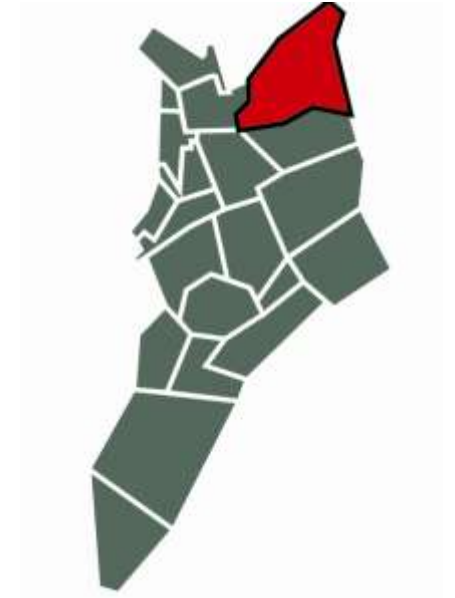




The character areas of Coombe



Location of the Coombe Area

5 Coombe

Origins

To the north of this area lies Richmond Park; to the east, Wimbledon Common and the boroughs of Merton and Wandsworth. The origin of this area of now mixed identities, dates back centuries, to when the Romans, having **forded the Thames where Kingston now stands, made a strategic camp on the high ground of today's Coombe Wood** golf course. Before local government re-organisation in 1965, Coombe formed the northern part of the former Municipal Borough of Malden and Coombe. It began as an area of minor estates established in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Coombe Park was acquired by the Duke of Cambridge in 1837, which began a period of royal patronage, and a process of progressive sub-division. By the mid 19th century a pattern of development of large houses on diminishing plots had been set, e.g. Kenry House, Kingston Hill Place, and Holmwood. Further development was encouraged by the easing of the gradient of Kingston Hill with a cutting near the summit and an embankment below. The opening of the by-pass in 1927 opened other areas to development like the Robin Hood Lane Estate, and there have been a succession of infill developments since then.

General Character

The character of Coombe today is a bi-polar one. In the heart of Coombe and Coombe Hill there is a stately revealing of the many layers of history; of road development, of fine houses and lodges, of planted woods and fine gardens; and an array of textures of old buildings with beautiful detailing, remnants of estate walls, spring-fed lakes, old manors, and large houses set in a majestic green, mature and unconstrained parkland. This palimpsest-like landscape adds a special dimension to the character of place here. It is exceptional. However, with this attractive character, and the successive release of land for development, has grown an area with a piggy-back character. This is not to say it has anything but high spatial standards, and the houses in terms of scale, mass and materials are sympathetic to their historic counterparts. But, as the historic maps reveal, the character changed significantly after WWII to recent times, with a succession of cul-de-sacs, closes, loops, dead-ends and gated developments containing detached houses often displaying crude reproduction elements on significantly smaller plots and to higher densities than the surrounding grain. This shift in character, though subtle, is cumulative, and raises the question of how much more development can be accommodated without seriously eroding the prevailing character of the area—low density housing in a parkland setting.

Beyond the heartland of Coombe and to the north lies the 1930's housing estate built on Robin Hood Farm, to a high standard of layout, benefiting from the woodland backdrop and the hillside topography. As Kingston Hill falls towards the town and Victorian Canbury, there is a cluster of tall buildings set back from the road and in a wooded area, together with flats and houses of varying character, described below. Kingston hospital and some crude blocks of flats define the western limit of this area. An enclave of off-shoot cul-de-sacs on Coombe Lane West marks the southern edge of the area, with houses of varying character in the slither of land between Kingston Hill and Richmond Park wall.

Land Use

Mainly residential. Nursery, primary, secondary and international schools. Kingston University has a prestigious **campus off Kingston Hill developed around the historic Kenry House. Health use includes a doctors' surgery, Kingston** district general hospital (520 beds serving 320,000 people), care homes and the private New Victoria Hospital. Sports facilities include a riding centre, two golf clubs which form a large part of the open space of Coombe (Coombe Hill Golf Club and Coombe Wood Golf Club), and along the A3 are generous fields for a cricket club, an archery club and until recently, the Old Bevonians Rugby Club. Two small parades of shops, a petrol station, offices **and a conference centre. St. John the Baptist on Robin Hood Lane and St. Anne's church on Kingston Hill.**

Movement

The larger part of this area is constrained by three roads. The strategic A3 road runs along the western edge, the A238 Coombe Lane West on the southern edge connects Kingston to Raynes Park and the A3, and the A308 Kingston Hill/Kingston Vale to the north connects to Wimbledon and to the A3. Both Coombe Lane West and Kingston Hill are busy and fast roads. Robin Hood Gate provides foot, bike and horse access to Richmond Park. There is also a pedestrian entrance from Ladderstile Ride. Kingston Gate in Park Road allows cars and walkers access. Because of the temptation to avoid the traffic lights at the Kingston Hill/ Park Road junction and the lights at Galsworthy Road/ Kingston Hill, there is a tendency, despite sleeping policemen, for some traffic to rat-run along Liverpool Road and Crescent Road.

Whilst many of the roads are private, most remain un-gated. The unbarred roads maintain permeability and the character of open, flowing landscape of the area. At the entrance to Warren Road (private) on Coombe Lane West, the owners of the land have erected a traffic control gate with rising/falling arm in red and white paint with bright orange electrical box (the adjacent footpath has enjoyed a public right of way over it since 1727), operated by a sentinel guardsman, wearing a fluorescent jacket. **This arrangement has more in common with the character of the entry to a military base or city centre car-park than a gentle transition into a nineteenth century Arcadian landscape, and detracts from the character of the area.**

The growth in road traffic since the late Victorian times when the rows of cottages called Ebor cottages and Florence Terrace, next to Stag Lodge, were built, with characteristic architecture and terracing, has created an environmental problem for residents of these 23 homes, some of whose front walls are less than 5m from the A3, at a busy four-lane intersection. This is demonstrated by the desperate measures some have taken to filter the harsh road environment, by erecting 2m high fences in their front gardens. The general character of the intersection is a traffic dominated one, save a rusty mast and a sewage pumping station. Whilst there are trees and patches of hedge on the island of this gateway to Kingston, there seems no coherence to the landscape - there appears an **unresolved tension between the Victorian terraces and green, tree'd backdrop character of the wider surroundings,**

and the high impact on the environment by traffic. The lead-in to Robin Hood Gate, since its closure to vehicles, is little more than a car-park. The setting is not helped by the back garden type fence erected on the boundary to Stag Lodge, which as a building commands an entrance setting admirably well, were it only more visible.

