Introduction

Conservation areas were introduced in the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and are defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.” Designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and the lopping or felling of trees above a certain size.

The major part of the conservation area was designated in 1969, with the addition of the East Twickenham Riverside and Petersham Meadows in 1975; and the Kingsmead/ Grove Road Gardens area in 1977. The conservation area was considered to be of 'outstanding' status when this additional term of designation was in use, reflecting its generally very high quality of townscape and landscape.

The conservation area spans the river, and incorporates a dramatic contrast between townscape and landscape, underscored by the landform with the ground rising steeply up from the river on the Richmond side. The view from the Terrace on Richmond Hill has been recorded by Turner and Reynolds and is one of this country's most important views. The conservation area forms a part of the built-up area lying between the Old Deer Park/Kew Gardens and Richmond Park and Ham Lands. It is almost entirely bounded by other conservation areas. Predominant building materials are yellow stock bricks with slate roofs, and red brick on the Twickenham side.
**History & Development**

**Archaeology and early history**

Evidence has been found of Stone and Bronze Age settlements towards the top of Richmond Hill. The area was a part of the Royal Manor in the Domesday Survey, and had a royal presence from as early as 1125. The 'Vineyard' street name refers to the vineyards outside the medieval settlement, with the development pattern relating to the early field patterns. Around 1635 Charles I enclosed Richmond Park, including most of Petersham Common. Various peripheral development followed this, including the first almshouses, such as the original buildings of Bishop Duper's and Michel's Almshouses.

**18th century**

Around the turn of the century, a medicinal spa was discovered, leading to the establishment of the Richmond Wells spa and entertainment centre. Development associated with this increased rapidly, strengthened by a demand for country cottages. Halford House and Vineyard House remain from this period. At the start of the century Terrace Walk at the top of Richmond Hill was laid out with an avenue of trees, and by this time a number of houses had been built there, although the current buildings date from the late C18 onwards. In the second half of the C18, with the closure of Richmond Wells and the tile kiln near the river, the Richmond Hill area became more fashionable and a number of important houses were built in this period, including Downe House, Ancaster House and Wick House, with similar development along the river. Richmond Bridge was completed in 1777.

**19th century**

During the first part of the century gaps were gradually filled in between existing buildings, and several chapels built, including Church of St. Elizabeth and the Congregational Church in The Vineyard. With the arrival of the railways in 1846, streets such as The Hermitage and Halford Road were developed, and shops appeared up the hill. In 1887 part of the grounds of Buckleigh House were opened to the public as Terrace Gardens, Terrace Field also being made accessible around this time.

**20th century**

In 1902 the Richmond, Petersham and Ham Open Spaces Act of Parliament safeguarded the famous view from Richmond Hill following proposals for development on the Twickenham bank. In 1924 the Star & Garter Home was built on the site of the Star & Garter Hotel. Throughout the century to the 1970s larger houses have been replaced by flats, such as the large scale development at Richmond Hill Court in the 1930s. A number have also survived as hotels, such as the Richmond Hill, Richmond Gate, Hobart Hall and Bingham Hotels.

**Character Appraisal**

The conservation area is comparatively large and includes a number of distinct character areas. The study has been divided into 5 sub-areas in order to reflect this, although this does not imply that each area below is of uniform character. The whole conservation area is unified by its relationship to Richmond Hill.

1. The Riverside: Richmond and Twickenham banks
2. Richmond Hill: Richmond Hill, Hill Rise, Petersham Road, Terrace Gardens
3. Queen's Road area: Queen's Road and adjoining streets, and boundary with Richmond Park
4. 'Rural Richmond': Terrace Field, Petersham Common and Petersham Meadow
5. Vineyard area: urban streets and spaces around The Vineyard

Some of the issues and proposals are derived from the Thames Landscape Strategy, adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the UDP. This study cannot realistically cover every aspect of quality and the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to mean that this is not of interest.

