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HERITAGE STATEMENT

In respect of

Kingston Bridge House, Church Grove, Hampton Wick

On behalf of

Westcombe Group

AHC REF: PM/9900

Date: October 2020

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1.0 INTRODUCTION & SCOPE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report has been prepared and written by Patrick Christopher Maguire, IHBC, Associate Director at Asset Heritage Consulting Ltd., on behalf of Westcombe Group in order to provide an independent assessment of the impact in built heritage terms of the proposals affecting Kingston Bridge House, Hampton Wick.
- 1.2 Kingston Bridge House does not appear on the statutory list, nor has it been identified as a 'Building of Townscape Merit' (i.e. a locally-listed building) by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames ('the Council').
- 1.3 It is, however, located within the Hampton Wick Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset, and within the setting of several other designated heritage assets, notably Bushy Park and Hampton Court Park (which are both covered by separate conservation area designations and appear on the statutory register of historic parks and gardens at Grade I), the listed St. John's Church (Grade II), and the cluster of listed buildings at Home Park Terrace (all listed at Grade II, including the war memorial).
- 1.4 This report falls into two distinct parts: the first sets out the historical background to the site and its surroundings and focuses on assessing the significance of the site in its current form, principally in relation to the character and appearance of the Hampton Wick Conservation Area and the settings of nearby heritage assets.
- 1.5 As such, this report complies with the requirements of paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the onus it places on those planning changes to historic assets to include 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 This second part of the report, which should be read in conjunction with the applicant's design and access statement, focuses on an assessment of the application scheme and the impact of the proposals in heritage terms.

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- 1.7 This two-stage approach of understanding 'significance' before moving on to assess the impact of potential change on that 'significance' has for some time been regarded as good conservation practice in the design and application process (see, for instance, English Heritage's, now Historic England's, 'Conservation Principles', 2008) and, following the introduction of the short-lived PPS5 in 2010 and the NPPF in 2012 (and its more recent iterations), is now effectively a standard requirement for most applications affecting heritage assets.
- 1.8 For the reasons set out in full in the main body of this report, I am satisfied that the application scheme is compatible with the objective of 'preserving' what is significant about the character and appearance of the Hampton Wick Conservation Area and the settings of nearby heritage assets.
- 1.9 Most pertinently, it is my firm opinion that the scheme passes the statutory tests set by Sections 66 & 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND & DESCRIPTION

Historical background

- 2.1 The application site is situated at the southern end of Hampton Wick High Street, where it turns into Hampton Court Road. To the east is the River Thames, which is crossed at this point by the 1825-28 Kingston Bridge (which spans two local authorities and is thus covered by two statutory list entries at Grade II*).
- 2.2 To the south and west, running along either side of Hampton Court Road, are two large, historic parks: Bushy Park and Hampton Court Park. Bushy Park has its origins in the late 15th century, when the Middle Park was enclosed as a deer park by Giles d'Aubrey. By 1514, this was added by Cardinal Wolsey (1475-1530) to two other areas of enclosed land: Bushy Park and Hare Warren. Wolsey was also involved at Hampton Court and enclosed the Home Park to the east of his house there at the same time.
- 2.3 Hampton Court Palace was built from 1514 by Wolsey and these areas of enclosed land, separated by Hampton Court Road, created a vast park of almost 2,000 acres. The bricks walls around both parks (which are in parts listed) still contain 16th-century material, alongside various areas and phases of later rebuilding and repairs.
- 2.4 When Hampton Court was acquired by Henry VIII (1491-1547) in 1529, he set about expanding both the palace and its grounds. The palace would again be extensively remodelled by Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723) from 1689 under William III (1650-1702).
- 2.5 In 1629, James I added a further 68ha (Court Field) into Bushy Park on its western side and enclosed it with a wall while, in 1638-9, Charles I had a tributary of the River Colne diverted through Bushy Park to make the Longford River.
- 2.6 That said, the present appearance of both parks is, in spite of later alterations, largely that of the late 17th and early 18th centuries, principally under William III

and his gardeners, George London (c.1640-1714) and Henry Wise (1653-1738) (Cherry, B., & Pevsner, N., *The Buildings of England: London 2: South* (London, 1983) 497). This scheme, begun in 1689, included the mile-long drive through Bushy Park, linking the principal entrances to both parks onto Hampton Court Road. Indeed, even the influential and celebrated landscape architect, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716-83), despite a tenure as Master Gardener to Hampton Court from 1764, made only minor changes to William III's scheme.

- 2.7 The two great parks and their well-defined boundaries have provided a clear western/south-western edge to the development of Hampton Wick since at least the late 15th century. At the north-eastern end of Hampton Court Park, adjacent to one of its public entrances (the park was opened to the public in 1893) is a group of largely 18th-century buildings known as Park Terrace. These include a lodge, Home Park House, and the Gate House (all listed at Grade II). Fern Glen to the north-east is a 19th-century addition.
- 2.8 Hampton Wick also retains several 18th-century buildings along the High Street, including Nos.2-8 (even), 9, and 16 (all listed at Grade II) but remained only a small hamlet into the 19th century. Certainly, the development of Church Grove, facing onto the north-eastern boundary of Bushy Park, dates principally from the 19th century, having been laid out in 1824 (and known as 'New Road' until the early 1860s).
- 2.9 Indeed, the hamlet only acquired its own church, the Church of St. John (listed at Grade II) in 1829-30, having previously been served by St. Mary's in Hampton. The Church Grove site was donated by the church's architect, Edward Lapidge (1779-1860), who also rebuilt the church at Hampton (*The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, & Instruction* No.551, 9th June 1832, 376). Lapidge was both developer and architect and was local to the area, his father having been head gardener at Hampton Court. As County Surveyor for Surrey from 1824, he also designed the nearby Kingston Bridge.
- 2.10 The church is sat alongside stock brick Italianate villas of the 1850s onwards (4-6 Church Grove – No.4, completed in 1850, was by Edward Lapidge). The 19th-century development of Church Grove took in large detached and semi-detached dwellings set within green plots, taking advantage of views over the park to the west. These were constructed on development land owned by Edward Lapidge

- 2.11 The future site of the southern range of Kingston Bridge House, on the other hand, fell outside of the Lapidge Estate and appears to have had more in common with High Street than Church Grove by the late 19th century, incorporating a tightly-packed terrace of buildings fronting onto the junction to the south-east.

