

Proposed Maisonettes

Site on Corner of Roseleigh Close and Cambridge Park, East
Twickenham, TW1 2JT

HERITAGE STATEMENT

July 2023

I Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to inform and support proposals for residential development at Roseleigh Close, East Twickenham. The Statement considers the heritage significance of the site and its relationship with its surroundings. It examines the impact of the proposed development on the setting of nearby heritage assets, with reference to national and local planning policy and guidance.

The Statement has been prepared on behalf of Deon Lombard Architects by Geoff Noble IHBC MRTPI. It draws on published, online and archival sources, as well as on-site observation.

The site is opposite Cambridge Park Court Park, a block of flats identified by LB Richmond upon Thames as a Building of Townscape Merit. Cambridge Park Court is at the eastern extent of the Cambridge Park Conservation Area.

This Heritage Statement should be read with the Design and Access Statement by Deon Lombard Architects and the submitted drawings.

2 Approach

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) requires applicants for development affecting the historic environment to describe the significance of the potentially affected heritage assets, including any contribution made by their setting, so that the impact of the proposals may be understood.¹ This Statement therefore examines the present site and the proposed development in relation to its historic and architectural context and nearby heritage assets.

Significance is defined in the NPPF as

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.²

Historic England's *Conservation Principles* (2008) sets out an approach to defining the significance that takes account of how a building or place is valued and the associations which it carries. Historic England describes four values that broadly align with the interests defined in the NPPF:

- **Historical** – value deriving from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present
- **Aesthetic** – value deriving from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place
- **Evidential** – value deriving from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

¹ NPPF 2021 para 194

² NPPF Annex 2 Glossary

- **Communal** – value deriving from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

3 Legislation and policy

The relevant statute and policies are summarised below.

3.1 Legislation and national policy and guidance

Local planning authorities' responsibilities for heritage matters are determined by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 sets out national policies for conserving and enhancing the historic environment (NPPF section 16). This is supported by the online National Planning Practice Guidance.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.³

When considering the impact of a proposed development on a designated heritage asset, Paragraph 199 of the NPPF calls for local authorities to give great weight to the asset's conservation. The more significant the asset, the greater the weight should be.

The setting of heritage assets, and the contribution they might make to their significance, is a further consideration. Setting is defined in the NPPF as

“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”⁴

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application (paragraph 197).

Historic England has published its own advice to local authorities and others seeking to make changes in the historic environment. These include GPA2 Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015) and GPA3 The Setting of Heritage Assets (second edition, December 2017).

³ NPPF para 197

⁴ NPPF Annex 2 Glossary

3.2 Local policy

Richmond's Local Plan

Richmond's Local Plan was adopted in 2018 and contains heritage policies consistent with the NPPF.

- Policy LP1 requires all development to be of high architectural and design quality.
- Policy LP3 addresses Designated Heritage Assets, including conservation areas, listed buildings and their settings. Policy LP3 C requires all proposals in Conservation Areas are required to preserve and, where possible, enhance the character or the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Policy LP 4 Non-Designated Heritage Assets
The Council will seek to preserve, and where possible enhance, the significance, character and setting of non-designated heritage assets, including Buildings of Townscape Merit, memorials, particularly war memorials, and other local historic features. There will be a presumption against the demolition of Buildings of Townscape Merit.
- Policy LP 28 Community Infrastructure supports the provision of new and extensions to community infrastructure where is it of a high quality and inclusive design, providing access for all.

A new draft local plan is in hand. The Strategic Objectives of the draft (Regulation 18) Plan include a commitment to protect and enhance the environment, including heritage assets. There is an aspiration to improve connectivity and accessibility for all in town centres.

Cambridge Park Conservation Area

The site adjoins the Cambridge Park Conservation Area. The Conservation Area was first designated in 1974 as representing a cohesive area of 19th century development between Marble Hill and Richmond Road. The boundary was later extended to include Sandycombe Road (1982), Norman Avenue (1988) and most recently Cambridge Park Court (2001), where it meets the site of the proposed development.

Buildings of townscape merit

LB Richmond has compiled a list of buildings of townscape merit. No individual list descriptions are available, but the criteria for inclusion are as follows:

Any building or structure which dates from before 1840.