Built form

Predominantly of 2-storey detached house form on substantial plots at low density, with more height in the limited number of blocks of flats, grander houses, health and educational buildings. Form is expanded by character area, in the text below. Because Coombe straddles a hill, there is a range of building heights in the predominantly 2-storey area. However, the successful, tall buildings have taken advantage of the topography to reduce their visual impact and their design responds to the unique local landscape conditions by integrating and enhancing the overall landscape character. The high quality landscape of the area is a beautiful and fragile asset to Kingston which built form should not disrupt.

Landscape

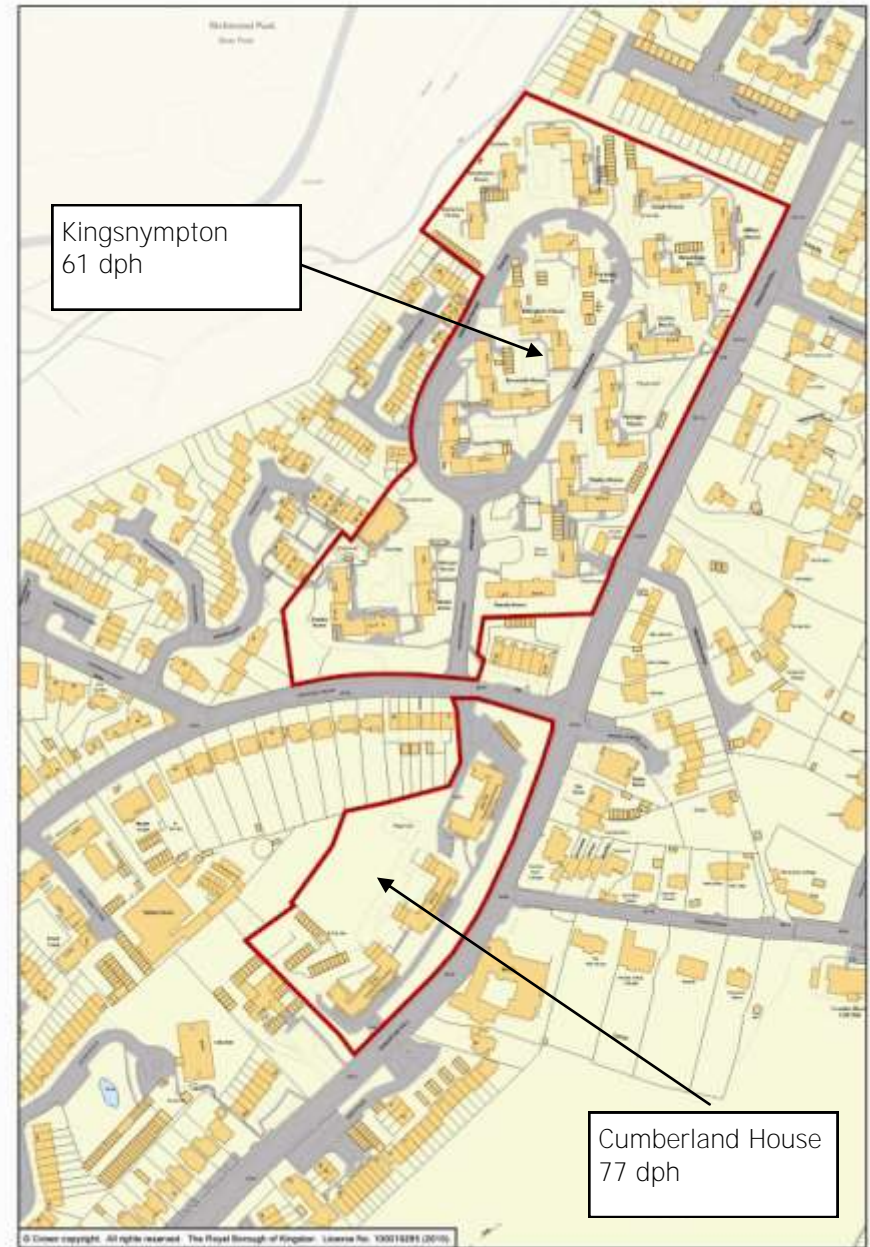
The landscape character of this area ranges from one of well planted front gardens of shrubs and trees set in wide streets containing 2-storey houses set apart with gaps and a strong roofscape, often benefiting from street trees and minor public spaces, to the Arcadian, and rolling hillside of historic manors, mature grounds and old woodland or surviving trees there from.

The importance of landscape space and design in high density schemes is illustrated in the Kingsnympton character area and maps A and B, below. Kingsnympton scores poorly in its character assessment, largely because of its poor quality and lacking landscape and the blocks being uniformly too tall within the small area of land in relation to each other. The site area of Kingsnympton is similar to the site area of The Keep, the Ministry of Defence developed site off King's Road (KN 5ha c/w Keep 6.3ha). Both are open-plan, single access loop road estate developments, but The Keep, with a density of around half that of Kingsnympton (Keep 32dph c/w KN 61dph) has a high quality landscape and a mixed but predominantly low (2storey-4storey-monopitch) height range of buildings. Kingsnympton would have to be halved in height to achieve the same density as The Keep. However, densities even higher than Kingsnympton can score highly in character if a sufficient and quality landscape is provided. Look on the opposite side of the street from Kingsnympton, to the site on rolling hillside containing three tower blocks (each confusingly sharing the name Cumberland House) built in 1948 of c121 flats up to nine storeys tall. This is a far higher density than Kingsnympton (77 dph c/w 61 dph) yet the building forms are sympathetic to the topography, allowing a far higher quality landscape setting, and no character of the blocks being too tall in relation to **themselves or the setting. Cumberland House 'gets more in' and 'gets them in' much better.**

Open space



Map A



Map B

This is an area that enjoys open space, and is part of the ‘green charm’ that makes Kingston evoke an impression of a borough rich in quality trees, parkland and riverside. The well-sheltered allotments with their backdrop of woodland and the expansive fields around the A3 and by Beverley Brook connecting to Wimbledon Common are the **‘formal’ or defined public, open spaces. However, the character here is also one of open space which is** borrowed from the golf courses, fields and gardens (fronts and backs) of private plots to the public realm, often planted with large trees and significant shrubs the, overall character of the individual contributions making a unified, balanced landscape, far greater than the sum of its parts.