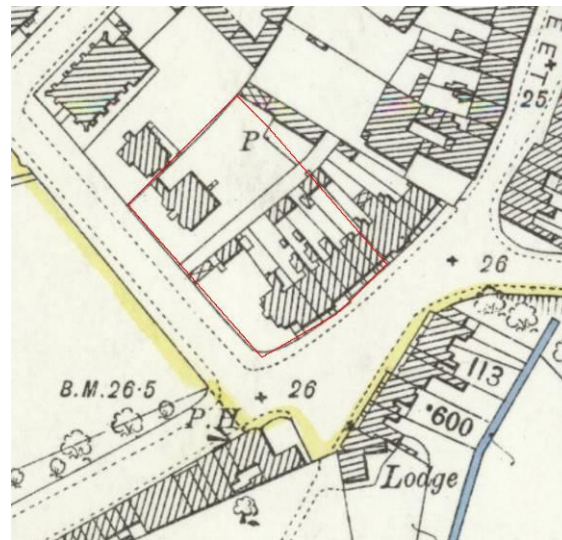


Fig.1. Extract from the 1898 (surveyed 1895) 1:2500 scale OS map, with the approximate application site boundaries outlined in red

- 2.12 The north-western part of the site was a separate plot and appears to have incorporated a house set well back from Church Grove. In 1877, that building was demolished and replaced by another villa, The Pines, fronting onto Church Grove and sharing a building line with 2 Church Grove (Elmitt, R., *Hampton Wick: Brick by Brick: Volume 2: Park Road & Environs* (Hampton Wick, 2013) 80).
- 2.13 It is worth noting that the area of Bushy Park closest to the application site, the King's Field, was a paddock until the 1920s when the Princess Royal, Princess Louise (1867-1931), gave it to the parish of Hampton Wick on behalf of George V (1865-1936). It was initially laid out as a playground with tennis courts and football pitches (*Ibid.*, 107).
- 2.14 Moving onto the post-war period, several of the terraces fronting onto the High Street/Hampton Court Street junction and immediately to the west of the White Hart Hotel were demolished at some point between 1949 and 1956 (1:10,560

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- and 1:2500 scale OS maps) and replaced with the existing Neo-Georgian Gas Board building (now HSBC).
- 2.15 The remaining terraces to the west and the late 19th-century The Pines (to the south of the existing 2 Church Grove, which was then numbered No.4) were demolished for the construction of Kingston Bridge House. This first phase represents the eastern range of the existing building and it was granted outline planning permission in 1960 (ref.59/1154), with the detailed scheme granted permission in September of that year.
- 2.16 The agent on the application was the architectural firm R. Seifert & Partners. This firm had been founded in 1958 by Richard Seifert (1910-2001) (who had an 80% share) and his two junior partners, Tony Henderson and George Marsh (Harrison, E.M., 'Richard Seifert (1910-2001) in *The Architectural Review* 1464, September 2019).
- 2.17 The firm, which by the early 1970s employed 300 architects across seven offices, was well known for its commercial office projects, often for speculative developers, and completed some 500 office developments during its existence. Its most famous project, Centre Point in central London with its expressed concrete frame, was built from 1961-66 on a site acquired in 1958 and was added to the statutory list at Grade II in 1995.
- 2.18 The office block at Kingston Bridge House lacks the flair of the firm's better-known projects but the northern range was set on *pilotis*. Unfortunately, this undercroft has been subsequently partially infilled, likely as a result of the 1994 planning application ref.94/0318/FUL.
- 2.19 Conservation area consent (as it then existed) was granted for the demolition of the office block in 1990 (ref.90/2080/CAC & 90/2081/CAC), with various applications made in that year and shortly afterwards for a replacement building, although all of these were withdrawn by the applicant prior to determination.
- 2.20 In 1993, planning permission was granted for the conversion of the office block to use as student accommodation (ref.93/0819/FUL). The building was converted shortly afterwards and has continued in this use until recently.

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- 2.21 As part of the 1993 works, the building was reclad in render and additional insulation added on uPVC rails and steel studs. uPVC window frames and cills were added at the same time ('Steel Construction Institute Publication P343: Insulated Render Systems Used with Light Steel Framing' (The Steel Construction Institute, 2006) 39). Considering the Brutalist style of the building (and Seifert's firm generally), it seems very likely that the existing rustication to the plinth and the projecting cornices were added only as part of this recladding.

Description

- 2.22 Kingston Bridge House, which is located on a prominent site at the junction of High Street, Church Grove, and Hampton Court Road, is a former office block of the 1960s and can broadly be recognised as such despite later alterations.
- 2.23 It comprises two distinct ranges. The southern range is set over seven storeys (plus rooftop plant enclosure), with eight bays on its long (southern) elevation (**plate 1**). The first and fourth bays from the west hold a single window, while the windows in the other bays are paired. The uPVC windows date to the early 1990s and the building was refaced in render at that time.
- 2.24 It was presumably as part of these works that an attempt was made to add some classical details to this range, in the form of rustication and a plat cornice to the ground floor, with subsidiary and main cornices demarcating an 'attic floor' above. An incredibly shallow projection to the western bay, expressed in both the cornice and render, is presumably intended to suggest a classical pavilion, although this conceit is unsuccessful.
- 2.25 There is a projecting canopy to the western, short elevation of this range, which shelters the main entrance (**plate 2**).
- 2.26 The northern range runs along Church Grove and is lower than the southern range, its three storeys being raised over an undercroft on *pilotis* and (back from the street frontage) concrete piers. This undercroft has been partially infilled with a 1990s' extension and bin stores (**plates 3-5**). The two ranges are connected by a projecting stair tower (**plate 6**).

