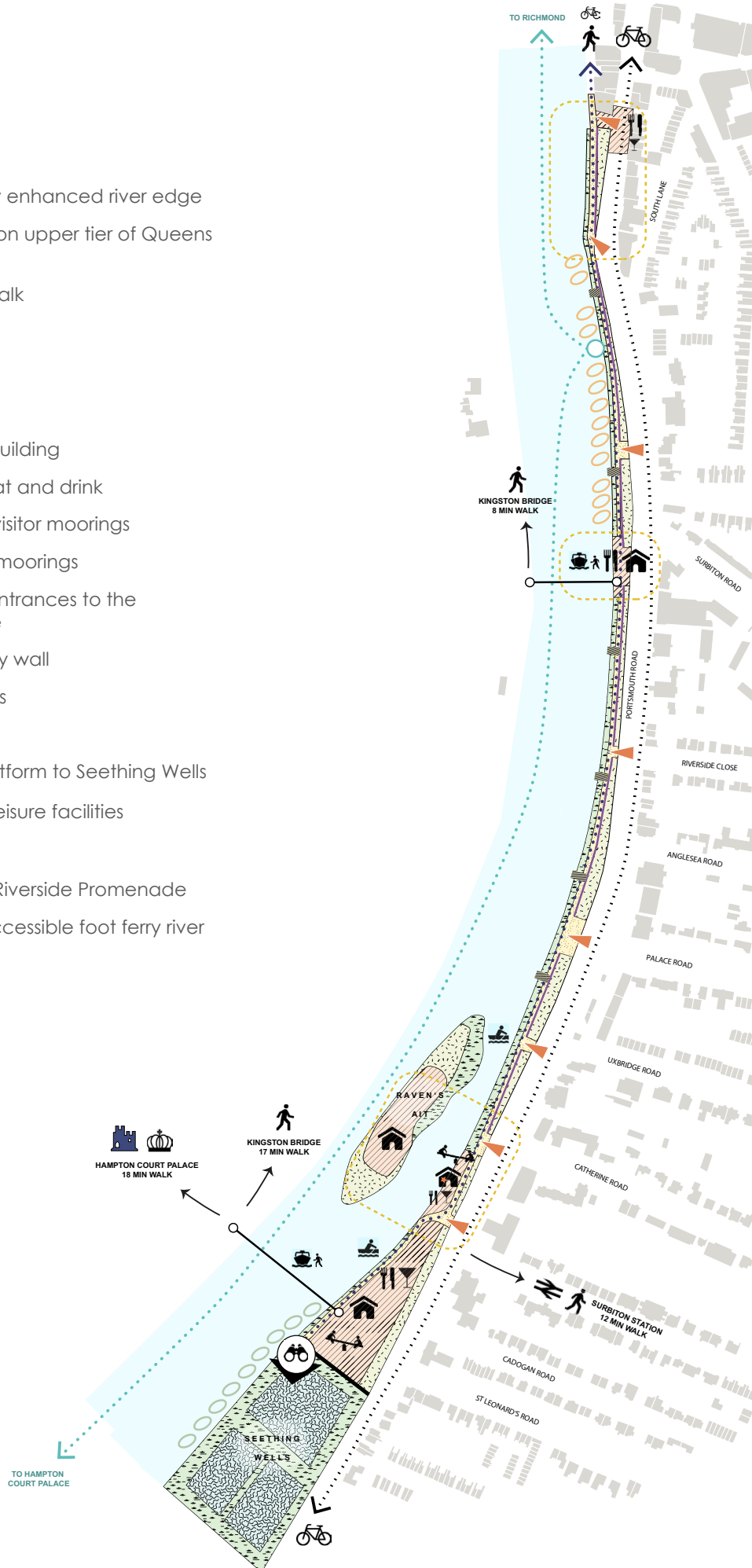


Fig 90

Proposals for Town End to Ravens Ait



# Appendices

**A - Additional policy context**

**B - Detailed review of Kingston Riverside today**

**C - Ecology report contributed by BSG Ecology** (separate document - available online)

**D - Lighting audit contributed by Studio Dekka** (separate document - available online)





# Appendix A

## Additional policy context

Other evidence informing the SPD:

- Thames River Basin Management Plan,
- Environment Agency
- Thames Marine Policy Statement, GLA.
- Kingston Town Centre Movement Strategy, 2014
- Sustainable Transport SPD, 2013
- Kingston CIL Charging Strategy
- London River Restoration Action Plan
- EU Water Framework Directive
- Mayor's vision for Cycling in London
- Mayor's Transport strategy, 2010
- Kingston's Moorings strategy, 2006
- Portsmouth Road / Queens Promenade Conservation Area Appraisal
- Canbury Gardens Conservation Area Appraisal

### North Kingston Forum



A neighbourhood forum has been designated with the intention of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for Canbury and Tudor wards which includes the SPD corridor north of Kingston Rail Bridge.

