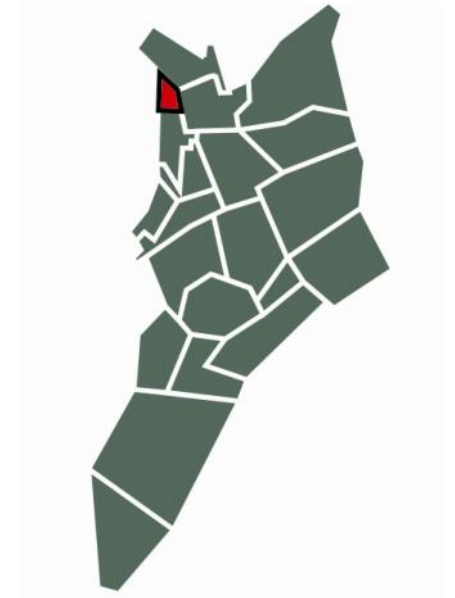


The character areas of Canbury Gardens



The location of Canbury Gardens

# 3 Canbury Gardens

## **Origins and General Character**

The Canbury Gardens Area is centred around the first bend of the river Thames as it runs from Kingston to Richmond. It is a low density housing area with some local shops and cafés, and is characteristic of North Kingston. It contains three, high quality street blocks of late Victorian housing built on sloping side roads between the busy Richmond Road to one side and the riverside park called Canbury Gardens to the other. Canbury Gardens was created by a visionary Mayor in 1890 from an area of drained land, once a tract of marshes and osier beds with a towpath and barge cottage. After the building expansion that followed the arrival of the railway in 1863, the site became a tar factory and rubbish dump before being transformed into parkland. The Gardens have a fine, curving avenue of London Plane trees planted circa 1902 leading to what was once an award-winning Corporation boathouse and cafeteria, now the Boaters' Inn and Kingston Rowing Club, whose architecture and character are largely unspoiled. Around the historic Bank Lane is a mix of housing types from various ages, with an outstanding range of late Victorian mansions in Albany Park Road. More, fine quality houses from the late nineteenth century or pre-First World War line Richmond Road. The neighbourhood has suffered some minor, incremental degradation of its architecture, with a few inappropriately large or tall blocks of flats which either add nothing to the townscape or weaken the quality of the riverscape. However, given the high quality, spacious plot and street layout prevalent in the area, the overall character retains coherence and quality. Just.

## **Land Use**

Predominantly housing, with a small amount of light industrial and leisure/pub use to the riverside. Some shops and cafés to Richmond Road. Open space in the park.

## **Movement**

Richmond Road is a main road linking Kingston to Richmond, and served by the No.65 bus which is over-subscribed during rush hours. Other roads serve local access. Small barges are able to moor for a short time at the Boaters' Inn. This stretch of river is popular with sports rowers trailed by 'trainer's' boats with loud-hailers. The riverbank is well used by leisure walkers and commuter or leisure cyclists. The Lower Ham Road has a conflict of movement. With a footway which rises suddenly and continues without break, pedestrians unfamiliar with this quirky configuration often find themselves walking down what begins as a continuing riverside lane, but what becomes a very narrow 'road' with parked cars, cyclists, large lorries and no refuge save the river. Cyclists too suffer from the over dominance of the car/lorry on this narrow riverside road which is really little more than a bridleway with an intimate connection to the river. Parking on the riverside road is uncontrolled, resembling ad-hoc, temporary festival parking—it works against those using legs instead of engines.

## **Built form**

On the town side of the neighbourhood, the height of buildings is generally 2 storeys, with some 3 storey elements of shop parades, corners, and attic rooms in large houses. The riverside contains some three or four storey riverside buildings or arts and crafts inspired houses. It has seen some recent increase in height with modern blocks of flats commonly set in extensive grounds. However, these are the exception to the prevailing heights. Forms are largely detached or semi-detached houses, some set in substantial plots with significant gaps between buildings and well set-back building lines.