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- 2.27 The rear elevations of the building lack the applied cornice detail and enclose a car park (**plate 7**). From within the car park there are views of the listed St. John's Church and the locally-listed 4 Church Grove. To the east is the Warehouse, a mid-20th-century commercial building (likely contemporary with the adjacent former Gas Board building, now HSBC) with a distinctive saw-tooth roof that now serves as a meeting/social hall to St. John's Church.
- 2.28 Moving onto its surroundings more generally, the application site is visible from the roundabout at the High Street/Hampton Court Road junction, including as one approaches from Kingston Bridge, where it is seen alongside the distinctively Neo-Georgian former Gas Board building (**plate 8**). The scale of development 'steps up' here from the two and two-and-half storey buildings of High Street to the four storeys of the former Gas Board building and the seven of Kingston Bridge House.
- 2.29 There are also glimpses of the side elevation of the building from the southern end of High Street itself, where it is seen over the side elevation of the former Gas Board building and alongside the heavily planted north-eastern boundary of Hampton Court Park (**plate 9**).
- 2.30 On the southern side of the roundabout, before the north-eastern entrance to Hampton Court Park, the listed war memorial is set within a small public garden, set back from the road behind railings and enclosed to the west by the return elevation of Fern Glen (**plate 10**).
- 2.31 To the west of this is Home Park Terrace, a collection of largely 18th-century buildings that face onto Hampton Court Road and towards Kingston Bridge House. Other than Fern Glen (a 19th-century addition that does not appear on the statutory list), these have the character of typical Georgian dwellings (**plates 11-13**). Alongside the Old King's Head (an early 20th-century public house – **plate 14**) these flank the north-eastern public entrance to Hampton Court Park.
- 2.32 Views out from this entrance take in the rather stark southern range of Kingston Bridge House (**plate 15**), including views along Church Grove that also take in the spire of St. John's Church (**plate 16**).

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- 2.33 The application site can be seen from the eastern end of Hampton Court Road over the boundary walls of Bushy Park, which retain 16th- and 17th-century brickwork at this point (**plate 17**).
- 2.34 Moving onto Church Grove, this is wholly enclosed on its western side by the boundary walls and planting of Bushy Park (with the areas of park adjoining this boundary being the play area known as the King's Field and an area of allotments to the north). Its eastern side takes in the application site and a number of 19th-century buildings, including good-quality villas, such as No.4 immediately adjacent to the site (**plate 18**) and the Italianate pair Nos.6-8 (**plate 19**) to the north. Between these is St. John's Church (**plate 20**, listed at Grade II).
- 2.35 While the villas are constructed in London stock brick, the church is built in Suffolk whites with Bath Stone dressings and in a stripped-back Gothic style. This subtle variation in material, alongside stylistic differences, helps the church (which predates the surrounding villas by a few decades) to stand out within its surroundings.
- 2.36 The northern elevation of the church faces onto St. John's Street, which has a denser residential character. Views from St. John's Street over the yard to the east of the church take in the rear elevations of Kingston Bridge House, as do views from the church car park (**plates 21 & 22**).
- 2.37 It is also worth considering visibility of the site from the highly-graded registered parks and gardens (and conservation areas) to the west and south.
- 2.38 Bushy Park is compartmentalised into a number of smaller areas through the use of boundary walls and fences. The south-eastern compartment, the King's Field, is closest to the application site and has been used as a children's play area since it was given to the parish in the 1920s. It contains an equipped play area, a small pavilion, a skate park, and tennis courts.
- 2.39 While there is tree planting along the eastern park boundary, views across the King's Field take in clear visibility of buildings along the eastern side of Church Grove, including Kingston Bridge House, 4 Church Grove, and the Church of St.

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- John (**plate 23**). In longer views from the western end of the King's Field, Kingston Bridge House is more dominant (**plate 24**).
- 2.40 Visibility of Church Grove from further west within Bushy Park is more limited, with glimpses from the cricket ground and further to the west taking in the upper floors of the 1960s' Heron House, with the Admiralty Building (a 2013-14 Redrow Homes development on a former gasworks site on the eastern bank of Thames) clearly visible over this (**plate 25**). There are also some glimpses of the spire of St. John's Church (**plate 26**) but on my site visit I identified no visibility of Kingston Bridge House.
- 2.41 As one moves further west, into the park proper and towards the main avenue, there is no visibility (certainly when trees are in leaf) towards Church Grove or the application site.
- 2.42 Moving onto Hampton Court Park, this large park also comprises several clearly-demarcated areas. The largest portion of the park, the Home Park to the east, takes in a triple avenue running north-eastwards, eastwards, and south-eastwards from the palace (**plate 27**).
- 2.43 While there are views northwards from the north-eastern avenue towards buildings on Hampton Court Road and within Bushy Park (**plate 28**), the Home Park generally has an enclosed character, reinforced by both the boundary walls and planting. To the east, the tower of Kingston College can be seen over the tree planting on the Thames boundary from several points (**plate 29**).
- 2.44 The only views of Kingston Bridge House from within Hampton Court Park are from its north-eastern corner. As the north-eastern arm of the avenue breaks up towards Wick Pond, there are glimpses of the spire of St. John's Church seen over the boundary wall (**plate 30**) and, as one moves further north-eastwards, of the top elements of Kingston Bridge House (**plate 31**).
- 2.45 There are further views as one moves closer to the north-eastern gates, with Kingston Bridge House seen over the rear elevation of 5-11 Hampton Court Road, which has a roof terrace looking into the park (**plate 32**). As one leaves

the park through the north-eastern entrance, the southern range of Kingston Bridge House dominates the view outwards (**plate 15**).

3.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 3.1 The purpose of this section of the report is to assess the significance of the application site in heritage terms. This will provide a 'baseline' against which the application proposals can be assessed at Section 4.0.
- 3.2 This approach follows the suggested methodology set out in the relevant Historic England guidance, 'The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3' (2nd edition; December 2017) (hereafter, 'GPA3'), with this section of the report corresponding to Steps 1 & 2 of that methodology, '*identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected*' and '*assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated*'.

Intrinsic significance

- 3.3 The application site comprises an early 1960s' office block that has been altered through its conversion to use as student accommodation and its recladding in the early 1990s.
- 3.4 The building appears to have originally been designed by R. Seifert & Partners, who were agents on the 1960 outline planning application. Richard Seifert practised as an architect from 1933 but is best known as a Brutalist architect of the post-war period who tended to work with property developers in the private sector. His firm (founded in 1958) was responsible for at least 500 office blocks during its existence.
- 3.5 With much of the 'prestige' architecture of the post-war period being concentrated in the public and education sectors, Seifert was not well regarded by the contemporary architectural establishment or press, although his best-known project, the 1961-66 Centre Point, was an exception.
- 3.6 Seifert & Partner's work (and Brutalism more generally) has drawn more interest in recent years and Centre Point was added to the statutory list at Grade II in 1995. More recently, the 1964-68 Space House was listed at Grade II in 2015. Both these buildings, with their distinctive expressed concrete frames, were

designed by one of the junior partners, George Marsh (1921-88), with Seifert himself having little direct input in design matters, as he concentrated on the commercial side of the business following the foundation of the partnership in 1958. Another of Marsh's projects for the firm, the 1970-72 Alpha Tower in Birmingham, was also added to the statutory list at Grade II in 2014.