# Appendix B

## Detailed review of Kingston Riverside today

### B1 The evolution of the Riverside

Kingston is located on the eastern bank of the Thames around 11 miles from Westminster. It is an ancient settlement in origin which was first attested in 838 AD. At the boundary of the Saxon kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia, it was chosen as the location for the coronation of several West Saxon kings.

Until 1729 Kingston was the first crossing place of the River Thames after London Bridge, initially by a ford and by 1219 a timber bridge. With the establishment of Hampton Court in the sixteenth century, Kingston became a convenient lodging place for people connected to the court on the western side of the Thames.

#### *18th Century*

Rocque's map of 1766 shows the urban settlement centred on the bridge and stretching down and beyond the Hogsmill. It was a significant urban presence in rural Surrey, in contrast with the surrounding open landscapes of the Hampton Court Palace estate, commons and farmland.

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the town was an important staging post for coaches on the London to Portsmouth road as well as an important market and horse fair serving the surrounding countryside. The Riverside frontage gave rise to supporting industries such as breweries and tanneries and Kingston was a centre for boat-building, fishing and river barge transport.

#### *19th Century*

By 1894 two major changes to the plan of Kingston had occurred: the rebuilding of the bridge, and the arrival of the railway, although the town's centre of gravity remained the historic high street and market place. The new stone bridge was sited 100 yards to the south of the original and connected to the town centre by a new road called Clarence Street which required the demolition of some houses to the north of All Saints Church. The first town centre railway station opened in 1863 and originally formed the terminus of the London and South Western Railway, later becoming a through route. A rail bridge across the river was built to the north of Down Hall.

In this period, to the north of Kingston Bridge, the river was more accessible than it is today, with a street pattern reflecting the historic alignment of the bridge and a riverside route to the north running through the newly opened Canbury Gardens (1890). To the south of the bridge, long narrow plots of private land ran between the river and Thames Street, with yards and gardens on the riverside and development focussed on the Ancient Market. The routes of today's Bishops Hall and Kings Walk were both evident, leading from the town centre to river landing stages.

The industrial nature of much of the riverbank at this period is evident in the historic map: the river frontage was dominated by wharfs, a tannery, brewery and saw mill.

Further south, Queens Promenade had opened to the public and numerous villas were evident along Portsmouth Road. Seething Wells (site of spring with reputed ophthalmic properties) had become the site of the Chelsea and Lambeth Waterworks the buildings of which remain an important landmark today.

#### *1950s*

In 1956, the river frontage accommodated a number of industrial uses including a timber yard, tannery, boat building workshop, sheet metal works and engineering works. Many of the smaller plots had been combined to accommodate larger buildings and Bentalls garage had been constructed on the site of the old Down Hall House and grounds, intensifying the trend of large block developments around Wood Street.

#### *2016*

The most significant change to the centre of Kingston in the last thirty years has been the re-planning of the traffic system. A dual carriageway relief road and additional car parking was planned in the late-1980s to alleviate serious traffic congestion in the centre of Kingston. Traffic was diverted up Wood Street to bypass Clarence Street. At the same time, significant sections of the town centre were pedestrianised.

The large John Lewis store on the riverfront opened in 1990 in the location of the original Kingston Bridge. This obliterated the remaining

network of small streets which had existed in this area, which is now dominated by large retail block developments. The construction works unearthed much interesting archaeology and the remains of the twelfth century bridge were preserved in the basement of the store. The dual carriageway relief road was designed to dissect the John Lewis complex, funnelling through- traffic over Kingston Bridge.

More recently, major residential developments have been completed at Thames Side and Down Hall Road. These apartment blocks of up to 16 storeys, integrate poorly with the surrounding townscape.

Nevertheless, the historic core of Kingston, centred around All Saints Church, the market place and the High Street, retains much of its medieval road layout and character, making it one of the best preserved examples of a medieval street pattern in outer London. Importantly, the redevelopment of Bishop's Palace and Charter Quay enabled public access to the waterfront creating a continuous Riverside public footpath for the first time in 2001 and reversing the historic impression of Kingston 'turning its back on the river'. As a result the river now plays an increasingly important role in the town for leisure, sport and cultural events and as a setting for residential and commercial development.