Pix 3947-3957

ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

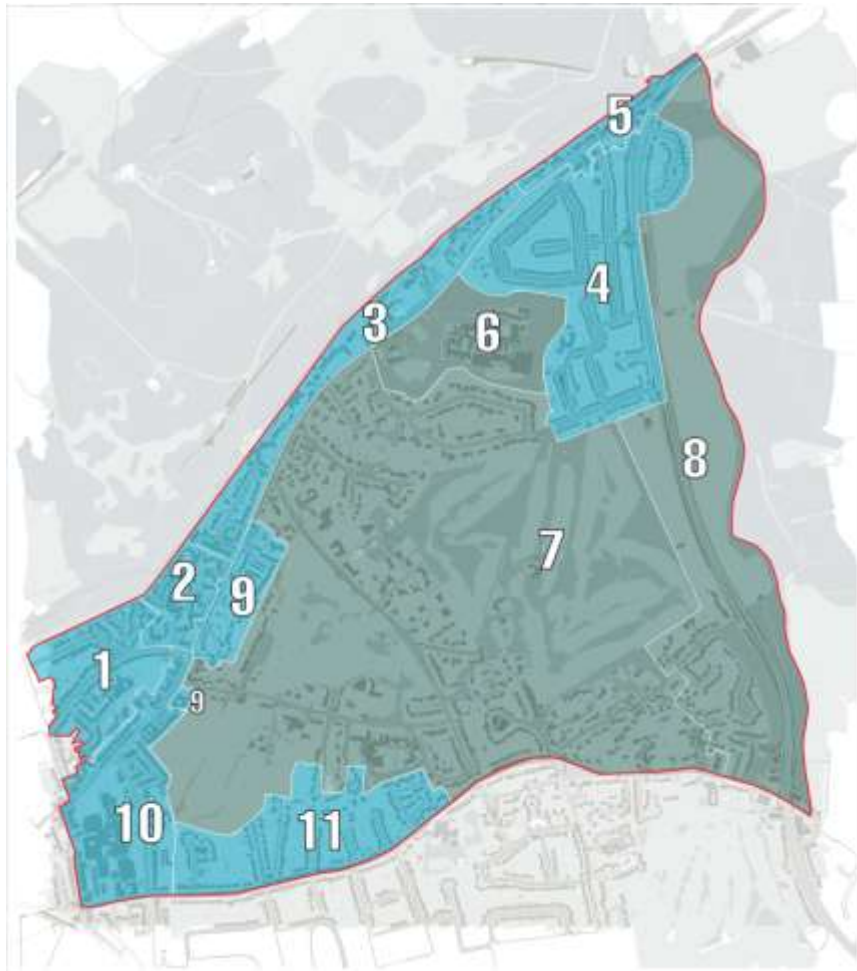
- Tidy up the disused playing field on the A3 formerly used by the Old Bevonians Rugby Club (ground litter, signage deteriorated, club house vandalism)
- **Rat-run measures in Crescent Road and Liverpool Road (consider ‘breaking’ the road by Kingsnympton Park)**
- Consider improving the visual impact of the sentry box at Warren Road, Coombe Lane West junction. For example, perhaps a fitting sentry box (like those at Buckingham Palace/ British Museum) could be designed.
- Consider an improvement scheme for Robin Hood Roundabout to include; enhancement of the public realm before Robin Hood Gate entry to Richmond Park appropriate to the setting of the largest Royal Park in London; boundary enclosure of Stag Lodge and interface to public realm/Park use; public realm scheme for the traffic island that reflects the special context of the surroundings and the gateway to the Royal Borough (hedge/tree etc); and promotion of an imaginative scheme to improve the terrace suffering poor environment, potentially preserving the Victorian frontages with internal environmental measures with reconsideration of access and approach to the houses from side/rear as appropriate



Key Area Characteristics

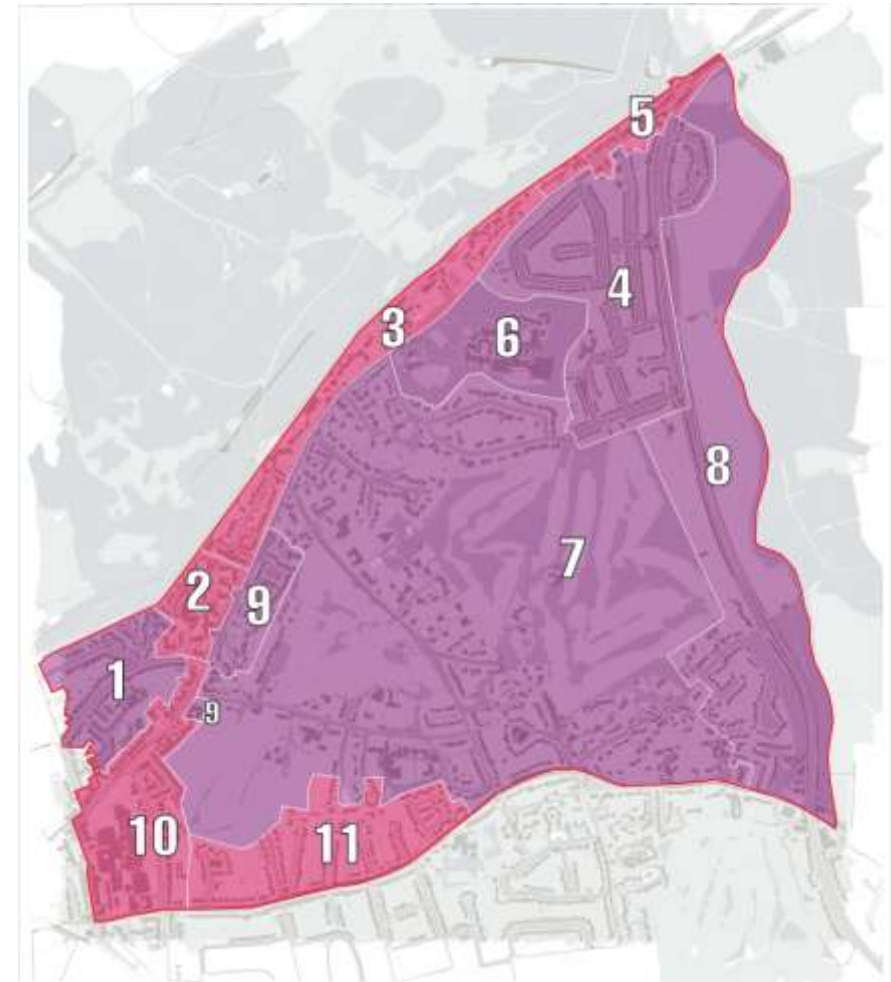
- Major movement corridor
- Minor movement corridor
- Movement corridor needing enhancement
- Area node
- Area node needing enhancement
- Minor Area node
- Major gateway
- Major barrier
- Strategic Landmark
- Local Landmark
- Potential new landmark
- Green open space
- Open space in need of improvement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