- 3.7 Other notable works by the firm, such as the 1971-80 Tower 42 (commonly known as the 'NatWest Tower') in central London and the 1969 Gateway House in Manchester are also now widely regarded as significant architectural achievements.
- 3.8 That said, while Seifert & Partners was an architectural firm of some significance and of clear standing within the field of post-war British Brutalism, it was also highly prolific. Set among the firm's extensive commercial office projects, Kingston Bridge House cannot be considered a major work.
- 3.9 Indeed, in major studies of Brutalism (such as Clement, A., *Brutalism: Post-war British Architecture* (2nd ed.; Marlborough, 2018)) or, more pertinently, the few specific studies of Seifert's work, such as Harrison's 2019 *Architectural Review* article (*op.cit.*) the building does not merit mention among the lists of key works by the firm.
- 3.10 Another major study of the firm's work by Dominic Bradbury was published this month (Bradbury, D., *Richard Seifert: British Brutalist Architect* (London, 2020)). This study is organised around a series of case studies of major projects (Centre Point, London; Space House, London; Sussex Heights, Brighton; NLA Tower, London; Drapers Gardens, London; International Press Centre, London; Park Lane Tower, London; Alpha Tower, Birmingham; King's Reach Tower, London; Wembley Conference Centre; Euston Station Buildings, London; and Nat West Tower, London).
- 3.11 Perhaps unsurprisingly, Kingston Bridge House does not feature as one of these major projects. Indeed, it does not even feature in the general, chronological list of projects by the firm at the end of this book, highlighting its low interest in the context of this prolific firm's work.

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- 3.12 The building lacks the expressed concrete frame or extensive glazing found on Seifert's better-known buildings, but it is broadly similar in its planning to other works by the firm. The use of a podium block set at right angles to a taller 'tower' is common to Seifert's office developments, although clearly the two elements are not distinguished here in the same manner as, for instance, the firm's nearby and contemporary Tolworth Tower.
- 3.13 The lack of structural expression in the design of the building is striking in comparison to Seifert's more successful designs, resulting in a bland, visually unsatisfying structure. In this respect, it has clearly not benefited from later recladding and poor-quality replacement windows.
- 3.14 The northern range is more successful than the southern, with the *pilotis*, a favourite conceit of Seifert, offering a faint echo of the Corbusian design felt more strongly in the firm's more successful buildings. That said, this approach is far less successful here than where used in other similarly-planned contemporary/near-contemporary buildings, such as Arthur Ling's 1957-59 Civic Centre II in Coventry (which was recently added to the statutory list at Grade II).
- 3.15 Taking this all into account, while Richard Seifert & Partners was a significant post-war architectural firm, Kingston Bridge House does not rank among its more significant work and has suffered from later alterations. Any intrinsic heritage interest that can be attributed to this building is therefore at a negligible level and clearly not sufficient to be a material consideration in the planning process.

The character and appearance of the Hampton Wick Conservation Area

- 3.16 As far as it has been possible to ascertain from the information available on the Council's website, no adopted conservation area appraisal exists for the Hampton Wick Conservation Area but a short summary 'conservation area statement' has been prepared for the area (this statement is undated but, from the map provided, must post-date the latest extension of the conservation area in 2014).

- 3.17 This document divides the conservation area into a number of 'character areas', with the application site falling within 'Bushy Park Edge':

The Western edge of Hampton Wick is defined by the high brick wall of Bushy Park, with park and street trees and private gardens contributing to the semi-rural character of the area. Two important areas of open space include the War Memorial Gardens and the entrance to Home Park, enclosed by a group of 18th[-]century buildings. St. John's Church (1831) is a landmark building overlooking the Park. Buildings along Church Grove are of varied styles but united by the use of common materials. Nos.52-68 Park Road is an important 18th[-]century group of cottages on narrow plots behind deep front gardens and fences. An eccentric group of the late 18th century[,] Thatched House and Bushy Home[,] add further interest.

- 3.18 The stated intention of the conservation area statement (https://www.richmond.gov.uk/conservation_area_statements, accessed 25th September 2020) is that it should explain when and why the area was designated, provide a short history of the area, and provide a map. No mention is made in this statement of the existing building on the application site and it must be assumed from this that the Council does not consider this building to form part of the reason why the area was designated.

- 3.19 Indeed, that report notes that the overall character of the conservation area is, 'unified by its relationship to the historic village centre and the distinctive river and landscape setting'.

- 3.20 As this suggests, the Hampton Wick Conservation Area is significant as a historic village set within a unique landscape setting to the west, with a distinctive riverside to the east.

- 3.21 While Kingston Bridge House is a large building and highly-visible from certain points within the conservation area, it does not contribute to the character of Hampton Wick as a historic village centre and, with its distinctly urban form, clearly does not contribute to what the Council's statement describes as the 'semi-rural' character of Bushy Park edge (albeit that the character of much of Church Grove itself is more suburban).

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- 3.22 Of course, it is perfectly possible for significant modern buildings to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of conservation areas, especially where such designated areas incorporate various phases and styles of development, as at Hampton Wick.
- 3.23 However, Kingston Bridge House is a conventional office block of the 1960s that has suffered from poor-quality later alteration and, in my view, is not an attractive addition to the conservation area.
- 3.24 As such, I am firmly of the view that the building in its current form does not make any meaningful contribution to the character and appearance (i.e. the 'special architectural or historical interest') of the Hampton Wick Conservation Area.