**Problems and Pressures**

The attractiveness of the location causes pressure for development which might harm the balance of the landscape-dominated setting. Problems and pressures for the whole conservation area are identified in more detail on the Analysis sheet.
Riverside

The riverside covers a diverse area between Richmond Bridge and Marble Hill Park, with impressive views opening up along this renowned bend in the river. There are both panoramas and vistas, ranging from the open views to Petersham Meadow, to fascinating limited vistas to individual buildings in Richmond, for example to Richmond Bridge from Buccleugh Gardens and to the Church of St. Elizabeth from the Twickenham embankment. The views to and from the top of Richmond Hill are protected by the Richmond, Petersham and Ham Open Spaces Act, and by various covenants in the area.

The overall character, in contrast to the urban nature of the Richmond Riverside development to the north of Richmond Bridge, is one of buildings subservient to trees and associated landscape, and to the dramatic landform of Richmond Hill.

Richmond bank

The river walk on the Richmond side is characterised by a number of open spaces linked by the towpath, between Buccleugh Gardens and Bridge Street Gardens adjacent to Richmond Bridge, with varying scale and character and with many important trees. The towpath is more urban in character than that on the Twickenham side, and it is essentially a public riverside with a recreational emphasis. The Three Pigeons PH is a local landmark as the last building fronting the towpath before Buccleugh Gardens, and the building acts as a visual gate-lodge to the town centre from both river and road. This and the adjoining boathouses form the only building group not contained by the landscape but prominently facing onto the towpath. Buccleugh Gardens contain magnificent plane trees and a notable vista towards the grade I listed Richmond Bridge, and the plane tree by the Canyon restaurant is a Great Tree of London (Tree Council/Countryside Agency). The view to the south is an almost completely rural outlook towards Petersham Meadows and the bend in the river.

The three main public green areas set back behind the towpath between Buccleugh Gardens and the bridge each have their own identity. There is an interesting almost hidden walled garden behind the Riverview Cafe. Bridge Street Gardens forms a shady backwater in contrast to the gardens to the front of the Richmond Riverside development itself.

Twickenham bank

The towpath on the Twickenham side, Warren Footpath, provides excellent views of Richmond and is more rural than the Richmond side between Marble Hill Park and Denton Road, being narrow and more enclosed by vegetation. Because of the landform and quality of buildings and open spaces on the Richmond side, there are some exceptional views, particularly to the top of Richmond Hill, and its landscape setting. There are a number of important landmarks visible from this side of the river, which include the Star & Garter Home, the Church of St. Elizabeth, the Petersham Hotel and Richmond Bridge. Glover’s Island provides a wooded wildlife haven, as well as a visual point of interest in the view from and to Richmond Hill, and emphasises the rural character of this area.

Behind the towpath the character is that of buildings of varied scale, contained and often hidden by the landscape. Land between Meadowside and Cambridge Park in particular contains an important belt of mature trees. A small section of Richmond Road is included in the conservation area, including roofs with distinctive obelised turrets, set off by a magnificent plane tree on the approach to the towpath.
Richmond Hill

Richmond Hill forms the distinctive ascent towards the historic view of the river from Terrace Walk and on to Richmond Park, with the chimneys of the C18 and C19 buildings forming an interesting profile throughout.

The lower half of Richmond Hill includes a substantial amount of duller inter-war and post-war flat development, but with trees softening the junction between old and new, Richmond Hill Court in particular is of a different scale and layout to its surroundings.

