DESIGNINGHOUNSLOW

London Borough of Hounslow
Urban context and character study

Cover photo: Old Isleworth, at the geographic centre of the borough

Contents

1 Introduction

Purpose, objectives and structure
What is a context & character study?
Policy context
The study in practice
Methodology

2 Borough-wide Context

Borough outline
A brief history
Strategic & Greater London context
West London context
Geology
Topography
Archaeology
Aerial view
Distinctive components
Road network
Building pattern
Block pattern
Land and building use
Movement and legibility
Green infrastructure
Blue infrastructure
Heritage assets
Urban growth
Urban types
Building heights
Housing density
Access to public transport
Public safety zone
Air quality
Road traffic noise
Air traffic noise
Socio-economic dimension
Political and administrative areas
Study areas
Urban structure

3 Study Areas

Chiswick
Brentford
Osterley & Spring Grove
Isleworth
Hounslow
Hounslow West
Cranford & Heston
Bedfont
Feltham
Hanworth
Great West Road

4 Urban Types

Summary of urban types
Urban type 1 - compact grid
Urban type 2 - loose grid
Urban type 3 - slabs and towers
Urban type 4 - courts and cul-de-sacs
Urban type 5 - urban renaissance
Urban type 6 - big box
Urban type 7 - urban centre

5 Conclusions

Recommendations
Further work

6 Appendices

Glossary
Production notes

© London Borough of Hounslow August 2014

Introduction

1

Introduction

The purpose of the study

The London Borough of Hounslow is preparing a Local Plan to guide development and growth over the next 15 years. As part of this process, the borough has undertaken a context and character study, to identify and analyse the urban character of the borough in order to inform planning policy, design and conservation and future development management. The document adds to the Conservation Area appraisals as a source of appraisal of the significance of heritage and community assets, and will also provide a resource to inform the design of future regeneration projects and other improvements to the public realm.

As part of London's continued success, the number of people living and working in the borough will grow substantially over the next 15 years. This growth will bring both significant opportunities and challenges. The opportunities need to be maximised and the challenges tackled in order to achieve sustainable development for the borough. Ensuring future growth adds to an area in a positive way is vital to achieving sustainable development, and goes hand in hand with protecting our much valued historic landscape and heritage assets. Development that is out of context, insensitive and of poor quality will only create problems for future generations.

This study aims to assist, by identifying and assessing the character of areas that are likely to undergo significant growth over the next 15 years, so that new development adds to this character in ways which enhance the positive qualities and address the negative ones. It will also identify those areas which require greater protection, such as buildings that might need locally listing, extensions to existing conservation areas or identifying new areas that might require conservation area status in the near future.

The objectives of the study

1. To document, evaluate and understand the borough's urban structure and character, including its historic growth pattern
2. To identify the key features of different types of development in the borough
3. To identify how these relate to different parts of the borough and contribute to local distinctiveness
4. To identify recommendations based on the quality of the borough's types and character areas and vision for the future
5. To identify heritage assets which could be further protected, enhanced and expanded to broaden local significance
6. To help understand where intensification may occur; where taller buildings may be suitably located; and where intensification and tall buildings may not be appropriate.
7. To test existing information and analysis against policy and development change.
8. Make appropriate recommendations for further work, new policy directions and guidance and inform the policy direction of the Local Plan.

The structure of the study

The study provides both borough-wide analysis and analysis of the 11 study areas that comprise it. It attempts to draw out the inter-linkages and overlaps between these two spatial scales.

The study is divided into five sections followed by appendices.

1. The first section outlines the study's objectives, policy context, use and methodology.
2. The second section outlines the history, urban structure and characteristics of the whole borough.
3. The third section describes and analyses each study area and establishes their character areas, assessing them on the basis of quality, sensitivity, permanence and suitability for tall buildings.
4. The fourth section examines the different urban types and development periods that prevail in the borough.
5. The fifth section concludes with broad recommendations for future development and further work.

Title page photo: Busy, attractive and diverse Chiswick High Road with statue of artist William Hogarth, to the east of the borough

Introduction

What is a context and character study?

Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments... respond to local character and history...

National Planning Policy Framework

The importance of undertaking an urban context and character study is becoming increasingly important for those involved in spatial planning. It is widely accepted that every place is unique, a combination of its parts, put together over time by many different people. Planning should understand and tap into this ‘sense of place’ when developing plans and policies.

