

## Summary

The vehicular access gates to 17 St Margarets Drive (Carolgates) are in need of replacement as the wood is rotted and decayed.

This application makes the case for their replacement with sliding gates into the existing gap in the wall, ie the existing visibility splays are maintained and hence both pedestrian and highway users safety is maintained.

The existing driveway opening will be unchanged at 5.55M wide.

The materials used will be the same as the existing gates, there will no changes to the walls or the crossover.

Existing trees and shrubs will be unaffected.

The privacy and security of the owners of Carolgates will be maintained.

No neighbours are affected by the change in gates location.

The amenity of the area will be improved by eliminating the visual incongruity of the break in the wall and by the elimination of the dumping of rental bikes and accumulated rubbish in the space.

## Heritage Analysis

Carolgates is located within the St Margaret's Estate Conservation Area 19 and also subject to Article 4 Direction 2000. The property is located north east of the junction of St Margarets Drive and Ailsa Road. The house abuts the St margarets Trust Grounds.

### *Key Elements of the Conservation Statement*

*The sense of spaciousness is quite evident with the gaps between each house having a particular significance to the entire group, allowing glimpses of the gardens behind the houses.*

*Throughout the area strong boundary definition is apparent, mostly achieved by low brick walls and hedge planting. Trees in front gardens add further colour, light and shade.*

*The pleasure gardens of St. Peter's Road and the Institute grounds combine to provide an apparent rural backdrop to the Thames from Railshead Road to Twickenham Bridge.*

### *Key Features*

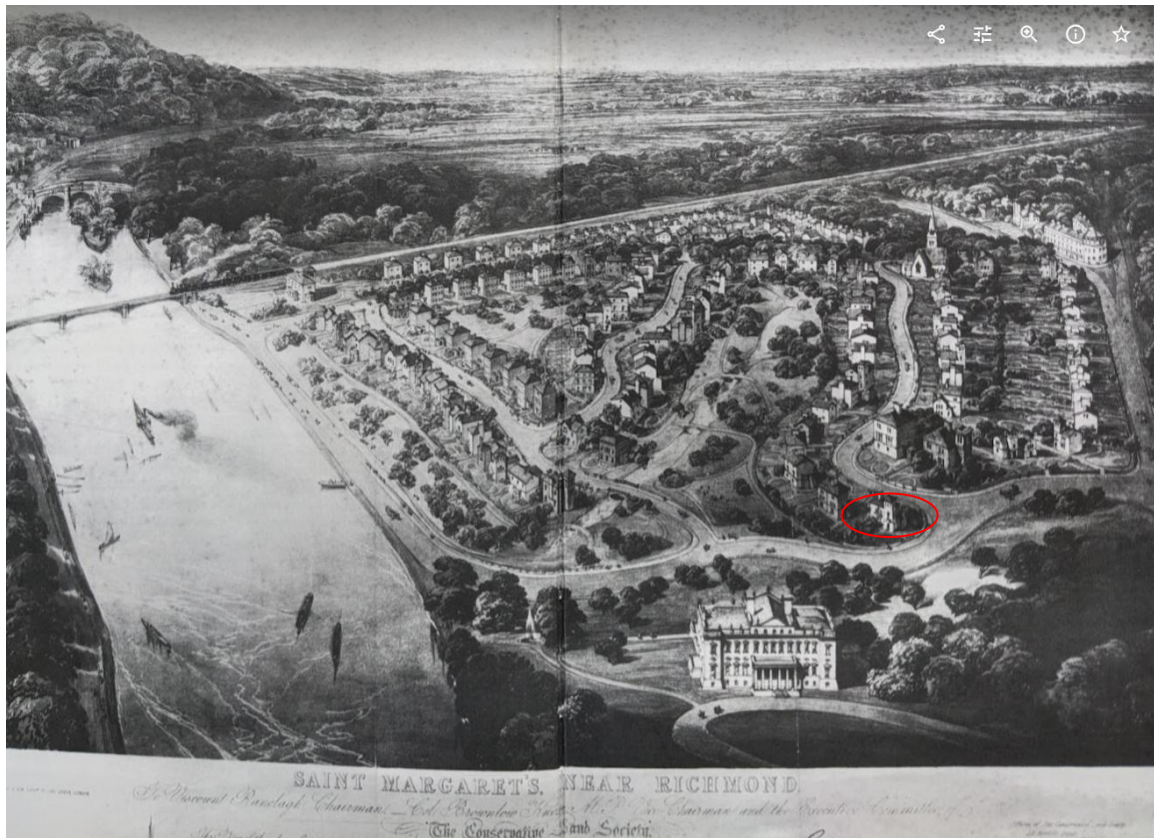
Development in the area was started when the Conservative Land Society bought a significant part of Twickenham Park circa 1850 and laid out a plan for one of the first garden suburbs in the country as illustrated below. The Trust Grounds, established in 1854, comprising 3 parts, 13 acres and ~650

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## 17 St Margarets Drive - Replacement and relocation of gates

mature trees today, are a key element in the creation of the spaciousness and rural feel of the area highlighted in the conservation statement.