The settings of nearby heritage assets

- 3.25 In line with the guidance set out in GPA3, having assessed the site and surrounding area through a site visit and investigation of HER and National Heritage List entries, it is my firm opinion that the principal heritage assets with the potential to be affected by development of the sort proposed on the application site are: the listed St. John's Church/locally-listed 4 Church Grove; the listed buildings of Home Park Terrace; the Bushy Park registered park/conservation area; and the Hampton Court Park registered park/conservation area.
- 3.26 Of course, possessing such potential does not necessarily mean that these heritage assets will be materially affected nor, indeed, that any such effects would inevitably be 'harmful' in built heritage terms.
- 3.27 Consideration has been given to other designated heritage assets in the vicinity, including the listed buildings of Hampton Wick High Street and the listed Kingston Bridge, but following my site visit I do not feel that these have the potential for their heritage interest to be affected by development/alteration of the sort proposed on the application site.

St. John's Church & 4 Church Grove

- 3.28 There is clearly some overlap between the settings of these listed/locally-listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Hampton Wick Conservation Area (in which they are located) as discussed above.
- 3.29 The listed St. John's Church (1829-30) and the locally-listed 4 Church Grove (1850) were both designed by Edward Lapidge and front onto Church Grove, overlooking Bushy Park to the west. Alongside 6-8 Church Grove to the north (also locally listed) these form a group of recognisably mid-19th-century buildings, unified by a complementary palette (stock bricks on the residential buildings and Suffolk whites with Bath stone on the church). Indeed, the buildings have clear group value.
- 3.30 The core of these buildings' significance relates to their architectural character. It is clear that their relationships with the road and Bushy Park formed a key element of their original designs and, as such, it is these elements of their settings that make a contribution to their heritage significance. The church, with its spire, is a distinctive landmark, visible in a small number of longer views from Bushy Park and Hampton Court Park (see Section 2.0 above).
- 3.31 The location of the church on the corner of St. John's Street also means that the northern wall of the nave, with its long, traceried windows, features in longer views along Church Grove from the western side of the road to the north.
- 3.32 Immediately to the east of the church is a yard defined by single-storey ranges. Views over these ranges take in the rear of Kingston Bridge House, which is not an attractive addition to this element of the setting of this listed building (**plate 21**).
- 3.33 To the east/south-east of the church and the locally-listed 4 Church Grove is a car park, set on the former gardens of 4 Church Grove. Other than providing 'breathing room' to the rears of these buildings, this element of the setting of these heritage assets does not contribute to their significance.

Home Park Terrace (including the war memorial)

- 3.34 Home Park Terrace comprises a group of listed 18th-century houses. To the east of this group is the 19th-century Fern Glen and, set in a small park to the east of this, the listed war memorial.
- 3.35 The setting of the war memorial is defined by its small park which, set back from the road, provides an area for rest and contemplation. To the east of this, Park Terrace is clearly legible as a group of Georgian dwellings. Their building line, set obliquely to the road, relates to the line of the avenue and entrance to Hampton Court Park to the south-east.
- 3.36 The listed buildings of Park Terrace are principally significant as well-preserved examples of Georgian architecture. They have clear group value and a discernible relationship with Hampton Court Park to the south.
- 3.37 The element of their setting to the north, including Kingston Bridge House, although highly visible, does not make any meaningful contribution to what is significant about this group of listed buildings.

The Bushy Park Registered Park/Conservation Area

- 3.38 As noted in Section 2.0 above, Bushy Park (which is a Grade I registered park & garden as well as a designated conservation area) covers an extensive area and comprises several distinct, compartmentalised spaces. Along its eastern boundary is the King's Field (the play area donated to the parish in the 1920s) and a series of allotments.
- 3.39 These areas have a distinct character to the 'main' portion of the park to the west, with its formal avenues set within less formal areas of parkland. As set out in Section 2.0, the King's Field and the allotments both take in visibility of built form on Church Grove seen over the brick boundary walls. This includes the Church of St. John and 19th-century dwellings, as well as later buildings such as Kingston Bridge House.

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- 3.40 Visibility of the church and 19th-century dwellings illustrates the later development of Hampton Wick eastwards towards Bushy Park and the 'gentrification' and 'suburbanisation' of the area, with attractive villas taking advantage of long views over the park. While this element of its setting is clearly not key to the significance of this large and important park, it does make a small contribution to its interest.
- 3.41 That said, while Kingston Bridge House is also visible from this eastern edge of the registered park/conservation area (indeed, it is highly visible from the King's Field even in summer months), it makes no contribution to the significance of this designated heritage asset through the effect on its setting.
- 3.42 Indeed, it simply reads as a modern, urban addition to the setting and does not reflect or relate to the historical setting or interest of this designated heritage asset.
- 3.43 That said, as the setting of this part of the registered park/conservation area makes little contribution to its overall significance, in my view, Kingston Bridge House does not actively detract from the significance of Bushy Park.
- 3.44 In line with this, it is worth noting that the Council's 'proposals map' (adopted July 2015) for its local plan identifies a number of important 'vistas/landmarks' through/across and out from Bushy Park. These do not include any views out towards the application site.
- 3.45 That said, the Council's 'conservation area statement' for Bushy Park does note that, *'other views are also important in terms of the setting of listed buildings in the park'*; however, the application site makes no contribution to such views.
- 3.46 That statement also (in the sections of 'problems and pressures' and 'opportunity for enhancement') makes refers to the importance of the 'landscape-dominated setting' of the park; however, this characterisation is clearly not applicable to the eastern setting of the park, which is dominated by built form.

The Hampton Court Park Registered Park/Conservation Area

- 3.47 Hampton Court Park is significant as an area of historic parkland that provides a distinct landscape setting to a significant listed building and royal palace. Kingston Bridge House makes no meaningful contribution to the significance of this historic parkland through its contribution to its setting.
- 3.48 Like Bushy Park, Hampton Court Park (both the registered park and the conservation area) covers a large area. The Council's 'conservation area statement' describes it as, *'of national and international importance as an area of parkland and the setting to Hampton Court Palace, which is listed Grade I and scheduled as an Ancient Monument'*.
- 3.49 It goes on to note that, *'Hampton Court Park is a well[-]defined and extensive area of open space with a distinct physical identity, contained by the river and Hampton Court Road. The informal landscape of the park is overlain with the discipline of three radiating avenues with the central avenue bordering the Long Water. All three avenues are linked by a fourth completing a vast equilateral triangle of trees. Vistas framed by these avenues extend beyond the confines of the park and contribute also to the setting of the palace...The historic boundary walls and railings to the park are also of historic significance and provide containment and enclosure to the open space and heightens [sic] its significance and the pleasure of glimpsed views'*.
- 3.50 As with Bushy Park, the Council's 'proposals map' indicates a number of 'vistas/landmarks' through/across and out from Hampton Court Park, which essentially comprise views both ways along the avenues. None of these long views takes in the application site.
- 3.51 Generally speaking, the eastern side of Hampton Court Park (Home Park) has an enclosed character, with enclosure provided by both boundary walls and planting. Views eastwards do take in limited built form, notably the tower of Kingston College. Built form is more common in views northwards, where buildings on Hampton Court Road and within Bushy Park are occasionally visible.