Character Area Types

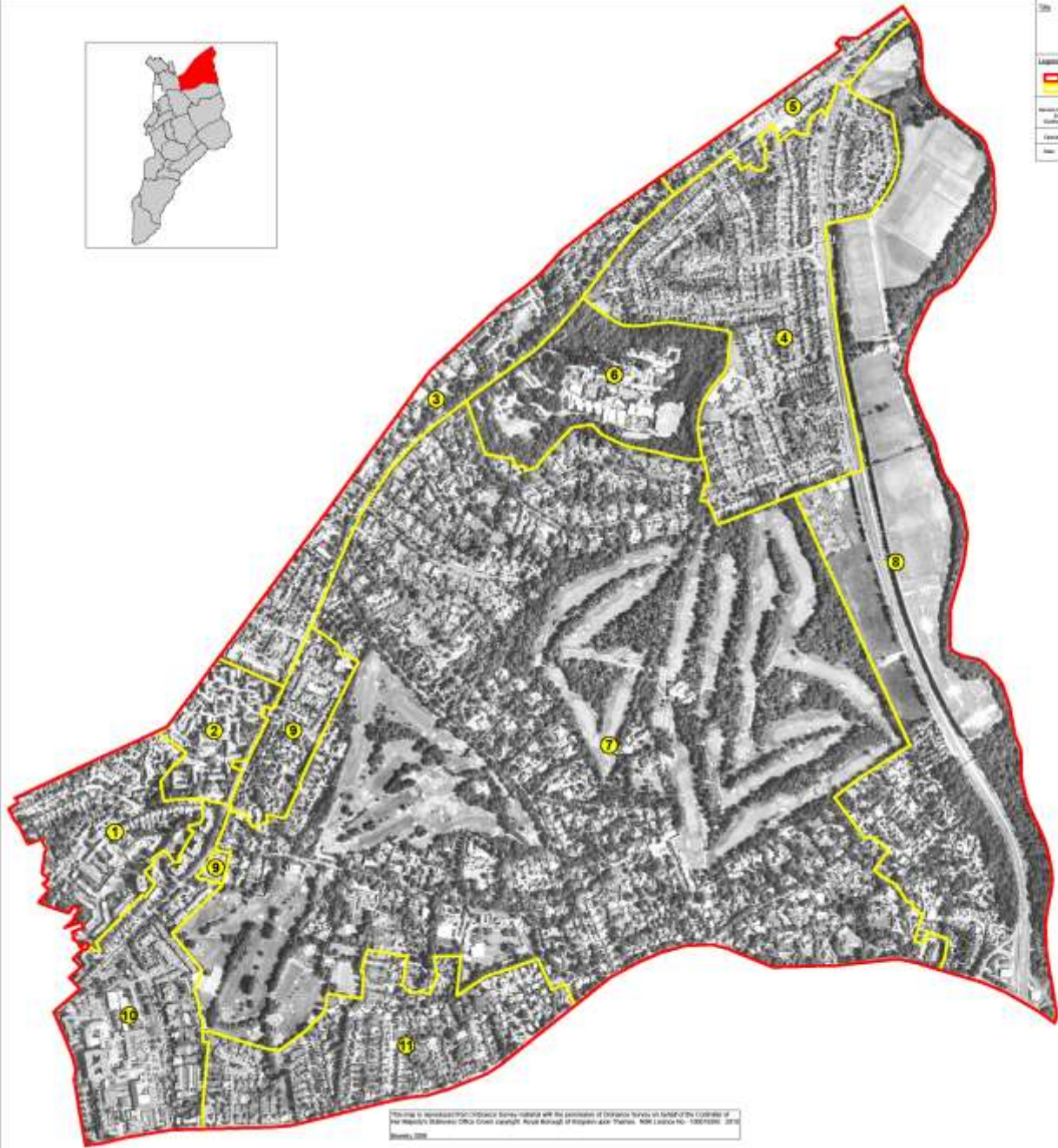


- Urban
- Inner Suburban
- Outer Suburban
- Rural / Open

Character Area Assessment



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



DENSITY AREAS
Coombe

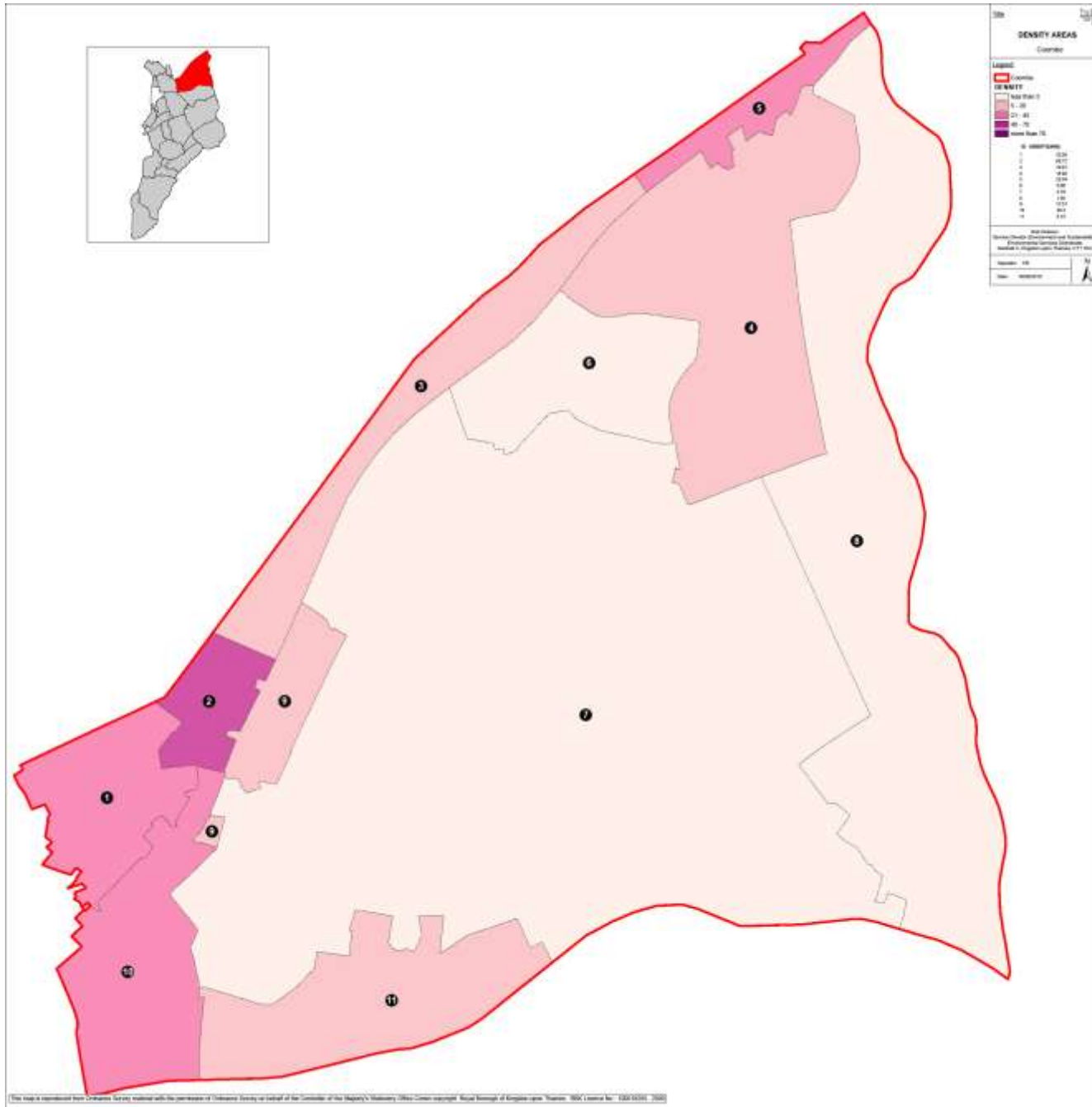
Legend

- Density Area
- Boundary

Scale
1:10,000

North Arrow

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Liverpool Road



Left Lakeside, and right, Cumberland House



Eaton Close

1 Liverpool Road

The development of Liverpool Road and Crescent Road is shown on maps as far back as 1868 with substantial completion by the turn of the 20th century. The earlier Victorian, detached 2-principal-storey, elegant houses with sweeping roofs stand out with their character, rich in good detailing and fine design. Large, wide plots with some fine 3-storey houses, including semi-detached. Front gardens are well planted with shrubs and trees and front boundaries are intact.

Heatherdale Close, a 1970 development of six blocks of 3-storey town houses following the demolition of the **Victorian Meadow House, has small but well worked landscape ‘patches’ in front of the houses. Gaps, set-back, steep hill, and existing mature trees lift the character.** Windmill Rise and Dutch Gardens were developed in 1986 in the grounds of what was Kingsnympton Hall. The 2-storey detached and 3-storey town houses take advantage of the topography and old trees in a modern, coherent style set on sloping ground with staggered terraces, a lack of front boundaries but integrated with mature trees, and well planted front gardens. Redevelopment in 1969 resulted in around 60 flats on three sites where once stood two Victorian houses and the fields of Meadow Lodge, now the Crescent Riding Centre and stables. The blocks of flats add nothing to the **townscape of the area and are architecturally unworthy of their location. King’s Court is particularly over-scaled, lumpen and grim-looking.** The Riding Centre, being so close to Kingston Gate for Richmond Park adds a **charm to the area and a reminder of its historical development, the King’s Highway (King’s Road) and the purpose of the Park.** While Deer Park Close is bereft of character, Eaton Close, a 1964 development on a former brickworks (the pond today was once an excavation/lake and is one of the last infill developments in this area. Originally planned for two tower blocks and 31 houses, the developer changed his mind and built the 11-storey **block of 66 flats ‘Lakeside’, and 77 3-storey town houses** in staggered and modulated terraces with parapets and flat roofs around. The houses are rendered and have been painted in soft pastel colours. There is a strong architectural coherence, as there are repeated motifs of balconette, canopy, and fenestration. There is just enough planting space designed in the front-on-plot parking areas to soften the scheme. The townscape, because of its coherence and success in addressing the street with interest is a good contributor to character. The block of flats, excavated to take advantage of the nestling effect of the local topography of the hillside is bland and undistinguished. The soft landscape sets off the block, but is limited in extent.