Images:

- historic maps for 1766, 1894, 1956 plus 2016 OS annotated to show historic evolution. (See Fig 8-11 p18).

## **B2 Heritage and townscape designations**

Reflecting the importance of the Riverside in Kingston the corridor contains a number of nationally designated and locally listed heritage assets. Both local and national policy puts the emphasis on the enhancement of heritage assets and the positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness that should be made through new development.

## **Conservation Areas**

The majority of the Riverside is designated within one of three Conservation Areas (CA):

1. Riverside North
2. Kingston Old Town
3. Riverside South

The only section not designated is between the Rail Bridge and Kingston Bridge, reflecting the erosion of historic character in this area.

The AAP notes the importance of safeguarding and enhancing Kingston's historic environment, its medieval street pattern, scale and architectural richness, both in the historic core and the peripheral CAs. Where possible, proposals should re-establish the town's fine urban grain in relation to historic streets, frontage lines and plots.

The Town Centre AAP policy K11 requires that any proposals for development with the CA or within 200m of its boundary that exceed 20m in height above street level (i.e. approximately 6.5 storeys) be subject to a visual impact study to demonstrate impact on the conservation area and views.

## **Nationally designated heritage assets**

Within the Riverside SPD area and its immediate surroundings there are 65 listed buildings and structures of which the following are Grade I or II\*:

- Grade I listed: Coronation Stone, Clattern Bridge and Church of All Saints.
- Grade II\* listed: Church of St Raphael, 37-41 High Street, Picton House, Druid's Head Public House, Market House and Kingston Bridge.

## **Locally designated assets**

Areas of Special Character are safeguarded under Town Centre AAP policy DM12.

- The Kingston river frontage is designated a Strategic Area of Special Character, of metropolitan importance.
- The residential streets of Woodside Road / Eastbury Road which lie immediately to the east of Canbury Gardens are identified as a Local Area of Special Character.

Numerous buildings to the west of High Street plus railings and structures associated with the Chelsea Water Works on Portsmouth Road in the south and on Lower Ham Road to the north are designated as Buildings of Townscape Merit.

## Archaeology

The Riverside from Canbury Gardens to Queens Promenade/ Woodbines Avenue is designated an Area of Archaeological Significance, together with Raven's Ait.

The remains of the 12th century Kingston Bridge and medieval merchant's house have been relocated to the basement of John Lewis and can be viewed through a window. They are not individually listed but are recorded in the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (GLHER) and the site is under the status of Archaeological Priority Area. These are protected by national and local planning policies for the recognition and conservation of archaeological interest.

## Views

The Views Study (2018) notes a number of important and highly important views to, from and along the riverside, on both the east and west banks. Views are both static and kinetic, point to point and panoramic.

Policy K9 of the K+20 Kingston Town Centre AAP identifies and safeguards the following key views and panorama within the town centre which cross the SPD area:

- Panoramic view from Thatched House Lodge Richmond Park towards Kingston town centre and the Guildhall
- View 2: from Hampton Court Palace down The Avenue towards All Saints Church.

In addition, the Core Strategy Policy DM 10 identifies and safeguards key views to the south of the town centre which cross the SPD area:

- View from Hampton Court Palace towards Palace Road/ Portsmouth Road
- View from Hampton Court Palace towards Simpson Way / Portsmouth Road

Although not formally designated, views up and down the river and towards the rural landscape of the western bank are an important characteristic of the Riverside area, enjoyed by users of the riverside walk, diners, boat users and visitors arriving by train or via Kingston Bridge.

Facing west, the Riverside enjoys views towards the sunset adding to its attractiveness as an evening destination.

Views between the river and the Ancient Market are currently limited, but have potential to be opened up, for example through the redevelopment of Bishop's Palace House as identified in K+20 Town Centre AAP policy P13.

Images:

- heritage and townscape designations (Fig 12, p19).

## Land use designations

Kingston town centre is busy and successful centre with a wide range of shopping, food and drink and leisure uses. This is reflected in the London Plan, 2016 which identifies Kingston as a strategic location for leisure/tourism/arts/culture/sports of greater than sub-regional importance. The Riverside between Samuel Grey Gardens in the north and Town End Pier/South Lane in the south falls within the London Plan designated Metropolitan Town Centre. The town centre was designated as a Business Improvement District (BID) in 2005 managed by Kingston First.

The Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan identifies three major development sites and public realm improvements within the Riverside:

- Development site P17 Skerne Road and Down Hall Road. This major residential site has now been built out and includes a hotel.
- Development site P13 Bishops House. Consent for the phased expansion and reconfiguration of this mixed use site including the introduction of A3 uses fronting the river has been granted and phase 1 built out.
- Development site P12 Bentalls car parks, Vicarage Road and Turks sites. A major site for hotel, residential and A1, A3 and A4 uses. A new public space is proposed close to the Riverside.
- Primary gateway improvements are identified at Kingston Bridge and Town End.

In addition the AAP seeks wider improvements to the Riverside including the provision of public art, active frontages, improved accessibility, increased use and attractions and an enhanced public realm.

## Landscape and ecology

Planning policy at all levels seeks the protection and enhancement of landscape and ecology

at the Riverside. In particular, London Plan Policy 2.8 focuses on the 'ecology and open nature' of the Thames'; Core Strategy Policy KT1 focuses enhancement at Canbury Gardens and Hogsmill Walk; and Policies P12 and OTCA 2 include specific enhancements at the North Riverfront and Riverside South respectively.

### **The Arcadian Thames character**

The Character of England's Landscape, Wildlife and Cultural Features map, Natural England, 2005 classifies Kingston's Riverside as part of the Thames Valley (National Character Area 115) stretching from Reading to the southwest London fringes. It notes that the River Thames provides a unifying feature through a very diverse landscape of urban and suburban settlements, infrastructure networks, fragmented agricultural land, historic parks, commons, woodland, reservoirs and extensive minerals workings.

Open spaces along the length of the Thames are recognised as one of the largest and most important connected landscapes in London described under Framework 9: The Arcadian Thames within the GLA's All London Green Grid. The GLA define the character of the Arcadian Thames as follows:

'The Arcadian Thames arguably forms one of the most important designed river landscapes in Europe which was historically formed and used by the Kings, Queens and courtiers of London escaping to the countryside.'

'The Upper Thames runs through the northern part of this area with the Thames Path linking large, high quality open spaces... The sequence of open spaces is interspersed with the relatively dense historic settlements of Kingston upon Thames, Twickenham, Isleworth, Richmond upon Thames, Chiswick, Barnes, Putney, and Wandsworth. Each settlement has an attractive river frontage, often with Victorian or Georgian terraces forming a backdrop to views along the river. Interwoven with the Arcadian Thames is a constantly evolving working landscape of boatyards, wharves and commercial frontages.'

*Extracts from area description from All London Green Grid, Area Framework 9, Arcadian Thames, GLA*

The Thames Landscape Strategy notes the importance of the relatively continuous nature of the Riverside open space network linked through built up areas by avenues, small open spaces and river channels.

At Kingston, the formal park at Canbury Gardens to the north and planted Queens Promenade to the south provide green bookends around the otherwise urban Riverside edge associated with the town centre. Recent development at Charter Quay where the Hogsmill River meets the Thames has provided man-made habitats for wildfowl.

However, the Kingston Open Space Assessment, RBK, 2006 identifies qualitative and quantitative shortfalls in open space provision within Kingston Town. A survey of 1000 Kingston residents revealed that 4% visit Canbury Gardens while 34% visit riverside walks which are popular with all age groups.

The role of the Riverside landscape as a space for leisure and recreation is supported by the London Plan policies on the Thames Policy Area and Blue Ribbon Network which require boroughs to take action in protecting the River Thames as part of London's open space network by improving Riverside access, enhancing the River's potential for sport, recreation, leisure, educational activities and tourism. As growth in the town centre occurs over the next decade the intensity of use at the Riverside will increase. The SPD considers how this activity can be balanced with the needs of wildlife, and the appropriate landscape character which should be developed in response.

### **Ecology network**

The River Thames provides an important ecological link, connecting directly, or through its many tributaries, a large number of London's major green spaces and statutory and non-statutory sites. The river allows linked chains of populations of species to extend their distribution into London and out into the countryside and also provides dispersal and migratory routes for plants and animals through London.

The Thames and its tributaries have been adopted as London's Biodiversity Opportunity Area, a designation which reflects UK scale potential for habitat restoration and enhancement.

In the Kingston area, the Thames links Bushy Park and Home Park (SSSI, SMI) on the west bank of the river opposite the study area with Ham Lands (LNR, SMI) and Richmond Park (SAC, SSSI, SMI) to the north and north east of the study area.