## **Open space**

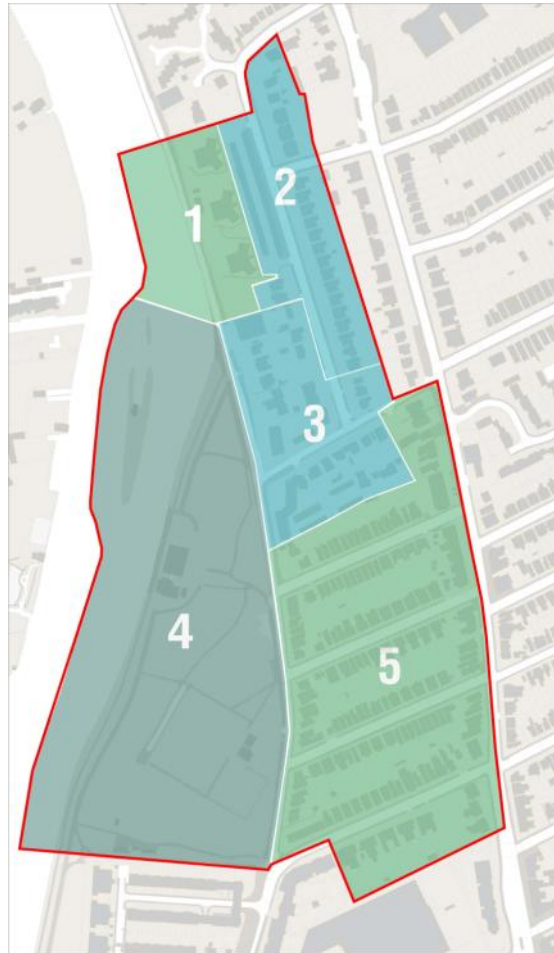
The riverside and the open space of Canbury Gardens park is a central feature of the area. The space is varied and very well laid out in an exceptionally high quality setting. As well as being important to the character of this neighbourhood it is part of the character of Kingston as a whole. It must rank as one of the finest parks in London and demonstrates a unique, English approach to landscape design. It is a jewel in Kingston's crown, and as such merits special protection and enhancement of both ends and the riverside edge to the north, part of its setting.



**Key Area Characteristics**

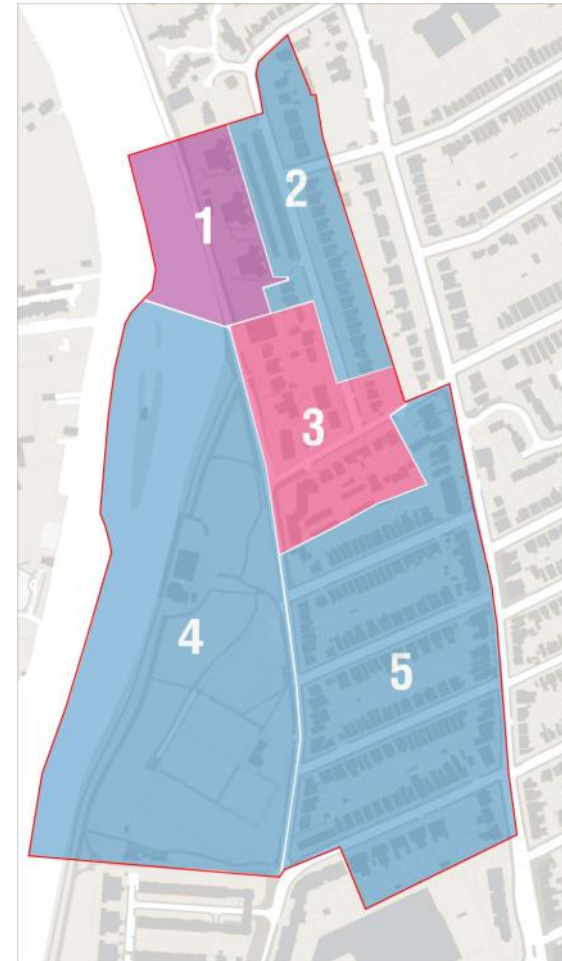
-  Major movement corridor
-  Minor movement corridor
-  Movement corridor needing enhancement
-  Area node
-  Area node needing enhancement
-  Minor Area node
-  Major gateway
-  Major barrier
-  Strategic Landmark
-  Local Landmark
-  Potential new landmark
-  Green open space
-  Open space in need of improvement
-  Key views to open space
-  Potential new view
-  Significant view to protect