- 3.52 As noted in Section 2.0 above, there is visibility of Kingston Bridge House from towards the eastern end of the north-eastern avenue, seen in glimpses over the boundary wall. Similar views also take in the spire of St. John's Church.
- 3.53 In a similar manner to the tower of Kingston College, where visible from within the park, Kingston Bridge House contrasts with the semi-rural character of the historic parkland, articulating the presence of urban development to the north/north-east.

4.0 THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS & THE HERITAGE ISSUES

- 4.1 Section 3.0 established the significance of the site in built heritage terms, including in relation to the settings of nearby heritage assets. Having considered this, the purpose of this section of the report is to analyse the application scheme against that significance in order to establish the potential effects of the proposals in built heritage terms.
- 4.2 As will be clear from Section 3.0, the application site is of no real intrinsic heritage significance, being a lesser commission by a significant firm that has since been the subject of unsympathetic alteration.
- 4.3 As such, the key heritage issues in this case relate to the settings of nearby heritage assets, which are considered below.
- 4.4 This section of the report corresponds to Step 3 of the methodology set out in GPA3, *'Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it'*, while incorporating elements of Step 4, *'Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm'*.

The application proposals

- 4.5 The motivation and rationale underpinning the application scheme is set out in the documentation prepared by the scheme's designers, Fluent Architectural Design Services, and planning consultants, Progress Planning. As such, this does not require restatement here, where it suffices simply to summarise the proposals sufficiently to understand their effects in built heritage terms.
- 4.6 The application scheme comprises the extension and alteration of Kingston Bridge House, largely within its existing footprint. Alongside internal alterations, the principal elements of the application scheme are roof-top extensions and refacing.
- 4.7 The southern range will be raised from its existing seven storeys (plus rooftop plant) to eight storeys (plus rooftop plant) in height. The stair core will be raised

correspondingly, while the lower, northern range will be raised from four storeys to six storeys.

- 4.8 Alongside these extensions, the building is to be refronted/reclad. The rustication to the ground floor of the southern range is to be extended onto the northern range (with the remaining elements of the undercroft here infilled but for a vehicle entrance) and rear elevations. The 1990s' render to the upper floors is to be replaced with yellow stock brick facing with stone detailing, including quoins and new subsidiary and main cornices to the northern range.
- 4.9 1990s' uPVC windows are to be replaced with timber sashes with gauged brick heads and the building will incorporate a series of balconies, some of which will be projecting, while others will be recessed into the elevations.
- 4.10 The changes will use the regular rhythm of the existing fenestration to create something closer to the Neo-Georgian character of the adjacent Gas Board building (now HSBC). The use of stock brick as the facing material is intended to reference the 19th-century buildings along Church Grove, as the building will be visible alongside these from the eastern edge of Bushy Park.

The heritage issues

The character and appearance of the Hampton Wick Conservation Area

- 4.11 As set out in Section 3.0 above, drawing on the Council's 'conservation area statement', Kingston Bridge House in its current form does not make any contribution to what is 'significant' about the Hampton Wick Conservation Area.
- 4.12 The application proposals will alter the external appearance of the building, while incorporating an increase in height. In terms of its stylistic character, the building will be a more comfortable neighbour to the adjacent Gas Board building (now HSBC), facing onto the southern part of High Street.
- 4.13 Equally, the use of stock brick will tie the building in better to the buildings of Church Grove, bearing in mind that the Council's conservation area statement

highlights a common materials palette as one of the principal characteristics of 'Bushy Park Edge' (see paragraph 3.17 above).

- 4.14 While the building will increase in height, it is already distinguished by being taller and larger in scale than neighbouring buildings. This is an established element of its character and relationship with its surroundings.
- 4.15 Despite its increase in height, the northern range will remain well below the current height of the southern range (rising from approximately 11.3m to 16m, compared to the approximately 18.4m of the existing southern range – heights scaled from drawings), while the southern range will rise from c.18.4m (c.21.3m with plant enclosure) to c.20.7m (c.23.5 with plant enclosure).
- 4.16 Taking this into account, Kingston Bridge House will remain the largest building in the vicinity and continue to be a prominent building on this corner plot. As is currently the case, its character will remain distinct from the 'semi-rural' character of Bushy Park edge or the suburban character of Church Grove.
- 4.17 As such, while the proposals will result in a visual change, this change will not be 'harmful' to the character and appearance of the Hampton Wick Conservation Area. Indeed, considering especially the 1990s' recladding of Kingston Bridge House, the proposed refacing in sympathetic, high-quality materials will, in my view, result in a visual improvement.

The settings of nearby heritage assets

St. John's Church & 4 Church Grove

- 4.18 The most significant elements of the settings of the listed St. John's Church and the locally-listed 4 Church Grove relate to their relationships with the street (i.e. Church Grove).
- 4.19 In a similar vein to my analysis above regarding the character and appearance of the conservation area, Kingston Bridge House's relationship with these buildings is that of a larger, neighbouring building of distinct design.