Buildings and groups which make a major contribution to the character of the conservation area include:

- Richmond Gate and Lodge to Richmond Park, attributed to Capability Brown (1789)
- Richmond Gate Hotel and Richmond Hill Hotel, formed by a notable group of C18 buildings at the top of the hill, several with Regency facades
- The Wick, an elegant C18 house at a pivotal position at the top of Nightingale Lane, is a grade I listed building
- 114-142 Richmond Hill forms an appealing mixture of architectural styles near the top of the hill, of C18 & C19 origins; the variety of roof heights and forms is a distinctive element
- 90-112 Richmond Hill is a contrasting unified terrace. This and the above two groups of buildings are the most visible in the key views towards Richmond Hill and the roofscape is particularly important, especially roof profiles, dormer windows and chimneys

Qualities of the lower part of Richmond Hill include:

- Red brick Edwardian mansion blocks on the south side of the road
- The Old Vicarage School- an unusual Gothic Revival building opposite, with an exceptional early C18 interior
- The unified terrace of early Victorian houses, 28-40 Richmond Hill, with small front gardens and iron railings, and prominent chimneys

Throughout Richmond Hill there is a characteristic modulation between building frontages immediately behind the footway, and those set further back. Decorative iron railings for front boundaries with all rails set directly into copings, or tall boundary walls towards the top of the hill, are typical characteristics of residential buildings in the street. The townscape becomes notably more enclosed at the lower end of Richmond Hill, forming a gateway to the town centre.

Shopfronts in Hill Rise and the lower part of Richmond Hill are generally of good quality, some very distinctive. The shops in Hill Rise are prominently sited overlooking the sloping open space adjoining Compass Hill, which contains a number of important trees. There is a dramatic glimpse of the river visible from Hill Rise to the side of Northumberland House. The shopfronts are characteristically narrow-fronted and colourful.

On the southwest side of the road beyond Bromwich House, buildings give way to an extensive area of open space, made up of Terrace Gardens, Terrace Field and Petersham Common. Because of the steep slope of the landform, the line of buildings, typically about four storeys, towards the top of Richmond Hill forms a dramatic view over a wide open area, protected by an Act of Parliament. The view of these buildings has become less clear because of tree planting to the front of the Terrace which is increasingly encroaching on the view, and the view over Terrace Gardens and vistas downstream are becoming very limited as a result of tree growth. The Star & Garter House is also a major landmark visible over a very wide area.

On Petersham Road at the Richmond end the river is at first hidden by buildings, until views to the river finally open out dramatically. The area around the Three Pigeons PH marks the entry point to the enclosed historic streetscape of the town centre. The southern section is surprisingly rural as it approaches Petersham Common, varying from very open views around Petersham Meadows to an enclosed wooded character towards Star & Garter Hill. There are a number of important C18 buildings between the road and the river.
Queen's Road

This area has an edge of park character distinct from that of Richmond Hill, away from the famous views but bounding Richmond Park. It is mainly residential, with the exception of Richmond College, and is typically Victorian. It also includes the modern Queen's Road Estate, a good example of modern housing design with carefully chosen scale and materials in a tree-dominated setting, in polite relationship to its neighbours. Buildings in Queen's Road, and particularly Richmond College, with its impressive landscape setting, are often hidden away behind high walls and planting. The predominance of large trees and not being able to see everything in one glance adds to the quality of the area. The sports centre at the Richmond Gate Hotel is an elegant and unusual addition to the conservation area.

Terracotta detailing

Cambrian and Chisholm Roads consist mainly of C19 terraced and semi-detached houses with small but delightful leafy front gardens. The chimneys form an important element on the skyline in these streets, and the mansard roofs to the rear of three storey houses in Cambrian Road are distinctive, as are the group of two storey semi-detached villas with hipped roofs at 9-19 Cambrian Road. Elements of the modern Queen's Road Estate housing relate elegantly to the Victorian streets adjoining, providing townscape of high quality. The small size of the front gardens has precluded potential damage from front garden parking, maintaining the setting of the buildings. The boundary with Richmond Park is at the ends of both roads, together with access points; this provides an important ‘bookend’ to each street of mature trees and high walls. The boundary of the conservation area is Grove Road Gardens, a pleasant treeed backwater backing onto Richmond Park. The old workhouse at Kingsmead is a focus for the area of modern housing adjoining Grove Road Gardens. There is a strip of woodland and grass between the modern Queen’s Road development and the wall to Richmond Park, reinforcing the edge of Richmond Park character of the sub-area.