## Character Area Types



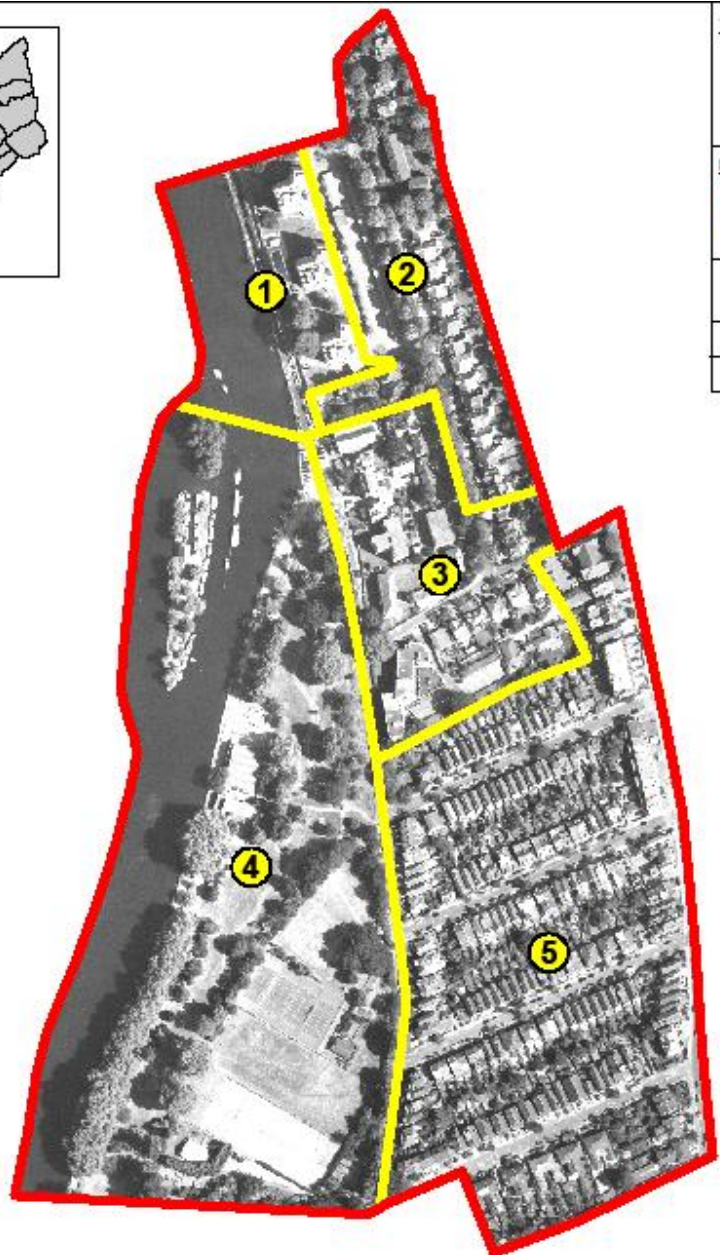
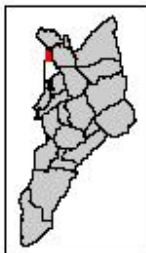
- Urban
- Inner Suburban
- Outer Suburban
- Rural / Open

## Character Area Assessment



- Area of Established High Quality
- Area with scope to reinforce the existing character
- Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity





**Title**

**DENSITY AREAS**  
Canbury Gardens

**Legend**

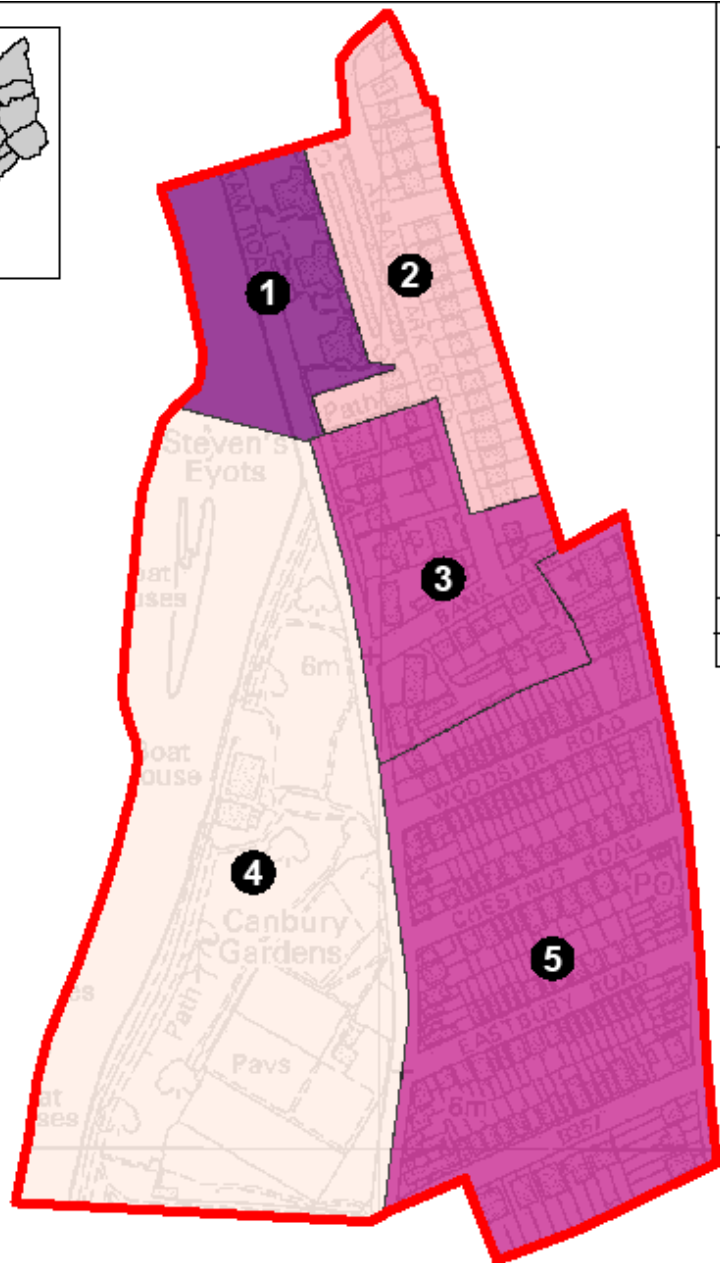
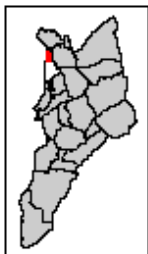
- Canbury Gardens
- Density Areas

Rob Dickson  
Service Director (Environment and Sustainability)  
Environmental Services Directorate  
Gladhall 2, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 1EU

Operator: IK

Date: 04/01/2010

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Blusky 2008



**Title**

**DENSITY AREAS**

Canbury Gardens

**Legend**

Canbury Gardens

**DENSITY**

- less than 5
- 5 - 20
- 21 - 45
- 46 - 70
- more than 70

ID	DENSITY(U/HA)
1	181.67
2	17.28
3	63.21
4	0
5	66.27

Rob Dickson  
 Service Director (Environment and Sustainability)  
 Environmental Services Directorate  
 Guildhall 2, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 1EU

Operator: IK

Date: 04/01/2010

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View south along Lower Ham Road to towers