ISSUES & RECOMMENDATION

- Consideration of measures to protect architectural integrity and coherence of Eaton Close, houses and front gardens

Character area type: outer suburb (density 33 dph) (PTAL 1a-3)

Character area assessment: area with scope to reinforce existing character



A landscape of 'unowned' space where car-parks



and sub-stations feature



Shop parade, Crescent Road



Entry to Kingsnympton Estate

2 Kingsnympton

On the grand entrance grounds to the long gone large house called 'The Knowle' (shown on the 1868 map and replaced by Kingsnympton Hall in the 20th century) the Kingsnympton Estate was built in a post war Britain. The potential character of this ambitious layout has been successively degraded. Apart from the half-dozen estate agents' boards pinned to no man's land, the entry is promising, with two large, historic piers before a sward of trees and hillock and a distant glimpse of some modern blocks rising up the hillside. However, after the fine entry, the character soon becomes one of overdevelopment.

The blocks appear at least one storey too tall, which is not helped by the pitched roofs added in 1982. Separation distances between the blocks is poor, with some as little as c13m apart; the distances on site are more suited to 2-storey to 3-storey development. However the real problem is the public realm of this site layout; there appear to be only two types of block, a hinge-block and a straight block, which contain good size, dual aspect flats, applied to a 90 degree grid with living rooms and the principal entrance to each block orientated either south or west, with the servant spaces to each cluster of blocks to the north or east. Developing this number of blocks in this arrangement makes the inevitable problem of fronts facing directly onto backs **across a middle ground of garage/ substation/ parking court or general undefined, 'un-owned' space, and the loop road.**

There is no spatial ordering, no architectural or landscape hierarchy, no way-finding or set-piece architectural devices (the 2 locally listed gatehouses and listed entrance may as well not be there for the opportunity this layout takes of them). Landscape is poor with just a few random trees and grass. No public or private spaces exist in the original layout; there is just an unending space of leftoverness between an imposed order of soviet union -like party-flats astride a loop road which is a form of potential, eternal purgatory.

