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## HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

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In respect of

**Teddington Pavilion, Udney Park Road, Teddington**

On behalf of

**Quantum Group**

**AHC REF: PM 9461**

**Date: May 2016**

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## CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION & SCOPE OF REPORT.....	3
2.0	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND & DESCRIPTION .....	5
3.0	ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE.....	9
4.0	CONCLUSIONS .....	12
5.0	REFERENCES.....	13

## PLATES

Plate 1:	Modern viewing stand on the playing field
Plate 2:	Sheltered housing on the site of the former tennis courts to the north
Plate 3:	The eastern elevation of the pavilion and extension
Plate 4:	The southern elevation of the pavilion
Plate 5:	The western elevation of the pavilion
Plate 6:	The northern elevation of the pavilion (1960s' extension)
Plate 7:	Later eastern elevation (left) and the original brickwork of the northern wing of the pavilion (right)
Plate 8:	Flat-roofed terrace and later eastern elevation of the pavilion
Plate 9:	Roman arch to central bay of the eastern elevation of the 1960s' extension
Plate 10:	Flat-roofed infill between the main portion of the 1960s' extension and the original pavilion
Plate 11:	Hipped dormer on northern elevation of the original pavilion, as viewed from the 1960s' extension
Plate 12:	The eastern elevation of the 1960s' extension
Plate 13:	The pavilion as viewed looking southwards from Udney Park Road
Plate 14:	The pavilion as viewed looking northwards from Udney Park Road
Plate 15:	The pavilion as viewed looking directly over the fence from Udney Park Road
Plate 16:	The pavilion as viewed looking directly over the fence from Udney Park Road
Plate 17:	Looking towards the pavilion and playing fields from Kingston Lane
Plate 18:	Looking towards the pavilion and playing fields from Kingston Lane
Plate 19:	Looking towards the pavilion and playing fields from Kingston Lane
Plate 20:	Looking onto the playing fields from gaps in the fencing on Cromwell Road

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION & SCOPE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report has been prepared and written by Patrick Christopher Maguire, Heritage Consultant at Asset Heritage Consulting Ltd., on behalf of Quantum Group in order to provide an independent assessment of the heritage significance of Teddington Pavilion.
- 1.2 The pavilion originally dates from the late 1920s, although it was heavily extended in the 1960s. It is not a statutorily listed building nor is it located in a conservation area. It does not appear on Richmond Borough Council's local list of 'Buildings of Townscape Merit'.
- 1.3 The surrounding playing fields are designated by Richmond Borough Council as 'Other Open Land of Townscape Interest' but according to the criteria set out in para.4.1.8 of the Richmond's 'Local Development Framework: Development Management Plan' (adopted November 2011) this is not a heritage-related designation.
- 1.4 This report sets out the historical background to the development of the site and the surrounding area and focuses on assessing what (if any) 'significance' can be attributed to the sports pavilion as a 'heritage asset'. This necessarily also includes an assessment of what (if any) contribution the building makes to the character and appearance of the surrounding area (albeit that this is not a conservation area).
- 1.5 As such, this report complies with the requirements of paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the onus it places on those planning changes to historic assets to begin the process of change with a clear description of the significance of the assets affected, albeit that the requirement in the NPPF is only such that *'The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'*.
- 1.6 Furthermore, such an approach is identified as best practice in Historic England's 'Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' (March 2015), which

notes that *'the information required in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consent should be no more than is necessary to reach an informed decision'*.

- 1.7 Following the assessment carried out for this report, it is my considered opinion that the Teddington Pavilion is a building of only the most modest significance in heritage terms. Indeed, I consider that its omission from even the local planning authority's local list of 'Buildings of Townscape Merit' as it should be.

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## 2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND & DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The playing fields at Teddington were originally laid out following WWI for the use of the Merchant Taylor's School. The fields were acquired by the publishing entrepreneur, Lord Beaverbrook, following the relocation of the Merchant Taylor's School to Northwood in 1933. He gave them to St. Mary's Hospital Medical School shortly afterwards, and they became the home ground of the St. Mary's Hospital Rugby Football Club.
- 2.2 The pavilion on the site first appears on OS map of 1934 and does not appear on OS maps of 1920. A pair of hoppers on the rear (western) elevation are marked 'CMTSC' (presumably 'Company of Merchant Taylors Sports Club' or similar) and '1929', confirming that the original building was constructed at the tail-end of the site's use by the Merchant Taylors. The building was heavily extended to the north in the 1960s.
- 2.3 St. Mary's Hospital Medical School merged with Imperial College in 1988 (which became the Imperial College School of Medicine in 1997, following a further merger with Charing Cross & Westminster Medical School). Imperial College continued to use the building as a sports pavilion until 2014.