A complete contrast is the Richmond Gate to Richmond Park, a major traffic thoroughfare, but imposing in itself with the distinctive white rendered Gate Lodge and granite drinking fountain. The Star & Garter Hotel forms a major termination point at the top of Queen’s Road, and the refurbished fountain in the middle of the adjoining roundabout a point of interest. Richmond Park gates with its glimpse to the park is the terminating view at the summit of Richmond Hill.
The Vineyard

This is the most urban part of the conservation area, a dense residential enclave close to the town centre between Hill Rise and Vineyard Passage. In contrast to Richmond Hill, building height is mainly two storey, with yellow stock brick and slate roofs predominating. The area is well provided with trees but, with the exception of the graveyard at Vineyard Passage, these are mainly on private land. The graveyard provides a welcome open space of historical interest.

View towards Richmond Hill from the river

Gateway of Bishop Duppa’s Almshouses

The enclaves of Ormond Avenue, Michel’s and Bishop Duppa’s Almshouses and Lancaster Cottages add considerable interest to the C18 and C19 townscape, with alleyways, entrance gates, courtyards and gardens leading off the main streets. A characteristic of this area is the ceramic street signs to a number of the streets, inset into walls.
Other notable streets in the Vineyard area include:

The Vineyard is characterised by variety rather than similarity of buildings, with a wonderful sinuous approach to the Church of St. Elizabeth at one end giving identity to the whole street. In some cases the buildings are quite decorative with distinctive ridge tiles, and together with chimneys make an important contribution to the varied skyline with height and direction of roof ridge variations. Front boundary walls and planting are very important, reinforcing the enclosure of the street and forming a setting to the buildings. The mature chestnut tree to the front of 2 The Vineyard is a key contributor to the setting. The street becomes very narrow by Hill Rise, which dramatises the view back to the church. At the Vineyard Passage end of The Vineyard, there is also very high quality townscape accentuated by bends in the road and distinctive buildings, such as the creeper clad 26 The Vineyard, the curved frontage of 30 The Vineyard, and the well preserved Salcombe Villas at the top of Vineyard Passage, together with granite setts paving and a traditional telephone box.

Halford Road and The Hermitage are unified and distinctive streets, unfortunately with the loss of most front gardens for parking. Ormond Road has a very enclosed atmosphere with buildings or boundary walls coming up to the back of the footway. Ormond Terrace is an important intact early C18 group.

Church of St. Elizabeth of Portugal, The Vineyard

**Detailed Proposals**

for the preservation or enhancement of the character of the conservation area

For the study to be successful everyone involved in property ownership, tenancy and management in both the public and private sector needs to contribute towards achieving the implementation of the detailed proposals. Many proposals fall outside the Council's control and it should be noted that current financial constraints on the Council mean that proposals for which it is responsible may take longer than is desirable to implement.

The detailed proposals are listed on the Proposals sheet accompanying this publication.

The Council will strictly apply Unitary Development Plan policies, and as opportunities arise, pursue the detailed proposals listed in the study in order to preserve or, where possible, enhance the special interest of the conservation area.

The proposals cover the following categories:

a. Improvement and protection of landscape setting
b. Preservation, enhancement and reinstatement of architectural quality and unity
c. Coordination of design and improvement in quality of street furniture
d. Improvement of highways conditions and pedestrian convenience

**Street furniture and paving**

Advice is given in the Council’s Street Design Guide. Some general guidance relevant to the conservation area is given below. It is an aim of the Street Design Guide to reduce clutter-opportunities should be taken to reduce unnecessary signage, poles etc., for example by fixing required signs to existing walls, railings or other existing street furniture.
There are locations where the installation of bollards is required but their use should be kept to a minimum, with long runs of identical types being avoided where at all possible. Any future traffic calming measures should generally avoid ‘speed tables’ from kerb to kerb in the middle of streets, which can disrupt the balance of the streetscape, and minimise painting on the road surface. Concrete street lighting columns should be replaced with the painted tubular steel type with side entry lanterns.