Later buildings or structures which are considered to be of definite quality and character, including the work of important architects and builders. Particular attention will be paid to buildings which:

- a) Have historic associations, in terms of famous people or events;
- b) Illustrates an important aspect of social or economic history or use;

- c) Represent an exceptionally good example of a specific and distinctive architectural style;
- d) Demonstrate excellence in building craftsmanship, use of materials, technical innovation, architectural features and detailing;
- e) Form part of a distinctive and cohesive group of buildings;
- f) Retain its original architectural interest and integrity, and not subject to insensitive alterations;
- g) Have landmark quality or make a unique and positive contribution to the quality of the townscape or an open space.

The Council's Supplementary Planning Document on buildings of townscape merit was adopted in 2015. It sets out the Council's approach:

It is hoped that by drawing attention to the historic, architectural and townscape interest of such buildings and structures, owners and others will regard them more carefully when considering any proposals for alteration, extension or replacement. The removal of original or characteristic features, or the introduction of unsympathetic windows, doors or materials can not only destroy the visual quality of one building but erode the entire character and interest of an area. Many Buildings of Townscape Merit play a crucial role in the character of local areas. The sympathetic maintenance and adaptation of these buildings can preserve and indeed increase the attractiveness of an area.

It must always be borne in mind that these buildings and structures are not the same as listed buildings and that unless they are within a designated conservation area they enjoy no legal protection from demolition. There will always be a presumption against the demolition of Buildings of Townscape Merit. Consent for demolition will only be granted when the Council is assured that retention and adaptation is not possible and where the proposed replacement is consistent with other policies and exhibits a high standard of design that would complement the surrounding area. Indeed the Council will endeavour to protect the character and setting of all Buildings of Townscape Merit through negotiation of a sympathetic scheme, as far as possible treating proposals for works to or close to them as if they were listed buildings.⁵

London Plan

There are equivalent and complementary strategic policies in the London Plan 2021 specifically policy HC1 Heritage Conservation and Growth.

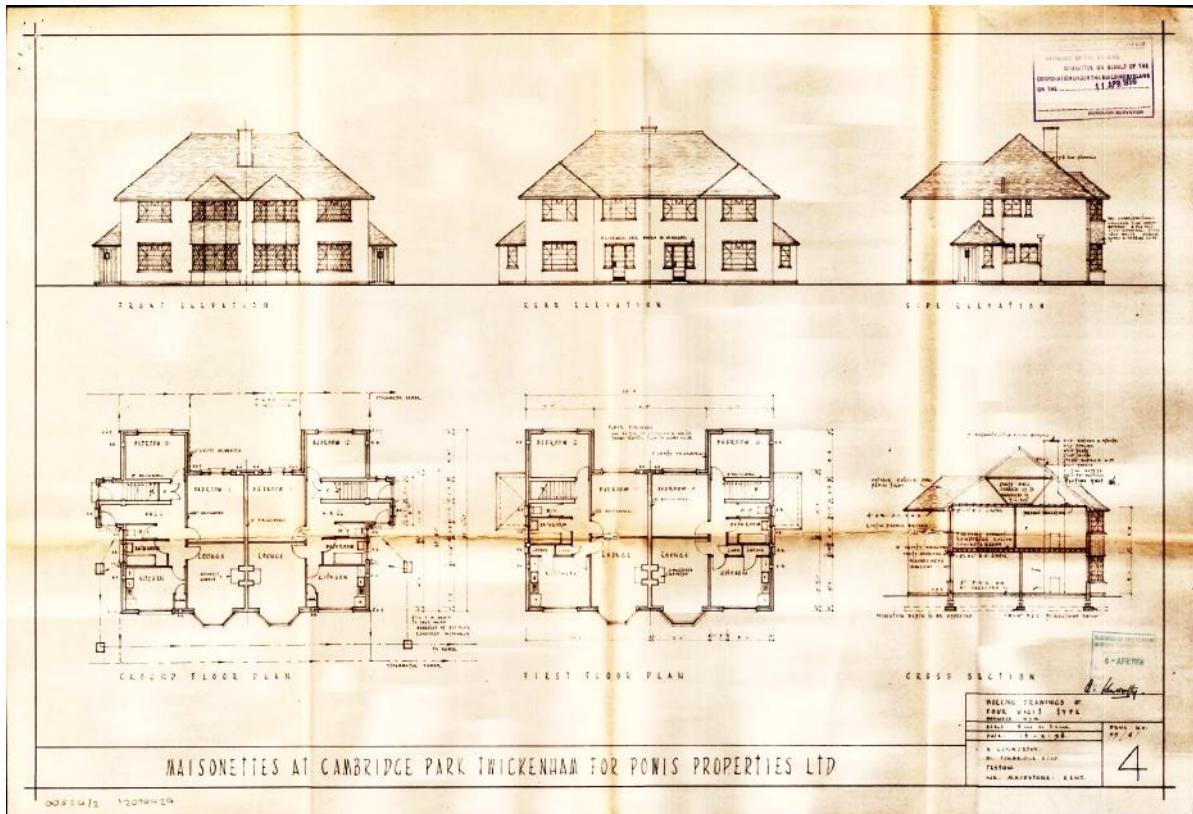
⁵ Buildings of Townscape Merit SPD paras 4.1 and 4.2