Identifying character areas...enhances our ability to safeguard distinctiveness when making decisions that will affect an area’s future.

English Heritage

Places do not stand still, but constantly evolve and change over time to reflect demographic, cultural, economic and wider social and lifestyle changes. It is this combination of static elements that do not change a great deal and fluid elements that change frequently that give a place both its spatial and temporal essence, its *genius loci* and *zeitgeist*.

Characterisation is a structured approach to understanding the physical context for a place: it is about identifying assets, qualities, constraints and opportunities.

CABE

If we acknowledge that each place has its own unique character then we can begin to identify and assess the quality of that place in order to protect, enhance and improve that place.

Understanding the existing character and local context of a place is essential to an appreciation of how a place could develop in the future

Greater London Authority

By adopting a logical, structured approach to identifying, describing and analysing a place’s character we can begin to get under the skin of what makes it special, its good and its bad qualities. This study uses a number of approaches to describe the character of the borough, its arrangement of physical features, why they are so and what makes them work - or not. A character study provides this foundation, and can be reviewed and revised over time to reflect changes in the borough and its places. In order to get the most from this study, it should be read in its entirety and in the round, cross-referring different sections to gain a holistic understanding of the borough’s character.

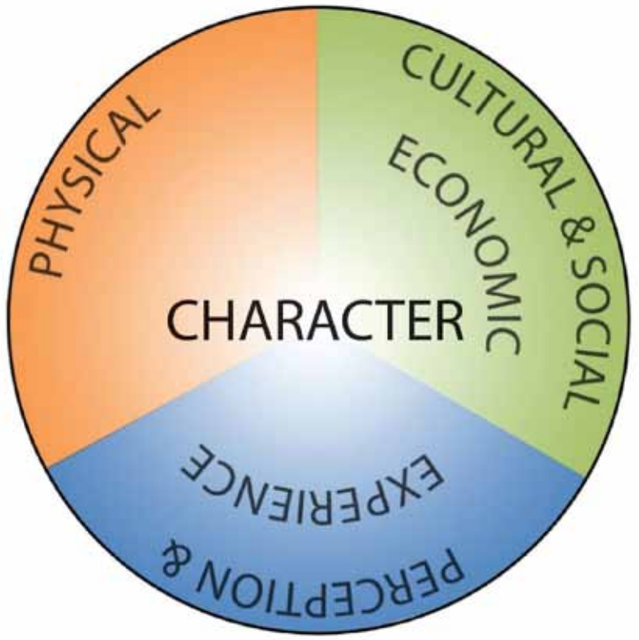
The elements of character

There are three key components of place. They are:

1. Physical
The underlying structure of a place including geology, topography, habitats, landscape, settlement and built form.

2. Cultural
The evolution of a place over time, often also linked to social, political, environmental and economic factors, and the ways in which a place functions and the activities which defines it.

3. Perceptual and experiential
The sensory aspects of a place - its ‘look and feel’. How places are used and experienced. Also covers memories and associations which individuals and communities have with their place.



The elements of character, Shaping Neighourhoods: Character and Context SPG, GLA June 2014

In brief

The study is:

- an urban design document founded on urban design principles and ideas of placemaking formalized in established documents such as By Design and the Urban Design Compendium.
- concerned with the form and function of places and the experiences of people within the public spaces of the borough and with the effect of development / built form on those spaces.
- necessarily autonomous and impartial in relation to other council departmental activities and documents, in order to function effectively and achieve the necessary level of qualitative objectivity.
- necessarily a snapshot of the borough at the time of its production/publication, though it will be subject to up-dating as and when appropriate.
- intended to provide an educational and appraisal resource to help inform future heritage and community assets, design of future regeneration projects and other improvements in the public realm.
- evidence to underpin policies contained within statutory documents like the Local Plan. These policies are material considerations when making planning decisions

The study is not:

- a public relations exercise or promotional tool. Negative elements and aspects are not omitted, but rather described and assessed in the round.
- a direct assessment of the successes and failures of council departments or council policies and strategies.
- a planning policy document and does not attempt to devise future policy but rather sets out evidence for and recommendations on the possible future direction of planning policy. It is not, officially at least, aware of site allocations, proposals, consents, CAAs, AAPs etc. In some cases definitions of e.g. ‘retail’ or ‘tertiary road’ may differ from those in official planning terminology.
- directly at least, concerned with the experiences of people within private and restricted public access spaces such as the interiors of buildings, private gardens and elevated carriageways.
- for the most part, intended to provide appraisal at scales below that of neighbourhood, i.e. several urban blocks.