Development took many years, but the plan was on the whole realised. The terms of buying and developing a plot, which included simple design guidelines, were visionary and are a primary reason why the area is a conservation area today. In summary, each plot had to be developed with high value, single family homes, well set back from the road with generous spacing between houses. This led to the great variety of architecturally interesting, high quality buildings including many of townscape merit being built. Combined with the many magnificent trees in the Trust Grounds and LBRUT's street tree plantings, the setting close to the Thames and Old Deer Park, the area has a rural feel in what could otherwise have developed into a typical London suburban environment.



Carolgates is built on the plot circled in the figure above. The property was built in 1934 and was the first property on The Drive. Carolgates is unique on The Drive in respect of several aspects; the plot abuts the Trust Grounds, the building is double fronted to Ailsa Drive and St Margarets Drive and is built to the east of the plot with a wrap around garden in front of all the facades. As such it does not have separate front or back garden. Privacy and security is achieved by a 1.8M high stock brick boundary wall topped with a mature hedge of holly and other shrubs, to a total height of 2.6M high which is shaped in a curve throughout its full length. Pedestrian access to the property is separate to vehicular access. Both gates are matching construction of tongue and groove natural finish wood also maintaining privacy and security.

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The curved wall around the property extends contiguously from the boundary with 52 Ailsa Road, around the north end of the Trust Grounds, ending at 3 St Peters Road, approximately 250M long. The wall is mirrored by the wall that surrounds the Richmond Lock development and Ranelagh Drive part of the Trust Grounds as well as into Kilmorey Road.

*Carol gates viewed from the junction of St Margarets Drive and Ailsa Road*



On the opposite side of the road the Ballet Rambert School has a feather board wooden fence on top of a low level brick wall, backed with a variety of mature shrubs and mature trees that provides privacy to the garden that separates the school administration buildings and studio from St Margarets Drive.

Carol gates' garden includes 6 mature ornamental trees which further echo the treescape in the Trust Grounds, Ballet Rambert School and the streetscene, especially the trees in the junction islands between Ailsa Road/St Margarets Drive and Kilmorey Road/St Margarets Drive.

The rest of the properties on St Margarets Drive were developed in the late 1930s and are of a different design. The property layout is broadly conventional with mostly semi-detached properties, some link-detached. The front boundary treatment is much more conventional and consistent with the generalised designs included in The Transport SPD. Either low brick walls or feather edged low wooden fences are used. The rear of properties, not visible from the road, typically have a conventional private back garden. In some cases garages are set back behind the property with shared access or, in the case of detached properties, are an integral part of the building.

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*Typical St Margarets Drive Properties*



The Ballet Rambert School opposite Carolgates comprises Clifton Lodge, a building of Townscape Merit, and a modern dance studio of glass and steel, both set back from the road in the same manner as Carolgates. The boundary treatment, although a low brick wall, topped by a feather edge wooden fence, backed by mature trees and shrubs creates a similar sense of privacy and security to the school's garden as Carolgates.

In summary, Carolgates is a unique design and plot layout, which echos the key themes of the area and was also built several years earlier than the other properties on St Margarets Drive.

Arguably changing the position of the gates has no impact whatsoever on the amenity and delight of the area.

## Planning History

The previous planning application relevant to this application is [17/0580/HOT](#)

There are 11 planning applications dated after the above application. They are for tree works mostly in the Trust Grounds but also for tree works in the garden of Carolgates.

The application 17/0580/HOT was refused as the impact on pedestrians and traffic of reducing the size of the exit was not considered in the application.

This new application addresses the issues raised by the Case Officer on 11/04/2017 by a) retaining the existing dimensions of gap in the wall and b) including an analysis of the visibility and separation distances.



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## Current Layout

The current layout of the gates was established in 1960 and comprises:

- a gap in the wall 5.55M wide which is set at an angle of 152 degrees to the garage and drive orientation (more typically 90 degrees) finished with brick pillars at each end
- within the property curtilage two curved brick walls of 1.8M high set at same height as the boundary wall of the Trust Grounds to the north and Carolgates boundary wall to the south
- a permeable driveway set at an incline of about 5 degrees constructed of blockwork set in a sand base leading to a double garage set 7.1M back from the boundary of the property and 4.9M from the gates (measured at the centre of the gap)
- curved solid tongue and groove hardwood gates, a minimum of 1.8M high and a maximum height of 2.0M, which swing outwards due to the incline. When open the gates do not project over the footway.