4 Historic development and the site today



Ordnance Survey 1893-4. The site is on the garden and drive of the house shown as Roseneath.

The site is largely comprised of what was once the front garden and driveway to a freestanding Victorian villa known as Roseneath (later renamed Cumberland House). This house which was extant in 1935 when Cambridge Park Court was built but was demolished in the 1950s, along with its neighbours.



Planning application for maisonettes at Cambridge Park 1956 (LBRUT archives)

In February 1956 planning permission was granted by the Twickenham Planning Authority to Powis Properties Ltd (designer A.Kenworthy of Maidstone) (PLA/00554) for a development of maisonettes and it can be assumed that construction took place shortly afterwards.

At the time of the building of the estate in 1957, tree protection orders were placed on 18 large mature trees scattered over the designated area. These included two cedars on the site of the proposed development, shown on the Deed Registry Plan .

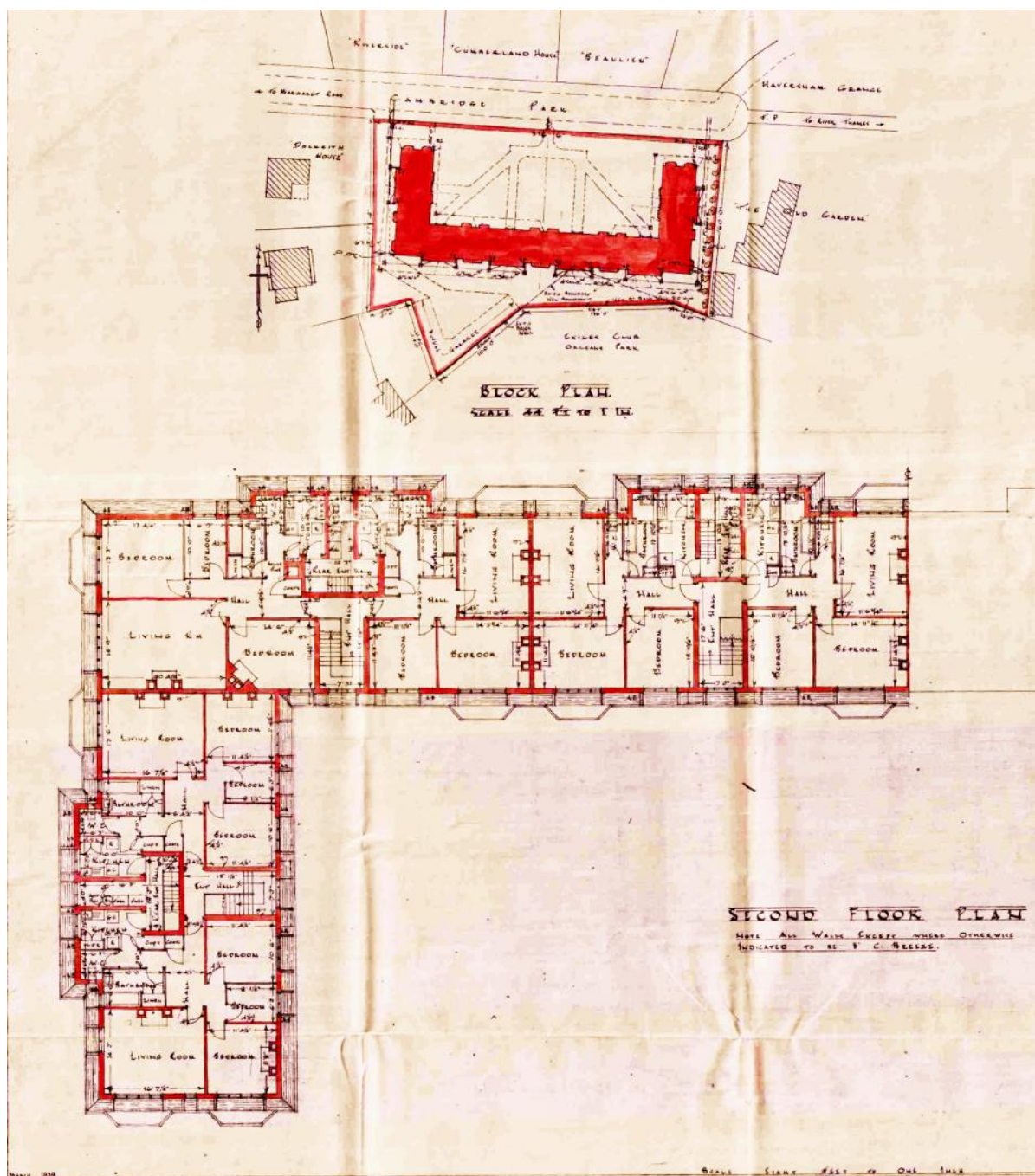
The layout of the three cul-de-sac and the maisonette blocks were obliged to accommodate these trees. The presence of the cedars meant it would not have been possible to develop the site in the normal way, as is evident on the other corner sites on the estate. By 1990 both cedars had died and have not been replaced.

Cambridge Court Park

Opposite the site is Cambridge Park Court, a long, U-shaped block of flats built between 1935-8.⁶ The builder and developer is unknown, but the planning drawings are in the name of W.M.Edwards of Romford.

⁶ Kelly's Directory and the Electoral Roll show that the first flats were occupied in 1939.