Policy context

National

National Planning Policy Framework

Compared to the previous separate policy guidance statements on different topics, the NPPF brings the consideration of good quality design and preservation of heritage central to all planning decisions. The NPPF opens by making clear that the purpose of planning is the achievement of sustainable development, which requires the economic, social and environmental dimensions to be considered ‘jointly and simultaneously’.

Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Policies should be based on an understanding and evaluation of the area’s defining characteristics, and planning policies and decisions should respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local areas while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

Crucially, the significance of heritage assets must be understood and preserved and responded to accordingly with this significance.

It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all developments, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.

Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- Function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term, but over the lifetime of the development;
- Establish a strong sense of places, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks
- Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;
- Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and
- Are visually attractive through good architecture and appropriate landscaping

Regional

The Mayor’s vision to 2031 and beyond states that:

“London should excel among global cities – expanding opportunities for all its people and enterprises, achieving the highest environmental standards and quality of life and leading the world in its approach to tackling the urban challenges of the 21st century, particularly that of climate change.”

One of the key statements in the Mayor’s vision focuses on achieving the highest environmental standards and quality of life. This study will strive to succeed in this aspect by ensuring that quality and character of all corners of the borough are assessed to the very highest standards so that recommendations for future developments can be formed on sound evidence.

Chapter Seven – London’s Living Places And Spaces states that London should be:

“A city of diverse, strong, secure and accessible neighbour-hoods to which Londoners feel attached, which provide all of its residents, workers, visitors and students – whatever their origin, background, age or status – with opportunities to realise and express their potential and a high quality environment for individuals to enjoy, live together and thrive.”

and:

“A city that delights the senses and takes care over its buildings and streets, having the best of modern architecture while also making the most of London’s built heritage, and which makes the most of and extends its wealth of open and green spaces, natural environment and waterways, realising their potential for improving Londoners’ health, welfare and development.”

Policy context

Policy 7.4 of the London Plan notes that development should have regard to the form, function, and structure of an area, place or street and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings. This policy emphasises that in areas of poor or ill-defined character, development should build on the positive elements that can contribute to establishing an enhanced character for the future function of the area. Character should also be informed by the surrounding historic environment.

Policy 7.4 C on LDF preparation states that:

"Boroughs should consider different characters of their areas to identify...where character should be sustained, protected and enhanced through managed change. Characterisation studies can help in this process"

Through the London Plan, Local Plans should also consider the different characters of their areas to identify landscapes, buildings and places, including the Blue Ribbon Network, where character should be sustained, protected and enhanced through managed change.

Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology is also of major importance as part of this context and character study. Identifying heritage assets through this study will help to sustain and enhance their significance and utilise their positive role in place shaping.

In June 2014 the Mayor of London published the London Plan supplementary planning guidance (SPG) on Shaping Neighbourhoods: Character and Context, a draft of which had been available since February 2013. The objectives of this SPG are to provide:

- specific guidance on the attributes of character and context in London (physical, cultural, social, economic, perceptions and experience);
- information on resources that inform an understanding of character and context in London;
- an analysis of the interrelationships between different aspects of character, and how it can be articulated and presented to others;
- examples of good practice in how an understanding of character and context can be used to help manage change in a way that sustains and enhances the positive attributes of a place.

This study has been prepared in line with the London Plan SPG.

Local

Unitary Development Plan (2003)

Objective ENV-B.1.1 - To promote high quality design, urban design and a sense of place and identity throughout the borough, and promote improvements which prioritise a safe, sustainable, accessible and pedestrian friendly environment for all.

Brentford Area Action Plan (2009)

Policy BAAP2 Urban Design - High quality redevelopment of all proposal sites will be required in order to enrich existing areas of distinctive local character, rejuvenate those areas that lack a positive identity, and improve the overall quality of Brentford's urban form.

Core Strategy Preferred Strategy (2011)

The Local Development Scheme for Hounslow was initially approved in 2007.