**Colour of street furniture**

Hill Rise, The Vineyard area, Petersham, Road to end of shops, Richmond Hill, towpath on Richmond side from Richmond Bridge to start of Buccleugh Gardens: black; remaining area: dark green BS.14.C.40 (lighting, bins, posts etc.; bollards & tree grilles black).

**Paving**

New paving should generally be in traditional rectangular slabs, if necessary with grey blocks to the front of the footway, where overriding may be a problem. Where practical, blacktop surfaces should be upgraded when opportunity and funding allows with a sealed gravel finish, and thick yellow lines replaced with the thin cream type.

**Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTMs)**

The Schedule of Buildings of Townscape Merit is a local list, introduced in 1982, compiled to recognise the value of those buildings which make a positive contribution to the streetscape but have not been included on the statutory list of buildings of architectural or historic interest. It is hoped that drawing attention to the historic, architectural and townscape interest of such buildings will encourage owners, developers and others to regard them more carefully when considering any proposals for alteration or extension. In a conservation area permission will not normally be given for the demolition of BTMs.

**Residential property**

**What the Council can do**

The Council is able to control new development through its powers under the planning acts. There is a range of guidance leaflets available on development requiring planning permission. If you are in any doubt about the need to obtain permission for intended works, you should contact the Planning & Building Control Department at the Civic Centre.

When a particularly good group of single dwellings would suffer if work, exempt from planning permission, were to be carried out (e.g. changing windows, demolition of front boundary walls etc.), the Council may apply an Article 4(2) Direction after consultation with the owners. Such Directions mean that certain permitted development rights, as specified in the Direction, are removed. Owners must then apply for permission to carry out the intended works.

**What residents can do**

Under present legislation, residents are entitled to carry out some minor works to their houses as ‘permitted development’. This freedom places great responsibility on owners to consider the overall quality of the street and the area when considering alterations to their property. There is plenty of opportunity to preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area by paying attention to small details on houses. Without care even apparently minor alterations accumulating over time can degrade the quality of the area. Examples of this type of change are replacement of original windows with aluminium or PVCu versions, or the painting of one house within a brick built terrace.
What constitutes 'permitted' development can be a complex matter and residents should contact the Council in the first instance if in any doubt. Importantly, local residents, and local groups in particular, can help preserve or enhance the conservation area by helping to record original features and passing on useful information about local crafts people and suppliers of local materials.

When considering undertaking works which do require planning permission, the best approach is to contact the Planning & Building Control Department for advice. Of particular concern are proposals for dormer windows and extensions, both of which can have a negative impact on the street scene. In this context it should be noted that rear elevations are also often visible from the public domain. Of equal impact is the breaking down of front boundaries and the destruction or adaptation of front gardens for car parking. Supplementary planning guidance is also available on these subjects from the Council.

Shopfronts
An important objective of this study is to retain and improve the quality of shopfronts within the conservation area. The Council will seek to do this through the development control process and by designating buildings retaining original shopfronts as BTMs where appropriate. The shopfronts have been divided into four categories below according to their quality.

Category A Shopfronts are of high quality or sufficient architectural or historic interest to justify their retention. This includes original period shopfronts or high quality modern shopfronts. Applications for their replacement will normally be refused. All buildings in this category will be designated as BTMs.

- 64, 80, 82, 84 Hill Rise
- 10, 12, 13, 17 Richmond Hill
- 426-428 Richmond Road

Category B Shopfronts of general good quality with a positive impact on the conservation area, including good quality modern shopfronts and those retaining some original features. Alterations or improvements leading to reinstatement of original features will be sought where appropriate and wholesale replacement discouraged.