The flats are two and a half storeys, including attic units in the roof. The style of the building is eclectic, with mock-Tudor elements combined with art deco detailing. The base of the block is in red brick with the first floor in roughcast render, with faux timber framing. The mansard roof, overhanging with a deep soffit, is in plain tile. Windows are mullioned and transomed casements, incorporating leaded lights and coloured glass.



Cambridge Park Court 1935 (W.M.Edwards,Surveyor) (LBRUT Archives)



Cambridge Court Park 2022

5 Heritage significance

The heritage values of the Cambridge Court flats are as follows:

- **Historical** – In terms of the history of Twickenham and Cambridge Park, the flats are relatively recent. The architectural style is conservative, and there are no obvious innovative or novel elements. There are no known associations with famous persons or events. The historical value of the block is thus considered to be **low**.
- **Aesthetic** – the flats are sturdily built and the materials have weathered satisfactorily. The unified composition of the block with its simple symmetry has some appeal, and the rather bulky form of the building is softened by the green apron of lawn at the entrance front. Buildings of this period and style, formerly derided, are increasingly being appreciated. Overall, the building has **moderate** aesthetic value.
- **Evidential** – the building replaced the large freestanding conservatory of a former 1926 house (The Old Garden) and nothing of it survives. The site is not considered to be of archaeological potential so the evidential value is **low**.
- **Communal** – The Cambridge Park Court flats have always been privately occupied so there is no known communal value.

Cambridge Court Park is not likely to meet Historic England's exacting standards for the statutory listing of twentieth century housing but it seems appropriate for it to be treated as a non-designated heritage asset and one of Richmond's Buildings of Townscape Merit.