The later addition of the parade of shops on the site, play space and community centre has helped activate the edges, if somewhat reduce the public landscape and setting. Haygreen Close, built on the playing fields of the now demolished Kingsnympton Primary School, bears even less relationship to its surroundings, and is a group of anywhere terraces whose front walls are set out one car-length back from the footpath with skimpy front gardens and no front boundaries. PIX 3701 3702 3712-3727

ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Seek to work with local estate agents to bring under control the impact of their boards at the entrance or consider Regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007
- Consider a scheme to integrate the 2 gate lodges i.e. make them visible to both sides of the boundary wall (i.e. to Kingston Hill and to the Kingsnympton Estate
- Landscape improvement scheme

Character area type: outer suburb (density 61 dph) (PTAL 1a-1a)

Character area assessment: area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity



Warboys Road



Ladderstile Ride



Ladderstile Ride



Ladderstile Ride

3 Kingston Hill

This area is characterised by dense trees onto Kingston Hill and Kingston Vale which are ‘borrowed’ from the front or rear gardens of the plots which line the road. There are interesting and varied houses that have access from the road or from adjacent roads, which sometimes provide glimpses of trees in Richmond Park. From the Kingston side, some formal and high quality and accessible housing gives character at Warboys, and Ladderstile Road. There are a series of large and sometimes historical houses, some listed, set in well tree'd grounds. Towards Kingston Vale the character shifts to gated developments or small closes of 2-storey houses squeezed-in between the road and the Park which have little character save being close to larger houses full of interest and character. Parkgate Close is a 2-storey modern development of well spaced houses, boundary-less but with planted front gardens. Astor Close (2-storey flat roof compact mews type houses with big garages) is a poor termination to the view down Warboys Road. Warboys Road has 1 to 2.5-storey large plot housing with well planted gardens. Ladderstile Ride has interesting 3-storey town houses with modulating living rooms. A new, fine-scaled house has been recently completed next to the Park, with a characterful play of textures and materials to external spaces including a ‘living’ wall. Ladderstile Ride is full of character; though the 3-storey terrace comes hard to the road, there is a soft footpath set behind mature trees on the opposite side, leading past a set-back cottage before entering the Park.

Character area type: outer suburb (density 11 dph) (PTAL 1a-1b)
Character area assessment: area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity

4 Vale Crescent & Robinhood Lane estate

Vale Crescent and the Robin Hood Lane estate were developed around Robin Hood Farm in 1936/7, following the opening of Kingston’s bypass. Until then the area was open fields with St. John’s Church, the Victorian school and a Robin Hood Inn behind the site of the demolished petrol station, appearing on the 1868 map. Vale Crescent is characterised by 2-storey, semi-detached mock Tudor houses on plots of varying size due to the geometry of the road layout. Paired garages are set between houses to



Cedar Close



Left, St. John the Baptist Church and right, former National School



the rear, with a landscape of mature trees and garden planting, despite some front boundary loss. An opened central roundabout provides a green reprieve. There is a background buzz of traffic noise. The Robin Hood Estate has a rich variety of housing styles and designs, with very strong character, early council housing and some later developments combining in a coherent form of detached, semi-detached, or terraced housing, almost without exception at 2-storeys, with varying gaps, all well set back. Most streets have characteristic grass verges and street trees lifting the landscape with **the University's parkland backdrop** adding a hinterland green character. Well ordered and well maintained housing and streets, with only minor alterations to the stock. There is a special quality **of space around St.John's Church to the old school, with mature trees. However the space in front of the church hall looks unfinished**; without a boundary, the space in front just flows into the road, which weakens the enclosure of the area and blurs the edge of the road. There is a double parade of 3-storey shops with flats over in the centre of the area, close to the A3, which provides a focal point of activity. There is a background buzz of traffic noise.

ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Seek to reinforce street tree planting (particularly on unplanted streets) to enhance character and mitigate against unwanted background noise from traffic
- Install some signifier of boundary enclosure (even planted specimen trees) to the recent development of the library in Robin Hood Lane
- Consider adding the St.John the Baptist Church and the old school to the local list of buildings

Character area type: outer

suburb (density 17 dph)



Grasmere Avenue Shopping, south parade (c 1937)



Grasmere Avenue Shopping, north parade (c 1949)



Characteristic street profile in CA05



HUF Haus, Ullswater Close



Kingston Vale



Kingston Vale



Kingston Vale

5 Kingston Hill/ Robin Hood roundabout

This section of Kingston Hill is bitty in character, made up of a range of buildings, often with interesting roofscapes that incorporate the second storey, that present to the street in 2 or 3-storey height, in the form of flats, houses or terraces. There are some bungalows. Vale Parade contains active shops with short stay parking. The terrace of cottages that front onto the A3 (Ebor cottages and Florence Terrace) endure a harsh environment from the A3 traffic. Residents have begun erecting 2m-high fencing to the front boundaries to mitigate the impact. The entrance to Richmond Park at Robin Hood Gate, since being closed to vehicles, still has the character of a road leading somewhere. The public realm would benefit from an improvement scheme to reduce the 'street' parking at this Gate and announce its presence as an entry to the Royal Park. The roundabout itself is a gateway to Kingston, and has benefited considerably from recent works to de-clutter and improve the road, yet there is nothing of distinction to mark this transition save a few trees on a highways-grass island. Suggestions to preserve the townscape and improve the quality of the environment and living have been made in the introduction to this area.

ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Preserve two storey elements which form an integral part of the character to the townscape here. E.g. 2-storey buildings are an important component of the townscape. To make the area entirely 3-storey would be to undermine the existing character of townscape height and variety of scale
- Consider a landscape improvement scheme

Character area type: outer suburb (density 26 dph) (PTAL 1a-1b)

Character area assessment: area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity



Stag Lodge Stables

6 Kingston University, Kingston Hill Campus

The campus is a mix of buildings from various ages - **older ones like Kenry House (mid 1800's), some portacabins,** some green-tinted glass and light-brick modern forms. There was building work taking place at the time of this study. The building strategy is clear and consistent; it appears to be adopting the character of the modern, large pavilion box, reusing the character buildings and trying to integrate them to the campus. However, with some imagination, based on the recent teaching block developments, and an eye for future/replacement buildings; an appropriate building and heights strategy could be developed to ensure character could be strong and articulate. This would seek to constrain height within the existing built envelope; ensure footprint and massing does not destroy but exploit the assets of the site (in particular the extensive and dense surrounding tree cover); acknowledge changes in level (qualities which led to it being included in a conservation area), acknowledge the setting of Kenry House and Coombehurst. The landscape strategy, however, is not clear, and because of the outstanding opportunity of the character of the surrounding landscape setting, this is equally if not more important than the buildings strategy. The character and quality of the landscape for future development could be interpreted on 2 levels; first the relationship with the immediate surroundings, i.e. the quality of the spaces between and around buildings (including views to Kenry House and Coombehurst, glimpses down long, new avenues, **across parkland, terminating views etc**), and second, **the spatial relationship which the campus 'footprint' has** with the wider setting, its contextual relationship, i.e. position of buildings, tree planting, formalising of spaces, views to distant landmarks etc. In short, save the well placed white rendered buildings to the south-west of the campus which nestle in hill shapes and orientate to views, with characterful landscape devices like procession, arrival, partial concealment and discovery, and the richness of the inherited Kenry House, Coombehurst, stable



Coombe Hurst Building



Kenry House



High point on the campus

site. The new developments in the campus could be transplanted elsewhere quite successfully, which suggests the unique character of the site may not have been integrated as it might. The challenge of the landscape strategy will be to respond to the rich character of the existing assets - some characterful old buildings, a listed wall, and one of the finest landscape opportunities in the region - with an imagination worthy of the setting.

ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

- The University should consider a landscape strategy and a buildings strategy showing phasing of works
- The University should consider a parking strategy
- The University should consider improving the skyline and roofscape of the hall of residence at the summit of the site. The telecommunications antennae and portacabin on the roof of the hall is a major detractor in the landscape.

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

Character area assessment: area with scope to reinforce existing character

Part of the skyline at the Kingston Hill campus



Warren Road

7 CA07 Coombe Heartlands

This character area has one underlying theme - a very high quality landscape; roads which have a variety of enclosures but universally garlanded by tree or green, interspersed mature trees throughout and views to hinterlands close and far, of greenscape, substantial, articulated, stately boundaries and roads which are lanes with verge, hedge, intermittent kerb, no kerb, little or no parking, painted gates and fences. The public realm benefits from the private landscape which is spacious and green, allowing room for the buildings to breathe. The character here is about seeing the landscape as the dominant element and occasionally finding, set within it, a building, a group of buildings, or an enclosing wall. There is a distinctive theme of marking the entrances to some of the private roads with white-painted timber post and rail (often 5-bar) gates, fixed open, which contributes to the rural appearance and contrasting character of this area. Indeed, with the proliferation of gates and gateways in the Coombe area, it is worth drawing a distinction between the two design conditions of Coombe gateways:

- There are locked gateways which serve individual dwellings or a small group of dwellings, **which differ from place to place, and express the owners' individual tastes or refer to the architectural style of the buildings they enclose, and,**
- There are fixed-open, **'marker' gateways which serve the entrances to private roads from public highways and which form part of a coherent, almost rural landscape identity of the Coombe area.** These gateways are located in various conditions; at each end of a private



Coombe House Stables





Ballard Close



Beverley Lane

ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider introducing some greenery and trees back in the sea of tarmac that is the car park of the Coombe Hill Golf Club

Character area type: rural (density 3 dph) (PTAL 0-1b)

Character area assessment: area with scope to reinforce existing character

8 Henley Drive

The character of development post 1954, compared to the less dense historical context, is one of squeezing-in, and capitalising on the high townscape and landscape value of character area 07, Coombe Heartlands. These houses have tried to extend that established character but weakened it by forming, as in character area 11, cul-de-sacs off cul-de-sacs, development at greater density, with lesser gaps between dwellings, and reduced plots - given the context and character of the setting, this is overdevelopment.

Character area type: rural (density 2 dph) (PTAL 0-1b)

Character area assessment: area with scope to reinforce existing character



Golf Club Drive



Warbank Lane



Coombe Hill Golf Club



Coombe End

Key:

- 1 Warren Road
- 2 George Road
- 3 Brook Gardens
- 4 Orchard Rise
- 5 Albion Road
- 6 West Road
- 7 Warren Road
- 8 Warren Rise
- 9 Golf Club Drive
- 10 Fitzgeorge Avenue
- 11 Coombe Hill Road
- 12 Warren Cutting
- 13 Coombe Bank





Location 1: Warren Road



Location 2: George Road



Location 2: George Road



Location 3: Brook Gardens



Location 4 : Orchard Rise



Location 5: Albion Road



Location 6: West Road



Location 7: Warren Road



Location 8: Warren Rise



Location 9: Golf Club Drive



Location 10: Fitzgeorge Avenue



Location 11: Coombe Hill Road



Location 12: Warren Cutting



Location 13: Coombe Bank



Magnolia Close



Morecombe Close



Morecombe Close

9 Kingston Hill east

Climbing Kingston Hill from the Kingston Lodge Hotel there is a stretch to the east of enclosed and sometimes gated residential developments from modern times, providing generally a high quality public realm with significant planting. Un-gated closes include Magnolia Close and Cotswold Close; a development of 2-storey, wide, modern houses with garage complexes and parking areas in a quality landscape that enhances the character of the houses.

Morecombe Close on a steep hillside contains well designed, 3-storey town houses, with a tendency to undercroft the ground storey and emphasise an oversailing first floor balconies or jettied upper floors, making a dramatic massing . Fenestration, roofscape and materials add to the character of this close which is rooted in its local topography and wider landscape. A block of flats is contemporary. The character of landscape, though open plan, is rich in planted textures and colours including evergreen.

Character area type: outer suburb (density 13 dph) (PTAL 1a-2)

Character area assessment: area with scope to reinforce existing character

10 Galsworthy Road

This is a traffic dominated area with a struggling public realm. The flat blocks on Galsworthy Road have a grim and dull character; most are just too tall for their aspect and situation, with little coherence or integration between them to the street. The character is one of a car-scape not a landscape. The Coombe side has softer edges but of mixed quality and character.

The hospital site contains a busy district general hospital which, not uncommonly, contains buildings of various ages and of mixed architectural quality, linked in various ways reflecting its gradual development since the Kingston Union Workhouse, built in 1839. The character of the edge of the site presenting to Galsworthy Road, whilst it contains some tree/shrub enclosure, is an incoherent veil to a sea of car-parking behind, bereft of shade, colour or movement of anything but cars. The car-park which for the large part of the day is full, does not provide landscape character - it simply crams in the car spaces at the frontage to a key site in Kingston. The priority given to car parking extends to the space between Esher Wing and the Royal Eye Unit. This is a small, sunny square in the very centre of the site, formed by



The flatblocks along Galsworthy Road



enclosing buildings with a formal restful garden off one side, but is used as another car-park. It is a busy thoroughfare for visitors as they walk from car -park to buildings, and for staff crossing between buildings. It has potential to be a great public space with a positive landscape character, but it today only provides a few cramped spaces for car-parking. As people walk, they look behind them to listen out for cars. This area is a missed opportunity. A unifying metal railing extends along the hospital boundary to Kingston Hill with significant planting of trees behind. It presents an ordered, yet soft character to the street. The staff car-park on raised decks meets a functional requirement for staff parking, but lacks any character. This could be addressed through a planting scheme. The Woolverton Avenue edge has fine, mature trees planted along it - their low canopies make a green and textured layer before the hospital buildings. The palisade fence here creates a feeling of isolating between these fine trees and the street.