### *Current Layout of Gates; Vehicular and Pedestrian*



In addition, there is a pedestrian entry 5.35 M to the south of the vehicular entry point. Pedestrians enter/exit the property via an arch in the wall, the gate materials are solid tongue and grooved hardwood matching the materials used in the drive gates. The gate is 80cm wide by 200cm high.

The bay area created by the drive/gate layout is treated by pedestrians as if it is part of the public footway even though the land is within the boundary of the property. The area frequently collects rubbish, rental bicycles and is used as a dog toilet. People also stand in the area to smoke and discard their cigarette butts here.

The sense of continuity of the stock brick wall that sweeps around the property and continues around the Trust Grounds is interrupted by the gates being set back from the footway.

## Proposed Layout

The proposed gate layout includes:

- retaining the exact same size gap in the wall, thus maintaining the 70 year old safe visibility and separation distances for both pedestrians and vehicles

- retaining the two brick piers that finish the ends of wall, one of which is property of the Trust
- retaining and making no modifications to the existing crossover.

The new gate will comprise a single element the same height as the walls, supported to the rear on an appropriate metal frame set back a few cms from the boundary of the property. The external view of the gate materials and appearance will be the same as the existing vehicular and pedestrian gates.

The gate will slide to the south behind the pier and wall into the property on a rail that will be installed on a suitable concrete base. The drive motor will be situated inside the property behind the wall and the new gate. Electrical supply will be provided from the garage, along the drive edge and installed according to current electrical installation standards. The motor used will be similar to the [FAAC 741 230V Sliding Gate Operator](#) and associated equipment. The final calculations of the weight of the gate will dictate the specific model used.

Appropriate sensors will be mounted to eliminate any crush risk.

The finish of the replacement gates is to be finalised – illustrative design shown right.

The curved brick walls within the property will be removed along with the old gates.



The root plate of T1 will be completely unaffected. Only minor modifications will be made to the shrubs in the border south of the gateway to make space for the concrete base for the rail and housing the retracted gate. Appropriate plantings will be made to mirror the shrubs to the south of the pedestrian gate, typically viburnum tinus and holly.

## Impact on Pedestrian Road Safety

The key issue with regards to the impact on road safety can be summed up as seeing or being seen at sufficient distance to reduce to an acceptable level of risk any potential accidents. The analysis involves sight lines and SSDs for vehicles on the highway and pedestrians on the footway.

The Transportation SPD visibility splays are set at 2.1M by 2.4M inside the property with maximum height of 0.6M in the form of walls or a wall topped with railings with visibility through the railings.