6 The setting of Cambridge Park Court

When Cambridge Park Court was built in the 1930s it profoundly changed the prevailing building typology in the immediate area, which up to then had been characterised by large detached Victorian villas in generous gardens. When the flats were built, they faced onto three such houses. In turn, the setting of the block changed with the demolition of the villas and their replacement in the 1950s with the present maisonettes. The maisonettes make no contribution to the setting of Cambridge Park Court, which is set back from the road, but nor do they detract from it. The overall effect is neutral.

Equally, the site of the proposed development does not markedly contribute to the setting of the flats, but nor does it detract from it.

The buildings are described in the East Twickenham Village Plan:⁷

Roseleigh Close, Beaulieu Close and Haversham Close

Roseleigh Close, Beaulieu Close and Haversham Close are of a similar date as the buildings on Vivienne Close but are more distinctive due to the green hung tiles that have been used on the projecting two-storey bays of each house. Roseleigh Close and Beaulieu Close are physically linked by a path and form three sides of a square on Cambridge Park. Most of the houses are semi-detached but there are a few terraces of three on Beaulieu and Haversham Close. Their projecting bays with the unusual green emphasis of the tiles and projecting porches give these buildings a distinctive compositional rhythm.

Like the buildings in Vivienne Close they are set apart on large plots with few prominent boundaries giving these closes an attractive, cohesive character.

Dominant Materials and Features

Characteristic materials and features include: Red brick, projecting bays, green hung tiles, enclosed porches, clay tiles, chimneys, lawned communal space.

The site is excluded from the Cambridge Park Conservation Area and has no intrinsic heritage value. The current Conservation Area Appraisal states “*There is a stark contrast between the size of the villas and gardens of Cambridge Park and the modern semi-detached properties of Vivienne and Roseleigh Close*”.

7 The proposal

Pre-application advice on a draft design was given by Richmond Council officers in August 2022:

The site is not located within a Conservation Area, but the boundary of the Cambridge Park East Twickenham (CA21) is directly opposite the site on the south side of Cambridge Park. Cambridge Park Court within the Conservation Area is designated as a Building of Townscape Merit. Any formal application would need to consider the impact upon the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets.

⁷ East Twickenham Village Plan p,26

Local Plan policy LP3 requires that the setting of the adjacent Cambridge Park CA is considered and LP4 requires consideration to the setting of the BTMs to the south at Cambridge Park Court. This BTM was included within an extension to the Conservation Area boundary in 2001 and is described in the Council's Conservation Area Statement as a fine interwar residential development little altered adding continuance of quality and interest to the area by way of its special architectural interest. A Heritage Statement will thus be a validation requirement.

The architects have looked at a range of options before settling on the proposed design, which is described in full in the Design and Access Statement.

8 Heritage impact

The only designated heritage asset in the vicinity of the proposed development is the Cambridge Park Conservation Area. The proposed development is in keeping with the prevailing height, bulk, materiality and character of its immediate neighbours, and in townscape terms it will provide a positive element at the corner of Roseleigh Close. It will not detract from the setting or significance of the Conservation Area or that of the building of townscape merit.

9 Conclusion

The NPPF calls for planning authorities to give great weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets, and to take into account the significance of non-designated heritage assets. This assessment concludes that the proposed development will have no direct impact on any heritage assets and only an indirect effect on the Conservation Area and the building of townscape merit. The setting of Cambridge Park Court will be very slightly changed, but there will be no harm to its heritage significance and the overall impact is neutral.

The proposal complies with the policy tests of the Richmond Local Plan, the London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. There is no reason in heritage terms why planning permission should not be granted.

10 Sources

Crofts, Jonathan Meadows, Mansions and Munitions: Stories and Lives of Cambridge Park (Richmond Bridge Media, 2021)

Bunch, Maureen Cambridge Park, East Twickenham: the Building of a Suburb (Borough of Twickenham Local History Society Paper 68, 1992)

LBRUT Cambridge Park Conservation Area Study (May 2001)

LBRUT Cambridge Park Conservation Area Statement (undated)

LBRUT East Twickenham Village Plan SPD (2016)

Victoria County History, Middlesex Vol 3 (1962)

Richmond Local Studies Library and Archive – maps and images