It also links lower level designated sites including Seething Wells Filter Beds on the southern edge of the study area, the Hogsmill River in Central Kingston and The Copse at Hampton Wick and Normansfield Hospital. The Hogsmill River is the only tributary entering Thames within the study area and is itself a blue/green corridor and habitat linking to the Hogsmill sewage work to the south and other non-statutory designated sites along the length of the river.

Along the Riverside the natural river bank and associated habitats and those associated with the channel of the river have largely been lost or simplified as a result of construction of the weir and lock at Teddington and the development of the right (east) bank of the river. Even where there is green space next to the river such as at Canbury Gardens the bankside has been landscaped and managed for many years.

The two islands are the principal in-channel features of the river, however both have been developed for use by river craft or for leisure purposes. The banks are reinforced to prevent erosion and easier access and there remains little or no natural habitat. As a consequence the right bank of the river supports little natural Riverside vegetation. Small pockets have been retained and/or created at the mouth of the Hogsmill River and the bank of the river at Canbury Gardens continues to support emergent Riverside vegetation. The highly urbanised character of the riverbank reduces the amount of available habitat for wildlife, restricts movement and/or distribution of some species that require continuity of habitat.

Identifying opportunities for softening and naturalisation of the urban river edge and extension of the habitat network are important considerations for the SPD strategy in line with the proposals of the Thames Landscape Strategy.

#### **Water quality**

The river provides a range of ecosystem services including drainage and foul water disposal. It

receives discharges from a range of sources including road and other urban surface run off and treated foul water discharges. These discharges result in low water quality in this stretch of the Thames and the Hogsmill.

#### **Functionality**

One of the key benefits of the River Thames is the role it plays as a linking blue/green corridor through the heart of London. This connectivity is affected in different ways in relation to different species. For example weirs and other barriers such as locks can provide a physical barrier to the movement of fish, a lack of continuity of suitable Riverside vegetation can result in isolated communities dotted along the river. Other species that use the river for dispersal from resting places to feeding grounds can be restricted by the character of the bankside uses rather than physical barriers. For example, light pollution can adversely affect the use of a river by light sensitive species such as bats.

#### **Designated nature conservation sites**

The following nature conservation designations are of relevance to the SPD:

##### *Located on site*

There are no Statutory Sites within the SPD boundary. The following Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) are recognised by the Greater London Authority and London borough councils as being of London wide (SMINC) or borough wide (SINC) importance for wildlife:

- River Thames and Tidal Tributaries Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (SMINC) and Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The River Thames is designated for the habitats and species it supports and its role as a significant green/blue corridor running through London. The river supports a wide variety of species associated with the in-channel habitats which range from estuarine and tidal habitats through to typical non-tidal lowland river habitats. The river supports a high diversity of species including over 100 species of fish (marine and freshwater), invertebrates including nationally rare snails, and good populations of wildfowl

and wading birds. A number of rare plants occur throughout the length of the Thames corridor.

- Seething Wells Filter Beds SINC. The filter beds are designated due to the presence of chalk grassland. The site is also known to contain a Daubenton's bat maternity roost.

#### *Located off site*

The following Statutory Sites are protected under UK law, recognizing their importance at a national level, and are located in close proximity to the Riverside:

- Richmond Park - Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) close proximity to the Riverside. Richmond Park is located north east of the river. The park contains many mature and veteran trees and is designated for its large population of stag beetle. It is also of national importance for its assemblage of saproxylic invertebrates, which are those that depend on dead and decaying wood for part of their lifecycle.
- Bushy Park and Home Park SSSI. These parks are located south west of the river. The park is notified due to its nationally important saproxylic invertebrate assemblage, population of veteran trees and acid grassland communities.
- Ham Common Richmond Local Nature Reserve (LNR). Ham Lands LNR is located north of the river. The LNR contains birch and oak woodland with wet hollows and acid grassland.
- The Wood and Richard Jefferies Bird Sanctuary LNR. The Woods was a large Victorian house with a lake and mixed woodland in the grounds. The site is important for a diverse woodland bird community and stag beetle.

#### **Movement and connectivity**

There is a direction at all levels of planning policy to increase the use of the Riverside through improvement to accessibility and movement. The following policies are of particular relevance:

- Core Strategy - improving the local network of pedestrian and cycle routes particularly to Kingston town centre (Core Strategy Policy KT1)
- Policy CS4 (Thames Policy Area) - supports opportunities to improve the riverside walk to, and develop links from, the Hogsmill River and Thames

River Corridor to other green networks in and out of the Borough

- Policy K13 - focuses on the riverside walk and links to the riverside from the rest of the centre including from Kingston Station and bus stops
- Policy P2 (Northern Riverfront) - references a high quality pedestrian route from Wood Street to the Riverside
- Policy OTCA (Riverside South):
- Improve the links between the riverside and the rest of the centre,
- Seeks to enhance approach to town centre from Kingston Bridge and approaches from the river
- Seeks to provide new cycle route along Horsefair between Kingston Bridge and Skerne Road and promote a riverside cycle route.