Boat safety zone along Lower Ham Road



Well used jetty along Lower Ham Road



River view to Kingston Rowing Club Boathouse

## 1 Y-shape towers/ Brunswick Court, Ulster Court and York Court

This area has two aspects: a neutral aspect to CA2 Albany Park Road (i.e. notwithstanding loss of light and sky, the excessive height is reduced by horizontal spacing, set back, mature trees, and lack of individual character compared with rich individuality of the Victorian houses) and a domineering aspect to the riverside. Blocks of eight storeys on raised ground with a public footpath running parallel to their arrangement, their building line is set back well. Their vertical scale is overbearing on the small riverside path at 90 degrees to it and at 180° and 360° to its neighbours it is also over bearing. Vertical scale is softened by Repton's remaining cedar trees of horizontal sculptural form contrasting to the vertically extruded form of the blocks. Horizontally well-spaced. The architecture of the blocks is bland but floorplate shape adds some visual interest. Also, the terracing of road and promenade footpath helps reduce the impact of height (perspective deception by two scales). Nonetheless this building contrasts with the prevailing low-scale, low-density development along the riverside.

### ISSUE

- The spatial character of the riverside area is low-scale, loose, uncramped, and not appropriate for tall buildings

### Significant Views

Lower Ham Road and the parkland hold significant, characteristic riverside views. Views to Kingston include a view of the Thames effectively splitting around Steven's Eyots. To the east leg is a middle distance view of the Boaters' Inn and Kingston Rowing Club set against the London Planes inside the park and the weeping willows on the river bank. To the west is a view of Kingston's link to Richmond and to its past, its road and rail bridges, and set in front of the longer backdrop of the Home Park fastigate trees. The railway bridge, completed in 1863 has 5 elegantly proportioned 75' spans. It is a beautiful example of Victorian engineering, yet with its clamped-on sewerage pipes and appearance of neglect, is an under-valued heritage asset. The road bridge of 1828 has been sympathetically widened, in 1914, and more recently in the 90's. Its piers have plinths for sculptures, common on London bridge piers, though they remain bare here. Adding some allegorical figures to the piers may enrich the character of Kingston's bridge (it was once one of only two bridges to cross the Thames in London, c/w Vauxhall bridge has 8 bronze figures representing agriculture, architecture, engineering, pottery, science, fine arts, local government and education. Holborn viaduct has agriculture, commerce, science and fine art). The view of the 2 bridges so closely juxtaposed highlights the difference in age that created them, their technological intrigue, and their different span geometries.



River view to Kingston's bridges

Vistas to Richmond vary from the more substantial buildings set back from the bank with occasional boat houses or jetties in front, running to the open space of Broom Road Recreation Ground, where the vista becomes more open with single storey small boater bungalows set close to the water as the river sweeps a gentle curve to the Teddington Lock straight. The meandering nature of the river in this area sets up a series of views and vistas, which can alternate between the distant and intimate within the distance of a few footsteps, and adds to the special character of the place.

#### ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider a public realm improvement scheme to sensitively address the safety of walkers and cyclists along the tow path of Lower Ham Road especially with conflict of parking and servicing to commercial units.
- Refurbishment of the cast-iron railway bridge, including the removal of corrugated iron panels, pigeon control measures

**Character area type: outer suburban (density 162 dph) (PTAL 1a-1b)**

**Character area assessment: area with scope to reinforce existing character**



Young sailors by Albany Canoe Club





Variety of form and detail



But consistency in quality, scale, density



Exceptionally beautiful street profile



Different scale, fenestration, garden

## Character area assessment: area of established high quality

### 2 Albany Park Road

Albany Park Road has a very high quality townscape with exceptionally well-designed and beautifully composed and detailed houses to the east side fronting a road lined with mature London plane trees, pruned very tall, which creates an exceptionally beautiful avenue effect, echoed by the footpaths with boundary planting overhanging to the street trees forming another arboreal delight.

Front boundaries are intact, well detailed with quality materials, with building lines well set back. The recently developed block of six semi-detached houses at the northern end are poor cousins to the established row of detached houses they ape. Their height has reduced the quality of coherent ridge heights along the street. The development appears cramped on narrow plots and disproportionately tall. The six semi-detached houses would have reinforced the character of the street better as four detached houses, with one storey less height. Detailed design has not been well handled with poor junctions, awkward manipulation of walls and a general lack of finesse. The front gardens have none of the softness or planting which characterises the area. The boundary enclosure of such narrow plots makes for fussy, busy elevations.