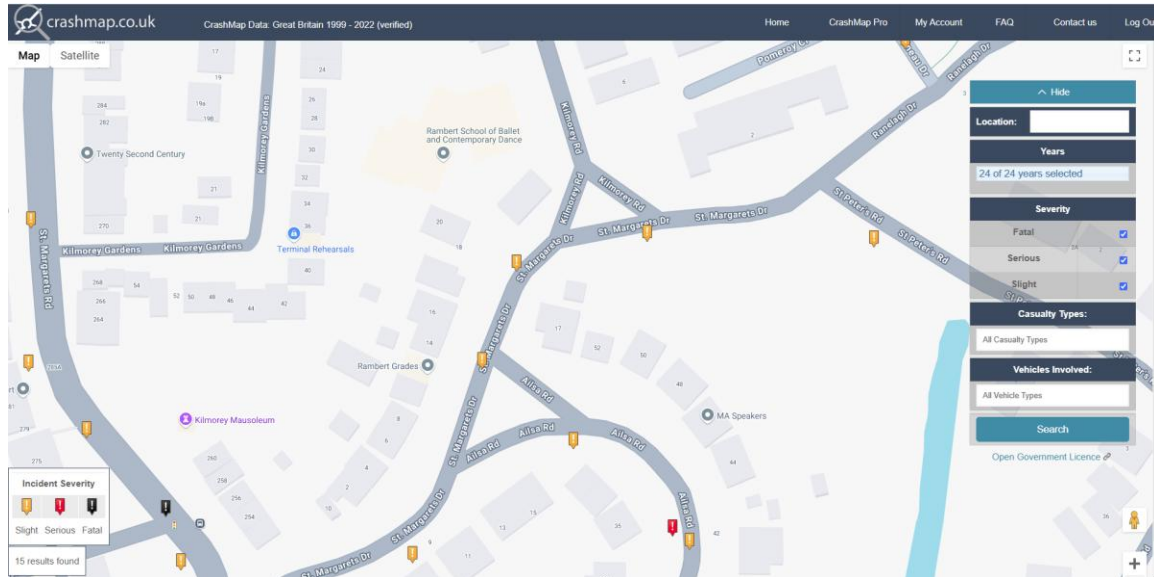
### *Historical Safety Record*

Historical data of personal injury accidents on public roads recorded by the Police is published at [crashmap.co.uk](#). The map (Figure X) shows 3 reported incidents in the local area for the period 1999 to 2022. None of the incidents recorded was a result of an entry or exit from Carolgates through the existing opening into the property.

In March 2020 LBRUT reduced the speed limit on St Margarets Drive (and many other roads throughout the Borough) from 30 mph to 20 mph. [LBRUTs published](#) analysis shows how the speed

limit reduction has reduced the number of incidents without impacting travel times. The reduction in speed will have further reduced the level of risk of an incident at the vehicular exit.

Map extract from crashmap.co.uk for 1999 to 2022



In conclusion, based on the available published dataset and the current owners 25 years of experience of using the vehicular gates to access the property there have been no incidents either involving pedestrians, vehicles or bicycles.

### Footpath Users Sightlines

In addition to the LBRUT SPD visibility plays the Manual for Streets 2 Visibility recommends in Section 2 using 2.4M as the typical length of the bonnet of the vehicle for analysis of sightlines.

The layout of the vehicle exit is such that the angle of a vehicle exiting is approximately 60 degrees to the pavement. Drawing: Visibility Driver/Pedestrians should be viewed in conjunction with the following discussion. The visibility distances are measured for a) pedestrians when the front of the vehicle is aligned with the boundary of the property and the footpath and b) vehicles when the front of the vehicle is aligned at the kerb of the highway. The visibility distances are the same for the existing and the proposed location of the gates as it is at the point of exit that the risk needs to be analysed.

### From the drivers perspective.

The visibility splay of 2.1M deep by 2.4M wide is shown shaded pale blue. The drivers actual visibility splay focussed 2.4M back from the front of the bonnet is shown in pale yellow.

The visibility splays overlap the car because the drive and pavement are not at 90 degrees. However, the drivers actual visibility on the drivers side of the vehicle over the pavement is only very slightly degraded (with regards to distance and angle) compared to the visibility splay. On the vehicles

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nearside the drivers actual visibility is significantly better (with regards to distance and angle) than the visibility splay.

#### From the pedestrians perspective.

The wall that surrounds the property extends to the Trust Grounds is curved. The closest a pedestrian can approach the exit is if they walk immediately next to the wall. The closest a pedestrian can approach a vehicle before seeing it is 4.1M from the north and 4.95M from the south. In practice as the pavement is 2.2 to 2.5M wide in this area the actual distance will be greater. Drawing: Visibility driver/pedestrian shows the distances marked with an orange arrow.

#### Summary

The drawing shows the vehicle centrally positioned in the exit. In summary depending on the exact positioning of the vehicle the actual visibility experienced by the driver is slightly degraded by distance but is better on an angular basis compared to the visibility splays. The historical record demonstrates that the actual visibility and distances results in an acceptably low risk of incident involving pedestrians.

#### Road Users Sightlines

Drawing: Vehicular Visibility illustrates the sightlines for seeing and being seen by all types of vehicles on the road. The vehicle exiting Carolgates is positioned on the footpath and the sightlines are shown focused on 2.4M back from the kerb edge/front of the vehicle. The pink cones show the Highway Code SSD of 12M at 20mph. The yellow cones show the Brake/TRL<sup>1</sup> recommended SSDs of 19M at 20mph and the green cones show the maximum visibility distance to the relevant half of the highway.

The visibility is symmetrical for both the driver exiting Carolgates and for the drivers of vehicles on St Margarets Drive. Sight lines for vehicles entering St Margarets Drive from Kilmorey Road and Ailsa Road (both giving way to vehicles on St Margarets Drive) are also shown.

#### Parked Vehicles

Parked vehicles have an impact on visibility distances.

Vehicles parked on St Margarets Drive to the north of Carolgates are always parked on the southern side of the highway forcing vehicles travelling west towards to St Margarets further north making the visibility distance greater as they are further away from the wall. Very few cars park to the south on the Carolgates side of The Drive because of the junction and a pedestrian dropped curb at the junction with Ailsa Road.