#### **Movement context**

Kingston is a bustling market town that straddles London and the County of Surrey. As a result the town centre benefits from excellent accessibility to public transport services, particularly focused on London, while also providing high levels of access by car to the edge of the town centre as well as plentiful car parking. In order to minimise the impact of traffic a significant proportion of the town centre was pedestrianised in the late 1980s and early 1990s and a gyratory was built encircling the medieval centre.

While improving quality in the town centre the gyratory encourages speeding and focuses traffic on the A307 and A308, creating severance between the station and the town centre and Riverside and between the town centre and the river to the north of Kingston Bridge.

Kingston Bridge is the only crossing of the Thames within 2km and as such is the main approach to the town centre, carrying around 30% of all traffic accessing it as well as being the busiest east west cycle route into the town. Historically Horse Fair and Clarence Street have been important routes into the town from the bridge but this importance has been visually eroded by the gyratory.

The pedestrianisation of the town centre means that pedestrians, cycle and vehicle movements are generally separated, with many of the key

areas of activity in and around Kingston free from vehicular traffic. However, there are a number of locations where key movement routes relating to different modes interact (for example at Kingston Bridge) or cross areas of high pedestrian activity, creating points of conflict. The Council's Go Cycle proposals seek to address conflicts between pedestrian and cycling movements through the provision of an improved cycling network. Walking Kingston town centre has a fine grain of pedestrianised streets creating a high quality and permeable environment for pedestrians within the retail core. Outside the town centre core, the emphasis on pedestrian priority is reduced by the highways dominated gyratory. In particular, the crossing outside the station is congested and shared by pedestrians and cyclists, which creates an area of tension.

Connections to the Riverside from the town centre core for pedestrians (and cyclists) are poor despite there being a number of existing alleys between Kingston Bridge and Queens Promenade.

The alleys take various forms from narrow passages to wider breaks in the buildings but they are generally not obvious from the town, provide limited direct visual links to the river and are often dominated by refuse storage, parking and servicing, making them a poor environment for pedestrians.

Access to the river adjacent to Kingston Bridge is narrow, creating a significant pinch point and conflict between cyclists and pedestrians. The built form at this point means there is limited potential to widen the link in order to provide good connections for cyclists to Horse Fair.

Despite the poor quality of access, the riverside walk between Kingston Bridge and Town End is popular with pedestrians and an important leisure route. The walk fluctuates in width and elevation as it traverses multiple land ownerships and this creates interest and character. However, it results in significant congestion for pedestrians particularly during the weekends and summertime.

Cycling is banned along the riverside walk although it is lightly used by cyclists. Between Kingston Bridge and Canbury Gardens access along and to the Thames is poor in terms of quality of environment, connection to the water and

facilities.

The Thames Path National Trail, a long distance route between Gloucestershire and the Thames Barrier, runs on the western bank of the Thames to Kingston Bridge, before detouring inland to the east to reconnect with the Riverside in Canbury Gardens via Down Hall Road. The route between Kingston Bridge and Canbury Gardens is poor, but once within the gardens it is pleasant and shared by pedestrians and cyclists. The bankside along the path is also used for fishing and activity related to Kingston Rowing Club and The Boaters Inn. While animating the river's edge this can create conflict between the different uses.

## Cycling

Kingston has the second highest level of cycling as a mode share in outer London, at around 4% of all trips. The town centre benefits from some quality segregated cycle routes as well as contra flow lanes and traffic free routes, however the infrastructure is not coherent which reduces its attractiveness. Cycling is permitted through parts of the pedestrian area enhancing access for cyclists to the town centre.

Portsmouth Road, Lower Ham Road, Richmond Road and Kingston Bridge are important existing cycle routes into the town centre that help to serve the key cycle movements to and from Surbiton, Teddington, Hounslow, Richmond, Wandsworth, Wimbledon, Croydon and Epsom. Sustrans National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 4 follows the Thames Path through the area, taking in Down Hall Road and Clarence Street, crossing Kingston Bridge and continuing on the western bank of the Thames towards Hampton Court.