The imposing, gated development of Y-shaped blocks York, Ulster and Brunswick Courts do not help the feeling of connection to river. They have a bland mass but are well spaced between and all around. The Albany Centre adds some river-life with its boats and masts to this road. The garages of the Y-shaped blocks have saved the road from a poor character; the plot they take up as single storey, gives some spatial relief from the over scaled blocks behind. The last 3 houses as the road curves away are of different styles, but they enhance the established character of the main run of Victorian houses.

#### ISSUES

- Design quality in new development

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Preservation of the character i.e. well spaced building plots containing detached houses, set-back building line, single plot development, front boundaries and planted gardens, 2-storey generally, exquisitely composed elevations which refer to the coherence of a whole, detailed houses, well spaced apart, high quality materials
- The garages to the Y-shaped blocks should not be developed above their current height as they offer relief to the over tall blocks behind
-



Lower Ham Road presents as an inviting riverside lane, but has potential for car/ bike/ walker conflict



Set-back lines and modest scale



Boat House detail

### 3 Bank Lane

The character of the area facing the river is open and uncramped. Some buildings are set on ground higher than the road and make an imposing, well spaced townscape. The fine Victorian boathouse, 92 Lower Ham Road, commands the entry to the park. However, the road layout and parking here together with the lack of front boundary make for a confusing and potentially dangerous situation. White paint on the footpath between rows of parked vans does not encourage walking. Pedestrians and cyclists have to weave into the road to cross or go around the parked commercial vehicles. This entrance to Canbury Gardens would benefit from a public realm improvement scheme addressing car dominance and parking. Houses facing the river vary from 2-storey arts and crafts inspired detached houses making a picturesque landscape to a modern 4-storey apparently semi-detached pair. Blocks of flats vary in their impact on the character from a nondescript 1958 block of 13 pretending to be a large house with a semi-open, un surveillanced rear garage block to the overall but well designed 4/5 storey Canbury Court with its set-back and relieved plan form, good planting and well detailed building. Behind the river frontages the area is a mix of low density housing in a variety of styles and ages, interesting forms of detached houses on large plots with good detailing and intact front boundaries, on-plot parking and good provision of street trees.

#### ISSUES

- Protection of the coherent skyline, and the character of spaces between buildings, on Lower Ham Road

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider a public realm improvement scheme to the road/entry to Canbury Gardens

**Character area type: outer suburban (density tba dph) (PTAL 1b-2)**

**Character area assessment: area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity**



Set-back lines and modelled corner



Park entry by narrow road, public and private parking areas, remote footpath and river traffic







Open riverside vista by mooring for 'The Boaters' pub



The Boaters pub facing the river



Popular children's play area

## 4 Canbury Gardens

This is a spectacularly beautiful riverside park in the heart of Kingston. These Elysian Fields have several landscape characters which visitors can seamlessly move between without losing the identity of the whole park. The park has;

- A riverside character with 2 levels of footpath/bike path to enjoy completely open views across the Thames to Hampton Wick
- An arboreal avenue of London plane trees planted parallel to the river about 100 years old which form a shaded and defined 'walk' between river and parkland
- A series of naturally enclosed spaces with differing aspects throughout the park
- Municipal uses such as the Kingston Rowing Club building, a former council cafeteria now The Boaters Inn, municipal tennis courts and clubhouse, bowling pavilion and bandstand
- Play area for toddlers
- A private tennis club which benefits from its secluded park side location

### ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A thin area of ground looks as if there were once bowling greens in the activity area of the park - this traditional use would have added character activity to the park. Perhaps a more popular use today such as pétanque or volleyball could be provided for instead?
- The toddler play area with exciting landscape and slide is very popular and sometimes full. The swings are few and low slung. An additional mature tree would help provide shade in summer months.
- The characteristic retaining wall to the tow path is faced with clinker/brick waste from the power station formerly burning coal nearby. Spot repairs have disposed of this material, and replaced with brick or granite blocks. Suggest a sympathetic source of clinker be found to replace recent 'repairs' and future rebuilding of the wall separates the concrete haunching and reuses the clinker blocks on-site
- Single metal poles have been erected to carry single signs. Between the gallery of Plane trees this disrupts an otherwise pleasant rhythm. Suggest signs are reviewed to share existing power columns or fixed to retaining wall as appropriate along the riverside, and reviewed elsewhere