Vehicles parked south of Carolgates parked on the west side of The Drive force the vehicles to the centre of the road. However the visibility distances are great enough and the angle small enough that the small reduction means the visibility distances are still well with the two limits.

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<sup>1</sup> Brake (the road safety charity commissioned the TRL to research the factors affecting stopping distances of vehicles. As a result of the research Brake published this [paper](#) and continue to advocate for increasing the Highway Code published distances.

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Vehicles parked south of Carolgates park on the east side of the Drive park along the triangular island to the south and the impact is broadly similar to vehicles parked on the west.

### Summary

In all scenarios the actual visibility distances comfortably exceed the Highway Code and the Brake/TRL recommendations. The only exception being to the north east direction where the Brake/TRL recommended distances is achieved.

## Other Similar Vehicle Exit/Entry Gates in the Area

LBRUT are obligated to balance the heritage and environmental considerations with the safety needs of pedestrians and road users. Examples of the wide variety of vehicle exit and entry and in some case mixed pedestrian vehicle arrangements combined with similar boundary treatments are shown below where the balance results in vehicular entry exit points smaller or comparable than proposed in this application.

*Ballet Rambert School – 3.25M wide.*



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*Richmond Lock Development – 5M wide*



*Trust Grounds Entrance – 3.5M wide*





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*1 St Peters Road – 3.2M wide*



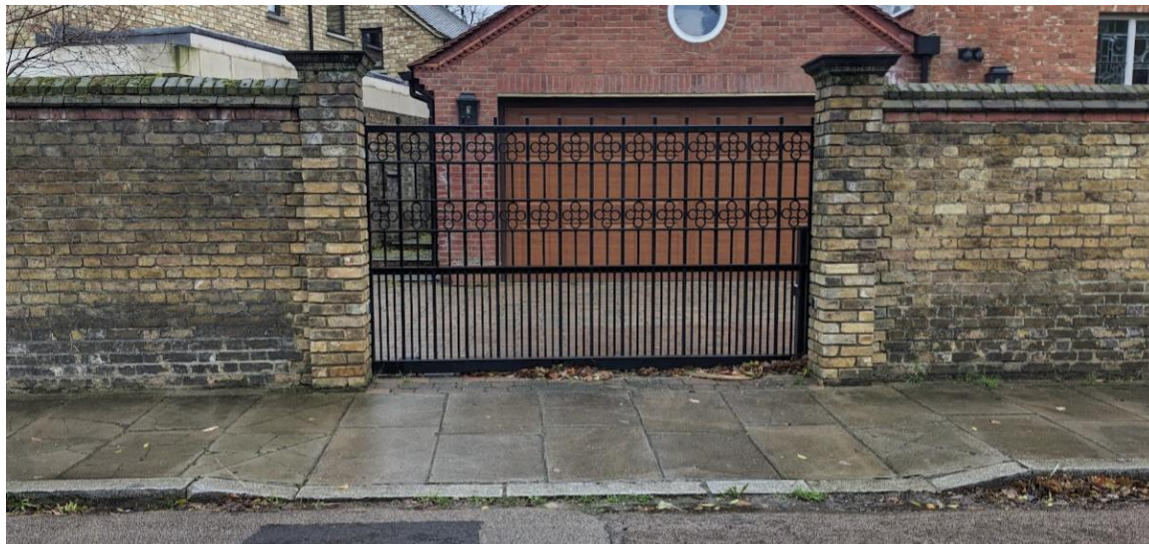
*2 St Peters Road – 3.4M wide*



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*3 St Peters Road – 3.2M wide*



*5 St Peters Road – 2.8M wide*





17 St Margarets Drive - Replacement and relocation of gates

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*10 St Peters Road – 3.6M wide*



*55 The Avenue – 3M wide*



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*34 St Georges Road – 3M wide*



The above images illustrate the wide variety of gate styles, many automated, some manual, in the local area with similar issues concerning visibility splays, separation distances for both pedestrians and vehicles and boundary treatments.

## Impact on Parking

The introduction of CPZ S3 in this area has significantly reduced the parking pressure on The Drive.

The change in the location of the gates has no impact on the pressure on parking in St Margarets Drive because there is no change to the available space for car parking on the highway with this change of gate location.

## Other Considerations

The existing gates are heavy and cumbersome to open and close manually and as a result the occupiers' vehicle is now frequently left parked on the highway. The program of transitioning vehicles from ICE to electric vehicles will require significant investment in public and private car charging infrastructure. Facilitating easier vehicular access to the property will also provide immediate access to a car charging point on the property and accelerate conversion to battery powered vehicles.