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- 4.20 The changes proposed as part of this scheme will maintain this essential relationship, albeit that there will be an increase in height. Notably, the use of stock bricks as part of the refacing scheme will create a more harmonious visual relationship with these buildings.
- 4.21 Indeed, in longer views towards Church Grove from Bushy Park, this unifying materials palette will create a more sympathetic character. Despite the Neo-Georgian character of the proposed refacing, Kingston Bridge House will, through its massing, still be legible as a later addition to the group.
- 4.22 While the northern range will increase in height, changing this element of its relationship with 4 Church Grove, the overall effect will be one of 'stepping up' from the three-and-a-half storeys of 4 Church Grove, through the six storeys of the northern range and up to the eight storeys of the southern range on the corner with High Street.
- 4.23 The view over St. John's Church from St. John's Street currently takes in the top of the rear elements of Kingston Bridge House. This visibility will be greater as a result of the increase in height, albeit in a more attractive and sympathetic form (benefitting particularly from the use of facing materials). In my view, the effect on this element of the setting of the church will not be 'harmful'.
- 4.24 More generally as regards the church, it should be noted that longer views of the church spire are not seen 'over' Kingston Bridge House, so the increase in height will not block any such views.
- 4.25 Taking this all into account, while the proposals will result in some visual change, in my view this change will not 'harm' the contribution that the settings of these buildings make to what is significant about them as designated heritage assets.

Home Park Terrace (including the war memorial)

- 4.26 As set out in Section 3.0 above, the setting of this significant group of listed buildings takes in the park to the south and west (and, in the case of the war

memorial, its surrounding memorial garden) and a busy road and modern development to the north.

4.27 Kingston Bridge House is a visible element of the setting of this group of designated heritage assets but their relationship is one of contrast. Notably, Kingston Bridge House, through its effect on their settings, does not contribute to what is significant about these listed buildings.

4.28 Indeed, there will be little change to this relationship through the implementation of the application proposals, with a distinct disparity in height, massing, and design remaining the basis of the relationship between Kingston Bridge House and these listed buildings. That said, the visual improvement to Kingston Bridge House will be a welcome change.

4.29 Despite the addition of balconies to Kingston Bridge House, the immediate setting of the war memorial, which is located in a distinct garden set back from the road will not be diminished by the proposals. Notably, the garden has well-planted boundaries and, again, a character of contrast with the busy, noisy road to the north. While it will continue to be over-looked by Kingston Bridge House (as is currently the case), it will also continue to provide a distinct area of calm, planted space away from the road.

4.30 Taking this into account, the application proposals will serve to 'preserve' the contribution that the settings of these listed buildings make to their significance.

The Bushy Park Registered Park/Conservation Area

4.31 Kingston Bridge House is visible from the King's Field at the eastern edge of Bushy Park, where it is seen alongside the buildings of Church Grove. In such views, Kingston Bridge House is a distinguishable as a distinctly urban form, contrasting with the more suburban character of the parts of Church Grove to the north, as well as the almost rural character of Bushy Park itself.

4.32 As described above in relation to St. John's Church and 4 Church Grove (paragraphs 4.21-23), this essential relationship will be 'preserved' by the application proposals. The increase in height will continue to 'step' development

upwards from north to south in views eastwards from Bushy Park, while the change in materials palette will create a more cohesive visual effect.

- 4.33 Notwithstanding the limited contribution that these views outwards to the east make to overall significance of Bushy Park, in my view, this change will not be 'harmful' to the significance of this highly-graded registered park and conservation area but will rather continue to illustrate the later development of the area to the east in a more attractive, albeit taller, form.

The Hampton Court Park Registered Park/Conservation Area

- 4.34 As set out in Section 3.0 above, Kingston Bridge House is currently visible from limited viewpoints towards the north-eastern edge of Hampton Court Park, with greater visibility through its north-eastern gate. Where it is visible, it currently contrasts with the semi-rural character of the historic parkland, articulating the presence of modern urban development to the north/north-east.
- 4.35 From the limited points where the building is visible from Hampton Court Park, the proposed increase in height will make it more visible (although, based on the observations of my site visit, the modest increase in height means it is unlikely to be visible from any additional viewpoints as a result of the changes), but it will remain a small feature within such views. As such, it will continue to articulate the presence of modern, urban development beyond the edges of the park, albeit in a more attractive form.
- 4.36 The building will remain a highly visible feature in views out from the north-eastern gate of the park. In such views, it will continue to be 'read' as a building that is larger in size and later in date than the historical buildings on the southern side of the road.
- 4.37 In its current form, Kingston Bridge House does not make any contribution to what is significant about Hampton Court Park through the effect on its setting, albeit that it is a very minor element of the surroundings of this large registered park/conservation area.

- 4.38 This will remain the case following implementation of the application proposals and, while there will be some visual change, the essential relationship between the historic parkland and building will remain unaltered; Kingston Bridge House will remain visible from certain, limited points within the historic parkland as a modern development beyond its boundaries.
- 4.39 I therefore identify no 'harm' to the significance of this important designated heritage asset through the effect on its setting as a result of these proposals.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This report has assessed the significance of the application site in built heritage terms. Notably, within the context of the contribution it makes to the settings of nearby heritage assets.
- 5.2 It has then assessed the effects in built heritage terms of the proposed development.
- 5.3 For the reasons set out in full in the body of this report, I am of the view that the application proposals would serve to 'preserve' what is significant about the character and appearance of the Hampton Wick Conservation Area and the contribution that the settings of nearby heritage assets make to what is significant about them in heritage terms.
- 5.4 With this in mind, it is my considered opinion that the proposals are compatible with both local and national policy regarding the conservation and enhancement of the historic built environment, including the advice contained within the revised NPPF and its accompanying PPG, and, most importantly of all in heritage planning terms, pass the statutory tests set by Sections 66 & 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

PLATES



Plate 1. Kingston Bridge House from the south



Plate 2. Kingston Bridge House from the south-west



Plate 3. The northern range of Kingston Bridge House from the west



Plate 4. The undercroft has been partially infilled in the 1990s



Plate 5. The undercroft has been partially infilled with a bin store



Plate 6. The stair core from the rear



Plate 7. The rear of the northern range of Kingston Bridge House



Plate 8. The former Gas Board building (now HSBC)



Plate 9. Kingston Bridge House is visible from the southern end of the High Street