### General Principles:

- Put forward Canbury Gardens and the riverside adjacent for inclusion on English Heritage's parks and gardens register, and for Green Flag status to recognise and protect its outstanding designed landscape
- Retain the open character of the riverside bank which is free of railings or balustrading
- Support the restoration of the mooring/pier alongside The Boater's inn
- Improve the cycle path which suffers from pot holes and tree root movement
- Plant additional/ replacement mature trees of substantial species to soften the Maybate Avenue development and the power station site onto the park



Houses over-exposed without garden walls make for.....

- Consider the preparation of a public realm improvement scheme for Barge Dock, the entry to the park, and the riverside car park which are underused and tawdry spaces. Given the adjacent northern riverside area, a scheme could investigate a restaurant over a free-ground Barge Dock, reflecting Kingston's direction in a sensitive, contextual way without disturbing the special setting
- Additional, wall-fixed lifebuoys/lines in discreet locations along the riverside road

**Character area type: rural/ open (density 0 dph) (PTAL 1a-1b)**

**Character area assessment: area of established high quality**



messy car-parks

## 5 Park Roads

This area contains the late Victorian side roads running from Richmond Road to Canbury Gardens and are described in turn;

### Lower Kings Road

- Few street trees
- Strong continuity of footprint/gap ratios
- Fine c1898 late Victorian housing
- Nearly all front boundaries removed for car parking on plot. By Asquith Nursery, because of the removed front boundary, the council has had to build a boundary onto the public footpath instead
- Undisturbed rooflines shift from hips to gables around the school
- Houses are 2-storey semi-detached of London stock brick with mostly single storey bays though some 2-storey, hipped roofs with chimney stacks and expressed party walls in slate roofs with slate hip tiles and simple, decorative, red brickwork
- Towards Richmond Road are houses with 2-storey hipped bays with fine gauged brickwork e.g. Caterham Villa



Where has the craftsmanship, daylight, appreciation of gar-

### ISSUE

- Footway is bituminous macadam but in a poor state of repair

### Richmond Road from Lower Kings Rd to Eastbury Road:

Mixed 2/3-storey detached housing and a doctors' surgery. Neutral front boundaries largely intact. One low quality infill development.

### Eastbury Road:

Apart from the poorly designed series of extensions to the building on the prominent, north-east corner, this road is a 2-storey, semi-detached, hipped roof street with some 2-storey detached gabled roof houses, all with good rooflines and similar character quality to Lower Kings Road. Some 2-storey gabled bays introduced in the 1898 stock.



Simple, consistent, rhythmic architecture along the street leads the eye to focus on detail like ornamentation and planting





House designs vary according to each builder but there

- Good street tree provision for future
- Front boundaries largely intact
- House fronts largely intact. Parking pressure evident from the ‘sold’ signs for parking spaces on private land
- No.4 has a hip to gable conversion, Nos.14 and 16, 19, 21 23 have roof conversions which have reduced the townscape character of the street
- A change in builder can be distinguished approaching Canbury Gardens, but the character of the townscape continues with different detailing
- There is a poor quality, blind edge by the healing centre which is uncharacteristic of the street

### Chestnut Road



Consistency in roof form, garden wall, fenestration, storeys

- Though the houses here are not as well detailed as those in the roads above, they nonetheless, together, make a fine townscape
- Good street trees and managed parking help the streetscape
- Strong articulated house plots, building lines, and house types
- Bar a few plots, a different builder from Lower Kings/Eastbury Road
- 2-storey gothic roofed bays to the south side add interest, and on the other side of the street some less successful/experimental detailing including tapered bays, oversailing gables
- Intact front boundaries
- Telegraph poles still connected

### Richmond Road, from Chestnut Road to Woodside Road

A strong terrace frontage with interesting skyline above the ground floor is a positive to the townscape. The shop fascias lack coherence. The forecourts in front of the shops present a confusing array of indications; are they for parking, seating, access or just to enjoy the tarmac?