- 2, 4, 6 Friars Stile Road
- 6, 11, 15-17, 16, 18, 24-26, 42, 48, 50, 58, 60
- 72, 74 Hill Rise
- Bethlehem Chapel Room, 24 Ormond Road
- 1, 7, 11-13 Petersham Road
- 424 Richmond Road
- 6, 14-24 (even) Richmond Hill
- 28 The Vineyard

Category C Shopfronts (usually modern) which have a neutral impact on the conservation area. Replacement with new designs of better quality will be encouraged.

- 5, 9, 10, 28-32 (even), 44, 46, 70 Hill Rise
- 5, 13 Petersham Road
- 15, 26 Richmond Hill

Category D Shopfronts which are of poor quality of design and materials, and which have little or no respect for the buildings of which they form a part. Proposals for suitable replacement shopfronts will be encouraged, and a high standard of design will be sought in any relevant planning application. The primary aim of the Council will be to achieve a good quality replacement which respects the character, proportions and materials of the buildings and any group of which it may form a part. This need not necessarily mean that reproduction of a period shopfront will be required.

- 2-4, 3, 7, 8, 20, 86 Hill Rise
- 9 Petersham Road

Minor updating of categories May 2000
Landscape and planting
Trees above a certain size in conservation areas, which are not already subject to a Tree Preservation Order, are protected automatically by the requirement that six weeks notice must be given to the Council before any proposed work is carried out, such as pruning or felling. This requirement applies to trees with a trunk diameter greater than 75mm. at a point measured 1.5m. above ground level. The Council has published a number of design guidance and planning information leaflets related to landscape issues, which are available free of charge from the Planning and Building Control reception at the Civic Centre. It is the owners' responsibility to contain overhanging branches/hedging to avoid obstruction.

Implementation
The Council will implement those proposals under its control as opportunities arise and when funds become available, and will give advice on action that can be taken by other groups and individuals. The Council will review the progress of enhancement proposals on a regular basis.
Other Publications

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames has also published the following information.

Planning Information Leaflets

no. 1 Conservation Areas
no. 2 Listed Buildings
no. 3 Historic Buildings
no. 4 Historic Buildings: Maintenance and Repair
no. 5 Trees: Legislation and Procedure
no. 6 Buildings of Townscape Merit

Design Guidance Leaflets

no. 1 Design Guidelines for Shopfronts and Shopsigns
no. 2 Design Guidelines for Car Parking in Front Gardens
no. 3 Design Guidelines for External Alterations to Houses
no. 4 Design Guidelines for House Extensions
no. 5 Trees: Landscape Design, Planting and Care
no. 6 Design Guidelines for Small Housing Sites
no. 8 Design Guidelines: Wildlife in Gardens
no. 9 Design Guidelines for Nature Conservation and Development
no. 10 Security by Design
no. 11 Design Guidelines for Shopfront Security

Street Design Guide

Conservation Area Studies
Studies for the other conservation areas in the Borough are available or are in preparation.

These leaflets and documents are available from the Planning & Building Control reception on the 2nd floor of the Civic Centre.

Other references referred to in the text

English Heritage
Register of Buildings at Risk
Register of Parks & Gardens of Special Historic Interest

Tree Council / Countryside Agency
Great Trees of London

On the front cover an extract from 'A View of Richmond, taken near Twickenham' an engraving by Boydell in 1753.

Acknowledgements

The co-operation and input of all individuals and organisations who took part in the consultation process for this study is gratefully acknowledged by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

The illustrations used in this study were produced by Joy Cuff for the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

This Study was approved by the Council's Environment Committee in January 2000.

Timber hut adjoining Richmond Hill

If you would like a copy of this leaflet in Braille, large print, on audio tape, or in a community language, please contact the Communications & Media Unit on 020 8891 7161.