### *The development of the surrounding area*

- 2.4 The 1850 1:5280 scale OS town plan shows this part of Teddington to have been open land, well outside of London, at that time. This remained the case as late as 1872 (1:10,560 scale OS map), although much of Teddington to the north had been laid out by this point, as had the Kingston Line of the London & South-Western Railway to the south.
- 2.5 The site of the sports fields and pavilion formed part of the grounds of the nearby Udney Farm at this time, although field parcel notations on the relevant OS maps suggest that at least the northern part of the site formed part of the grounds of Udney House to the north. Udney House dated from 1768 (replacing an earlier house of 1647) and was named for the merchant and art collector Robert Udney (1725-1802).

- 2.6 Cromwell Road, Kingston Lane, and Udney Road had been laid out by 1894-96 (1:1056 scale OS map). The houses here consisted of large villas in generous plots. There was a single villa in a similarly generous plot on the eastern side of Udney Park Road, within the otherwise open area defined by these roads. Plots and houses were smaller on Kingston Lane than Udney Park Road, and many of these remained empty into the 1890s.
- 2.7 By 1915 (1:2500 scale OS map), Kingston Lane had been fully developed as a series of narrow plots. Udney House (demolished c.1899) and its grounds to the north had been replaced by a series of terraces running along the High Street, the eastern side of Udney Park Road, and the western side of Kingston Lane (extending southwards into the formerly open area). Equally, further houses had been constructed on the south-western corner of this open area (at the junction of Cromwell Road and Udney Park Road – these have since been replaced with post-war terraces).
- 2.8 The 1934 1:2500 scale OS map shows the sports pavilion in place with its original proportions, a central range with projecting wings to the north and south. Tennis courts had been constructed to the north, defining the current boundaries of the sports ground. A long building to the south represents viewing stands, which have been replaced more recently (**plate 1**).
- 2.9 The pavilion was extensively extended to the north in the 1960s. Following a series of planning applications in the 1990s, the tennis courts at the northern end of the sports fields were replaced by the existing sheltered accommodation (**plate 2**).

*Description of the building*

- 2.10 The sports pavilion is a fairly unremarkable example of inter-war vernacular construction with extensive later alteration and extension. It is located on the western side of the playing fields, with access from Udney Park Road, although it necessarily faces eastwards onto the playing fields and presents its rear elevation to this road.

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- 2.11 The late 1920s' portion of the pavilion consists of three single-storey ranges wrapping around a central range of one-and-a-half storeys, all with hipped (with gablets to the one-and-half-storey range), tiled roofs. The similarity of roofing materials between the late 1920s' and 1960s' elements of the building suggest that the earlier elements were reroofed as part of the extension. The storey heights are generous and the high ridges mean that the single-storey elements could easily be read as one-and-a-half storeys and the one-and-a-half-storey element as two storeys (**plates 3-6**).
- 2.12 Construction is of stock brick laid in a somewhat irregular bond. Windows are flush, white-painted, metal casements throughout, although in many cases they are set in unadorned timber frames with timber mullions.
- 2.13 The building faces eastwards onto the playing field (**plate 3**) but the original front elevation here has been lost. The original line of this elevation is now marked internally by a row of piers in the main hall and externally by a pair of 'clerestory' windows above the flat-roofed projection. Map evidence (e.g. 1959 1:1250 scale OS map) suggests that there was originally a narrow covered terrace or loggia between the projecting wings, which must have been replaced when the extant wall was constructed.
- 2.14 Indeed, at ground-floor level this elevation has been moved forwards, with the introduction of a line of glazed timber doors separated by panels of later brickwork (**plate 7**). A further flat-roofed element, supported by a line of brick piers of similar vintage, forms a covered terrace between the projecting wings (**plate 8**).
- 2.15 The bricks here match those on the 1960s' extension and it likely that the reconfiguration of the elevation dates from that time. Indeed, the existing covered terrace has direct access from the bar in the extension, which incorporates part of the original northern cross wing.
- 2.16 A central, tile-hung, half-hipped projection oversails the flat-roofed extension to the original building. It is unclear whether this projection is original to the building (and had a lower portion lost during the construction of the terrace) or was added as part of the 1960s' extension. Map evidence (e.g. 1959 1:1250

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scale OS map) is inconclusive but favours the later proposition, clearly showing the outer wings and a covered terrace but no central projection.

- 2.17 Equally, the northern elevation has also been lost due to the construction of the extension, which was opened in 1966. This is a broadly-proportioned, two-storey neo-Georgian block (in plan form it is two rectangular blocks connected by a slightly-recessed range) constructed in stretcher bond with a hipped roof.
- 2.18 Dressings are limited to splayed brick lintels to the ground-floor windows, a simple Roman arch and brick quoins to the central window (possibly originally a doorway, although there is little to distinguish the infill brickwork to that elsewhere, suggesting that the shallow recess here is original) on the eastern elevation, and cement sills (**plates 3, 6, & 9**). Oddly, what appears to be a concrete or rendered top plate is exposed between the brickwork and roof, forming the lintels of the upper windows.
- 2.19 A flat-roofed single-storey infill between the central portion of the extension and the original building (**plate 10**) was presumably designed so that the second storey of the extension did not directly block light to the dormer window of the first-floor flat in the original portion of the building (**plate 11**).
- 2.20 There is a single-storey, flat-roofed projection to the west, constructed in Sussex bond (**plate 12**). The doorway on this extension has a simple soldier-course lintel rather than the splayed lintel used elsewhere. The use of Sussex bond rather than stretcher here may simply be due to the fact that this single-storey element is solid brickwork, rather than it necessarily being of a later date. This projection provides access to the female changing facilities on the first floor.