Richmond Road between Woodside and Chestnut Roads



The same shopping parade circa 1890

### ISSUE

- Shop forecourts and the shop frontage coherence/ signage
- Note the coherence and attractiveness of the 1890 shop buildings c/w today. Clues to improvement are in the old photo....

### RECOMMENDATIONS:



King's Penny House, Richmond Road

- Needs a public realm improvement scheme to restore the space in front of the shops and the shop fronts to the vibrancy, quality and coherence they once had.

### Woodside Road

- Strong townscape street. Trees and ordered parking are good contributors to its character
- Front boundaries largely intact
- 2-storey detached houses with decorated barge board gables, slate roofs with simple decorated brickwork
- Some later infill development is neutral
- There appears to be less slope to the street than in Lower Kings Road but the plot rhythm set up by the gabled roofs is as dramatic
- Modern infill neutral and some veranda work adds townscape interest



Front garden walls removed weakening

### Richmond Road from Woodside Road to Bank Lane

- Recent development of 5-storey King's Penny House is out of scale with its 2-storey surroundings. Its form is lumpen and unrefined, unlike the character of the area, but its bin stores are distinctive. There are little or no gardens to enjoy or to contribute to the area save two trees in the low maintenance hardscape. There is however, generous on-plot parking.
- A range of villas with front boundary leakage
- The recent development of the flat block Walton House, though it has an uncharacteristically large footprint is at least well set back with mature trees and some garden space to the flats

### ISSUE

- quality of design in developments

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Residential Design supplementary planning document to address the design pressures on this area



Aqualine form of upturned skulling hull

### Lower Ham Road fronting Canbury Gardens

Variety of ages and styles and forms but coherent mass and scale of 2-storey terracing, coherent gaps and heights, building line unity and common orientations. Front boundaries lost to parking. Design quality of each style is good or very good.



Lower Ham Road

### Character area type: inner suburban (density 55dph) (PTAL 1b-2)

## Character Area 1: Canbury Gardens

Character Area Assessment Criteria	<b>Good:</b> Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	<b>Moderate:</b> Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	<b>Poor:</b> Does not contribute (Value of 0)
Clearly identifiable “edges” that distinguish it from the surrounding development			
Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces			
Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets			
Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest			
Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details			
High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments			
Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area			
Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character			
Criteria score	90	0	0
Character Area total score	90		

## Character Area 2: Park roads

Character Area Assessment Criteria	<b>Good:</b> Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	<b>Moderate:</b> Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	<b>Poor:</b> Does not contribute (Value of 0)
Clearly identifiable “edges” that distinguish it from the surrounding development			
Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces			
Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets			
Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest			
Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details			
High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments			
Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area			
Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character			
Criteria score	80	10	0
Character Area total score	90		

### Character Area 3: Bank Lane

Character Area Assessment Criteria	<b>Good:</b> Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	<b>Moderate:</b> Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	<b>Poor:</b> Does not contribute (Value of 0)
Clearly identifiable “edges” that distinguish it from the surrounding development			
Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces			
Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets			
Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest			
Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details			
High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments			
Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area			
Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character			
Criteria score	0	9	0
Character Area total score	45		

### Character Area 4: Albany Park Road

Character Area Assessment Criteria	<b>Good:</b> Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	<b>Moderate:</b> Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	<b>Poor:</b> Does not contribute (Value of 0)
Clearly identifiable “edges” that distinguish it from the surrounding development			
Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces			
Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets			
Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest			
Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details			
High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments			
Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area			
Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character			
Criteria score	70	15	0
Character Area total score	85		



Character Area 5: Y-shape towers			
Character Area Assessment Criteria	<b>Good:</b> Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	<b>Moderate:</b> Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	<b>Poor:</b> Does not contribute (Value of 0)
Clearly identifiable “edges” that distinguish it from the surrounding development			
Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces			
Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets			
Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest			
Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details			
High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments			
Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area			
Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character			
Criteria score	50	15	0
Character Area total score	65		