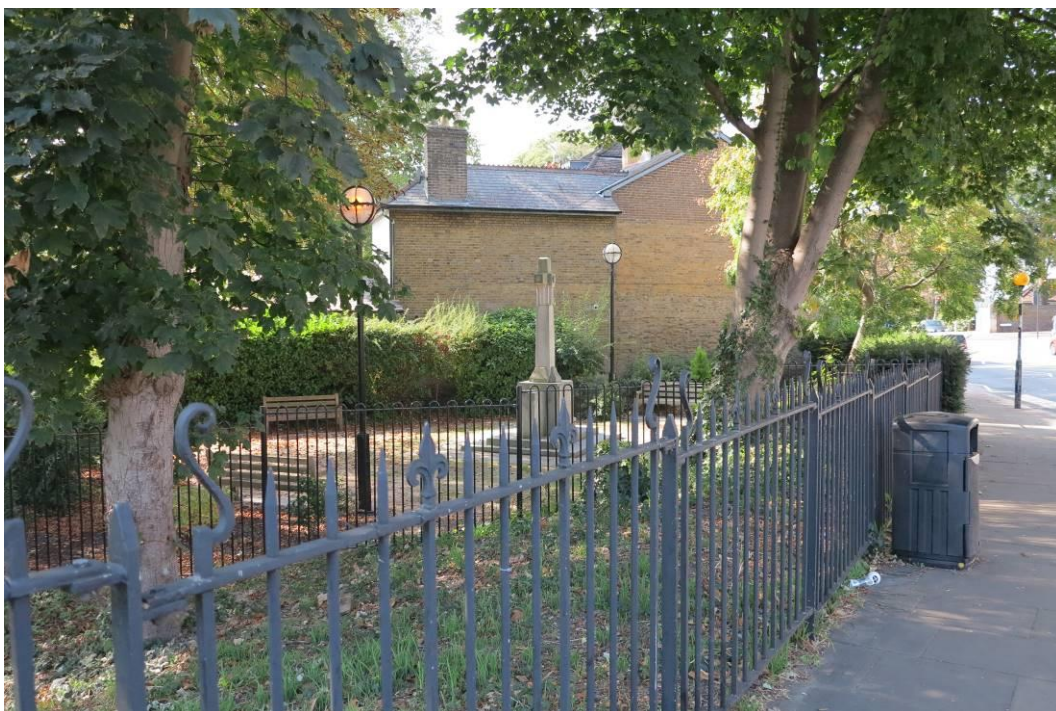


Plate 10. The listed war memorial, with the return elevation of Fern Glen beyond



Plate 11. Home Park Terrace – the Gate House



Plate 12. Home Park Terrace – the Park House



Plate 13. Home Park Terrace – Hampton Court Park Lodge



Plate 14. The Old King's Head



Plate 15. Kingston Bridge House from the north-eastern entrance to Hampton Court Park



Plate 16. View towards Church Grove from outside the north-eastern entrance to Hampton Court Park



Plate 17. View towards Kingston Bridge House from Hampton Court Road, looking over the boundary walls of Bushy Park



Plate 18. 4 Church Grove



Plate 19. 6-8 Church Grove



Plate 20. St. John's Church



Plate 21. View towards Kingston Bridge House from St. John's Street, over the yard to the east of St. John's Church



Plate 22. View towards Kingston Bridge House from the car park to the rear of 4 Church Grove



Plate 23. View towards Church Grove from the King's Field



Plate 24. View towards Church Grove from the western end of King's Field



Plate 25. Heron House and the Admiralty Building seen over the cricket pitch in Bushy Park



Plate 26. The spire of St. John's Church seen over the cricket pitch in Bushy Park



Plate 27. The north-eastern arm of the triple avenue in Hampton Court Park



Plate 28. View towards the northern boundary of Hampton Court Park from the north-eastern arm of the avenue



Plate 29. The tower of Kingston College is visible to the east of Hampton Court Park

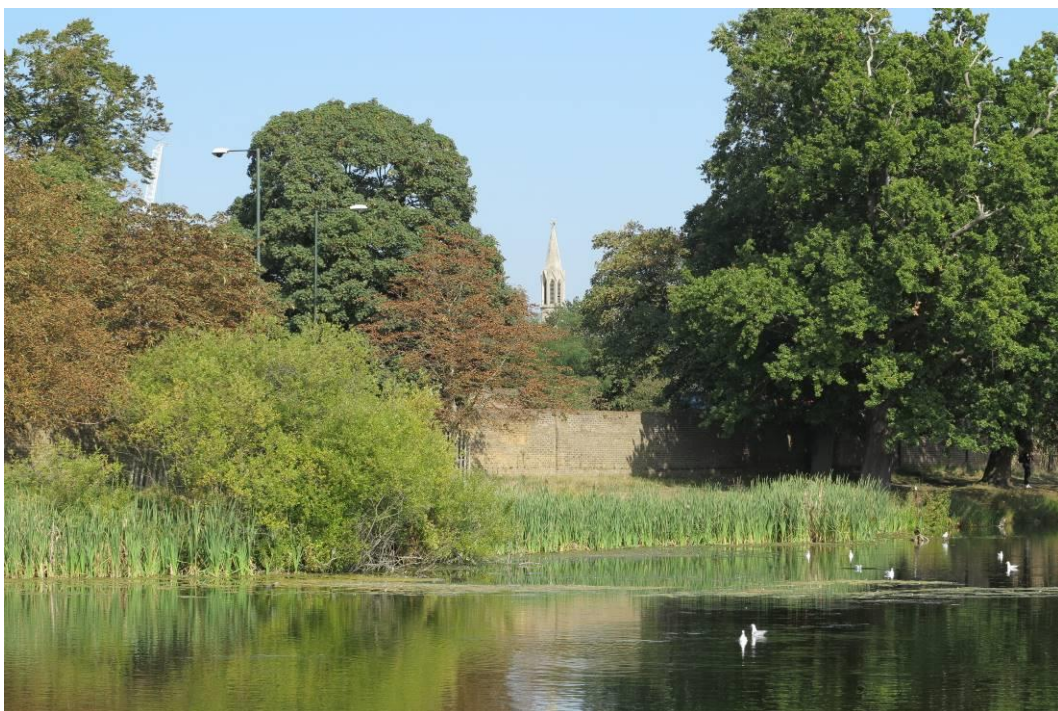


Plate 30. Glimpse of the spire of St. John's Church from the north-eastern edge of Hampton Court Park



Plate 31. Glimpse of Kingston Bridge House from the north-eastern edge of Hampton Court Park



Plate 32. Kingston Bridge House is visible over the roof terrace of 5-11 Hampton Court Road from the north-eastern edge of Hampton Court Park