There are a number of important cycle links missing both east west and north south around the town. These include along the river between Canbury Gardens and Portsmouth Road, around the town centre on Wheatfield Way and the gyratory, as well as east to west around Fairfield Recreational Ground to Clarence Street to the north and Kingston Hall Road to the south.

The Council's Go Cycle programme proposes a number of schemes that could fill some of these gaps over the next few years. Portsmouth Road has already been improved as part of the programme with the introduction of a two-way segregated cycle way.



## Public transport

Train services are frequent from Kingston to London but connections to Surrey or elsewhere within the borough are poor. The rail line runs parallel with the gyratory and creates a significant barrier to movement to the north west, with access to the river being difficult. Bus services to and from London are high frequency and serve the town centre well but create congestion and a poor quality environment, particularly on Eden Street. Services to and from Surrey are limited.

## Use of the River

There is a strong policy direction to support greater use of the river and riverside. Policies of particular relevance include:

- London Plan Policy 7.25 - increase use of the Blue Ribbon Network for passenger and tourist river services.
- Policy CS 4 (Thames Policy Area) - improvement to infrastructure/facilities for boat users and encourages new facilities for river-buses at pier/wharf locations identified in K+20.
- K+20 POLICY K13: Promotes greater use of river and seeks improvements to:
  - River-based and riverside recreation and leisure activities and attractions.
  - Facilities for boat users, including moorings, support facilities, club facilities and information.

## River users

The Riverside plays host to a range of community and leisure groups in addition to individuals walking, cycling, feeding swans or simply enjoying the view of passing rowers, sailing boats and cruisers. The River itself is navigable (except for a 12m non-navigable zone adjacent to the river wall) and non-tidal making it suitable for a wide range of river craft.

The River Users Group estimates that in 2015, there were over 160,000 boat trips in the central section of the Riverside, with boats ranging in size from 20m long commercial vessels and racing eight rowing boats to sailing boats and canoes.

Riverside organisations and user groups include:

- Minima Sailing Club
- Albany Park Canoe and Sailing Club, Albany Park Road (to the north of Canbury Gardens)
- Kingston Rowing Club, Lower Ham Road
- Thames Sailing Club, Surbiton make use of this stretch of river including their Stand Up Paddlers.
- River Thames Boat Project operating the Richmond Venturer, Thames Side
- Steadfast Sea Cadets
- Kingston Waterfront Fishing
- Canoe clubs
- Kingston Dragonboats.
- School, University rowing clubs
- Kingston Riverside Club, tennis club located in Canbury Gardens
- Running clubs
- Commercial boat trip operators including:
  - Turks Launches, Town End operating trips to Hampton Court and Richmond.
  - Parr Boats, Queens Promenade operating trips between Hampton Court and Kingston.
  - Westminster Passenger Services Association, between Houses of Parliament and Hampton Court, passing through Kingston.

## Events

The River and Riverside is host to a number of community and sporting events including:

- Kingston Regatta, a two day event run by Kingston Rowing Club from an enclosure on the western bank of the river opposite Bishop's Palace. The Regatta Saturday generally coincides with the Hampton Court Flower Show and is the busiest single day on the River.
- Other races include the Teddington Head, KRC Heads, KRC Courses and Dragonboat racing.
- Kingston River Festival was organized by Kingston First and ran alongside the Regatta to celebrate the town's maritime heritage.
- RBK in partnership with Creative Kingston run a programme of events.

Boat moorings are provided at points along the corridor managed by the Environment Agency,

the Royal Borough of Kingston or others:

- Visitor moorings at Thames Side Wharf and Charter Quay.
- Residential moorings at Charter Quay and Eagle Wharf.
- Temporary moorings (ropes and rings on the river wall) south of Kingston Bridge.

The Kingston Moorings Strategy Implementation Report, Vail Williams LLP for RBK, 2009 recommends new visitor and residential mooring pontoons at Town End and a new pontoon at the northern end of Queens Promenade close to the Riverside Café with flexibility for day hire use, visitor and permanent residential or leisure craft moorings. It notes that any new mooring facilities must not prevent or seriously impede annual events such as the Regatta and that improvements that provide wildlife habitat would be welcomed. Where high quality, secure facilities are provided, a charge could be levied.

### Development constraints Flooding

The Thames at Kingston is a wide freshwater river, which experiences fluctuations in level associated with spring tides and fluvial flooding despite being beyond the official tidal range which ends at Teddington Lock.

The level of the Hogsmill River, which joins the Thames at Charter Quay, varies dramatically in response to levels of discharge and abstraction upstream. There is also potential for the Thames to back up into the Hogsmill.