The section of Kingston Hill on the west side contains 2-storey detached houses well set back with positive front boundaries **(except the doctors' surgery), a short terrace, a 10-storey flat block 'High Ashton' well set back and the three medium rise Cumberland House deck access blocks.** Built in 1948 in extensive grounds, the building forms and staggered heights are sympathetic to the topography. There is a character of modernity and architectural austerity characteristic of the post-war period. However, what has been detailed has been handled very elegantly, for example the underplayed entrances, the generous car-passages, and modelled balconies. **Some minor maintenance would improve the blocks' integration to the exceptional landscape setting.** On the east side is the contained 3-storey, town house terraced development of 76 houses from 1969, Blenheim Gardens. The character is open-plan with minimal tree or garden planting, However the raised parapets and staggered block layout present a well-ordered if over-looked street scene. Between this and the Kingston Lodge Hotel on the corner of George Road, where once stood the George and Dragon pub, is Berystede, a 1972 marginally less dense develop-



In front of the hospital, Galsworthy Road – footpath or bin store?



Staff car park, Kingston Hospital



GP Surgery on Kingston Hill



Landmark Albert pub, Kingston Hill

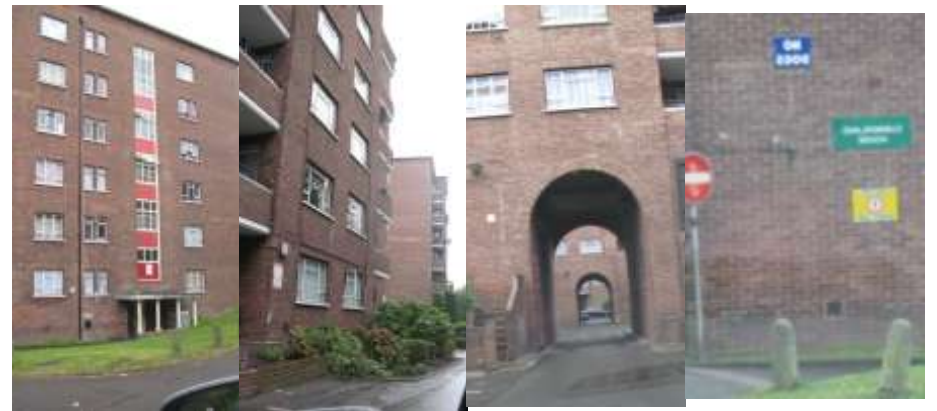
ment of 3-storey town houses, with a significant green and planted buffer to Kingston Hill, containing deciduous and sculptural evergreen trees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Cumberland House blocks are an asset, but need some maintenance e.g., removal of the proliferation of prohibition signs, repainting of the block entrances, installation of incomplete 1940's style block names to the buildings and a sign at the street entrance to tell people the blocks are there
- Kingston Hospital potential landscape improvements: significant landscape enhancement schemes for the car-parks, public square by Royal Eye Unit
- Promote the re-introduction of street trees back on Galsworthy Road
- The site would benefit from a masterplan approach that addresses the need to improve pedestrian and cycle linkage through and to/from the site (including from Norbiton station) with well defined, attractive site entrances

Character area type: inner suburban (density 30 dph) (PTAL 2-4)

Character area assessment: area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity



Cumberland House, off Kingston Hill



Cumberland House, simple detailing obscured by bin, sign proliferation, unsympathetic light and conduit



Coombe Conduit, obscured by fence



Coombe Conduit, inside the site



Coombe Conduit, lower house

11 Coombe Lane West

From Wolsey Close to Southwood Avenue, a series of cul-de-sacs developed on the open border of Coombe post WW1. Large detached houses, generally 2-storey, set in spacious plots, well set back, with well planted front gardens and streets with trees and or grass verges. While there is less character spatially and architecturally than Coombe heartland (CA07), there is a coherent townscape and consistently high landscape. Lord Chancellor Walk, **originally mooted as being called ‘Hampton Springs Place’, formerly a heavily wooded hillside, is an interesting development of 27 large family homes in a carefully landscaped site retaining existing trees which survives relatively intact from 1968, including building features such as split levels, double integral garages and white shiplap boarding.** However, the coherent sculptural forms, roofscape (mono and counter pitches) and architectural language of white shiplap and contrasting dark brick combine in the spacious open, layout to form a distinctive, high quality landscape of curved flowing spaces around sculptural, evergreen trees and rolling banked areas accommodating the site gradients. The whole responds to the Arcadian setting of Coombe Heartland, in a modern way, at a higher density, but having adopted the same tenet of design that the landscape is the prime element, with the interest from juxtaposition of buildings defining spaces in-between to make a harmonious whole. On the corner of Coombe Lane West and Lord Chancellor Walk is Coombe Conduit, screened from view as if it were an eyesore, by a 2m+ high close-boarded fence. It is one of three conduit houses which supplied water to Hampton Court Palace, and is almost 500 years old. This scheduled ancient monument has an intact conduit house. Its textured red brickwork and charming form, with its early C18th follyesque window insertions together with the romantic, ruinous walls of the upper house, in the setting of mature English oak trees, lush grass, and secure, enclosing boundary make for a high quality landscape, accessed 6 Sundays a year and on Heritage Open Day thanks to the Kingston-upon-Thames Society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider Lord Chancellor Walk for designation as a landscape area of special character against inappropriate development that reduces the landscape and architectural integrity
- Consider making the Coombe Conduit visible to the street by removing the close boarded fencing, tidying the trees on site and replacing with a high black-painted metal railing boundary fence with lockable gate so that the building can be 365 times more enjoyed.

Character area type: outer suburban (density 8 dph) (PTAL 1b-3)

Character area assessment: area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity

CA01: Liverpool Road			
Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: 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	25	0
Character Area total score	75		

CA02: Kingsnympton			
Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: 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	25	0
Character Area total score	75		

CA03: Kingston Hill

Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: 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	30	20	0
Character Area total score	50		

CA04: Robin Hood Lane Estate and Vale Crescent

Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: 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	25	0
Character Area total score	75		

CA05: Kingston Hill Robin Hood Lane roundabout

Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good:	Moderate:	Poor:
	Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	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	10	15	0
Character Area total score	25		

CA06: Kingston University Kingston Hill Campus

Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good:	Moderate:	Poor:
	Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	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	60	15	0
Character Area total score	75		

CA07: Coombe Heartlands

Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: 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	40	20	0
Character Area total score	60		

CA08: Henley Drive/ A3

Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: 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	40	15	0
Character Area total score	55		

CA09: Kingston Hill east side

Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: 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	20	35	0
Character Area total score	55		

CA10: Galsworthy Road/ Kingston Hill

Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: 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	10	25	0
Character Area total score	35		

CA11: Coombe Lane West

Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: 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	20	25	0
Character Area total score	45		