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### 3.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 3.1 The purpose of this section of the report is to provide an independent assessment of the heritage significance of the pavilion building.
- 3.2 As a 20<sup>th</sup>-century building of simple vernacular design without any particular architectural pretension or interest, the intrinsic significance of the pavilion is negligible. This is a functional building of little architectural ambition.
- 3.3 Indeed, any limited interest that this building might have had has been lessened by the substantial alteration to the primary elevation to the east and the 1966 extension to the north.
- 3.4 The portion of the building most visible from Udney Park Road, the two-storey, 1960s', neo-Georgian extension, makes no attempt (beyond being roofed with the same material) to complement the original pavilion. Indeed, it reads almost as a free-standing block when viewed from the road (**plate 13**). When viewed from within the sports field, it reads simply as a sizeable and insensitive addition.
- 3.5 Again, the conservative design of this 1960s' building is of no architectural interest. This represents a particularly unambitious design in a period when university sports pavilions could be of high architectural interest and quality, such as the modernist pavilion designed by the relatively-unknown M.G.D. Dixey for Merton College, Oxford, in 1967 and listed at grade II in 2014.
- 3.6 Regarding its relationship with the surrounding townscape, the pavilion is most visible from Udney Park Road, where from the north the 1960s' extension can be seen through the metal fencing with the open sports field around it. Due to the extension's domestic design, this is not readily identifiable as a sports pavilion from here (**plate 13**).
- 3.7 Visibility into the site is limited to the south by close-boarded fencing but the roof of the original pavilion is visible from here (**plate 14**). Fuller views of the plain southern and western elevation are available when stood on the eastern side of the road (**plates 15 & 16**) but the building's relationship is clearly with

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the playing fields rather than the surrounding roads (it presents a rear elevation to Udney Park Road) and there are no planned views onto it from these streets.

- 3.8 Indeed, visibility of the building from Kingston Lane is more limited. Although there is a clear sense of an open space to the west, visibility into this is limited by extensive foliage screening and close-boarded fencing (e.g. **plates 17-19**). The upper parts of the building are visible and a 'sense' is certainly achieved of construction to the west, but the pavilion is not readily distinguishable in these longer views from the residential construction behind.
- 3.9 The case is similar in glimpses into the sports ground from Cromwell Road, with the 1990s' sheltered accommodation to the north being the dominant built feature (**plate 20**).
- 3.10 Taking these views and the modest intrinsic interest of the building into account, the contribution that the pavilion makes to the character and appearance of the surrounding area (which is not a conservation area) is limited to its status as the only building on the central part of the space bounded by Udney Park Road, Kingston Lane, and Cromwell Road (there is further residential construction at the northern and southern ends of this area).
- 3.11 The specific form of the building, which post-dates much of the construction on the surrounding streets, is of no particular value to this contribution. Indeed, such a role could be played by any sizable building in this location.
- 3.12 Although the architectural significance of the pavilion building is negligible, some very limited, local historic significance may be attached to the building as the home of the defunct St. Mary's Hospital RFC from the 1930s until its amalgamation with the Westminster & Charing Cross Hospitals RFC to form Imperial Medicals RFC in 1997.
- 3.13 With all this taken into account, the heritage significance of the pavilion building is negligible, with any limited contribution that it might make to the surrounding townscape not linked to its specific form and as readily achievable by any building in the same location.

3.14 Needless to say, it falls far below the stringent criteria for inclusion on the statutory list. Indeed, the relative modernity of the building, combined with its unambitious design, substantial level of alteration, and extensive 1960s' extension mean that the building's significance in heritage terms is so limited that, in my considered opinion, its current omission from even the local list of 'Buildings of Townscape Merit' is as it should be.

## **4.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 As demonstrated by this report, it is clear that the existing pavilion building is of negligible significance in heritage terms.
- 4.2 It is relatively modern building of functional vernacular design which has been altered and extended. Moreover, even without this extension and alteration the original building, although not notably unattractive, would be of no particular value in architectural or historical terms.
- 4.3 Indeed, it post-dates the laying out of the playing fields and much of the surrounding residential construction. Its contribution to the character and appearance of the area (which is not a conservation area) is limited to its presence as the only sizable construction within this central open space, something that could be readily achieved by any sizable building in the same location.
- 4.4 With this in mind, its current omission from even Richmond Borough Council's local list of 'Buildings of Townscape Merit' is as it should be.

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Original documentary sources and planning records- fully referenced in the text.