Surface water flooding is managed via critical drainage areas across the Borough of which Group 8, 12 and 13 are relevant. Potential management solutions as a result of the programme include Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) which could include providing surface water attenuation volumes to limit peak runoff rates and the allocation of areas that could be allowed to flood during extreme events, to help to mitigate the risk of flooding elsewhere.

Maps showing modelled fluvial flood extents by the Environment Agency indicate that the majority of the riverside walk immediately adjacent to the River Thames, the Hogsmill River banks, the northern section of Canbury Gardens and Thames Side are classified as flood zone 3 (more than 1:100 annual probability of fluvial flooding). Most

of the remainder of the SPD area is located within flood zone 2 (between 1:100 and 1:1000 annual probability of fluvial flooding).

Future developments within these areas should be appropriate for flood zones identified by the EA, furthermore there may be restrictions on the extent to which landscaping levels can be raised within areas of flood zone 3.

The use of SuDS is supported by Local Policy. In particular, Core Strategy Policy KT1 promotes the use of SuDS in new developments and identifies the Hogsmill River as an area in which the Council will work with partners to mitigate effects associated with high flood risk; Policy K24 of the Kingston Town Centre AAP identifies appropriate uses within Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b and the requirement for SuDS where appropriate on all development sites to manage surface water runoff rates.

### Landownership

Ownership of the Riverside is fragmented and split roughly 50:50 between private landowners and Council ownerships with property the responsibility of a number of departments. The majority of the Riverside public realm is Council owned as is Canbury Gardens and Queens Promenade. Sections of the riverside walk and adjoining roads at Charter Quay and Thames Side are privately owned, together with the majority of riverfront built development.

The SPD presents a holistic approach to the riverside regardless of ownership boundaries to ensure a consistent planning approach across the Riverside and bring coherence to the design of the public realm and urban form. The detailed pattern of ownerships will be investigated as proposals move towards delivery.

Navigational rights and access to the River Thames are managed by the Environment Agency. (RBK – please confirm).

Policy CS 3 The Natural and Green Environment  
The Council will protect and improve Kingston's valued natural and green environment by:

- a. seeking to ensure that residents have access to an interconnected network of safe, well managed and maintained areas of open space through

the implementation of routes in the 'South West London Greenways Network Expansion - Feasibility Report', Kingston's Green Spaces Strategy, Park Management Plans and Annual Implementation Plans

- b. protecting Kingston's open space network from inappropriate development through its open spaces designations; Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), Thames Policy Area, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), Local Nature Reserves, Local Open Space, School Open Spaces, LDF Core Strategy Adopted April 2012 Thematic Policies, Green Corridors, Green Chains and Allotments, as shown on the Proposals Map
- c. facilitating regeneration, infrastructure upgrades and environmental improvement to the Hogsmill Environs
- d. incorporating appropriate elements of public open space into new developments and/or making a financial contribution to improving existing open spaces, with additional facilities and better management to Green Flag standards
- e. promoting the management of biodiversity in light of the threats arising from climate change and future development growth, by working in partnership with a range of organisations on projects to protect and enhance Kingston's Open Space Network. This will not only provide increased wildlife habitats, but will also link wider parts of Kingston, allowing easier movement and reducing isolation of habitats.

## ENGLISH

If you are unable to read this document because of disability or language, we can assist you. Please call the Kingston Council Helpline on 020 8547 5000 or ask someone to call on your behalf.

## KOREAN

귀하가 장애인 언어 때문에 이 문서를 읽을 수 없다면, 저희가 도와 드릴 수 있습니다. 킹스톤 카운슬의 전화 상담 서비스(전화번호: 020 8547 5000)로 전화 주시거나 귀하를 위해 누군가에게 전화해 달라고 부탁드립니다.

## FARSI

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## POLISH

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## TAMIL

இயலாமை அல்லது மொழி காரணமாக இத்தகவல் பத்திரத்தை உங்களால் படிக்க முடியாவிட்டால் நாம் உங்களுக்கு உதவி செய்ய முடியும். தயவுசெய்து கிங்ஸ்டன் நகரசபை உதவி அழைப்பிற்கு 020 8547 5000 என்ற தொலைபேசி எண்ணில் தொடர்பு கொள்ளவும் அல்லது உங்களுக்காக ஒருவரைத் தொடர்பு கொள்ளச் சொல்லவும்.



If you would like to discuss any aspect of this document or Strategic Planning and Regeneration generally, then please ring the Strategic Planning Team on 020 8547 5002 or email us at [localplan@kingston.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@kingston.gov.uk)

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