The Core Strategy will form the main document as part of the Local Plan in guiding the future development of the borough. The Core Strategy covers the entire borough and the preferred strategy which was consulted on from July to October 2011 contained eight objectives. One of these in particular focuses on the design and character of development:

"Improving the appearance of the borough and the quality of life for our residents through regeneration, high quality of design and the promotion of local character"

Taking the objectives together, they will not only enable significant growth to be accommodated in a sustainable way, but will also greatly enhance the lives of existing residents, workers and visitors to the borough. The objective stated above is centred on making the borough a more attractive place to live and work. Through high quality sustainable design, the regeneration of the borough and in particular town centres can come forward whilst promoting locally distinctive character.

Sustainable Community Strategy (2010)

Future Borough, Hounslow Together's vision, strategy and action plan

A vision for 2030:

"Over the next 20 years, Hounslow Together will work with the community to develop the borough to be distinctive, vibrant and thriving, with a happy, high achieving community at its heart."

The Sustainable Community Strategy for the borough focuses on four key elements to aid the delivery of the strategy including people, place, economy and leadership. By combining all of these elements and working together, the strategy becomes more achievable.

The places section is most relevant to the Local Plan. The long term outcomes of this part of the strategy are therefore:

- We will enjoy and maximise use of our built and natural environment - protecting and enhancing it
- We will live in an attractive, well designed, sustainable borough with good access to infrastructure and services
- We will reduce our impact on the environment and protect ourselves from its effects

The study in practice

NPPF
Paragraph 7 (Sustainable Development) and Section 7 (Requiring Good Design)

GLA London Plan
Policy 7.4 Local Character

GLA
Shaping Neighourhoods Character and Context SPG

London Borough of Hounslow Urban Context and Character Study

- An evidence base and local planning authority resource
- To be updated regularly to reflect the changes in a place's character
- Provide recommendations to inform the scope and content of future planning and regeneration work
- To identify and promote place-shaping opportunities across the borough

Informs

Planning / regeneration plans and projects

DPDs and other plans draw upon the study and help produce place-specific plans and projects that enhance local character, including:

- Local Plan
- Site allocations and design guidance
- Area Action Plans
- Masterplans
- Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Regeneration projects
- Conservation Area Appraisals
- Neighbourhood plans

Steers and guides planning decisions

General Developers

- Help in understanding the context and character of their site when preparing applications
- Feed this understanding into their Design and Access Statements, so a clear link can be seen between appreciation of context and design concepts
- Use in collobration with the council in pre-app meetings thus helping to speed up development decisions

Development Management

- Use as an evidence base alongside planning documents
- Help to secure higher quality design that finds a good fit between place and site design
- Use as a knowledge resource - what's the character surrounding a site?
- Help with pre-app discussions - share evidence with applicant
- Provide a basis to assess applicant's own design and access statement

General public, community groups and neighbourhood forums

- Use as an educational resource
- Help with creating neighbourhood plans
- Help to assess the design and character merits of proposed developments

Methodology

How was this study undertaken?

The study aims to identify, describe and analyse in a systematic and objective way those elements or combination of elements that help to form the character of a place and its inherent structure or morphology as it is often termed.

It does not attempt to cover all aspects of the borough's history and growth which would be a major undertaking, but rather to identify certain influential themes, elements and periods whereby the borough's character has been particularly influenced (for good or bad) by its past and where, therefore, it could be better understood and integrated into plans for the future so that future change reinforces and protects the good parts and improves the bad parts.

In order to do this, a mixed methodological approach was undertaken for this study, involving collecting and collating data using primary and secondary sources and methods.

Primary data collection was undertaken through extensive character surveys of each place and their subsequent sub-areas. This was been supplemented by workshops with key council officer's drawing on their local knowledge of the borough gained in the course of planning work on applications and enforcement cases, and ongoing engagement work with local communities.

Secondary data collection was underpinned by a desk-based exercise using maps (present and historic), aerial photographs, historical photographs, existing design evidence bases (e.g. CAA, BAAP evidence base) and local history publications. Guidance from a number of key urban design sources have also been used, including:

- Urban Design Compendium (1 and 2),
- By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System – Towards Better Practice
- Towards an Urban Renaissance
- Shaping Neighbourhoods: Character and Context London Plan SPG

tasks

explore | define | review | collect | survey | describe | audit | characterise | analyse | assess | identify cues | make recommendations

process

initial exploration

defining the study areas

- analysing the building types, periods, features
- analysing the urban structure of the whole borough
- analysing the study areas of the borough in detail

analysis of study areas | characterisation of study areas | assessment of study areas | design response

methods and data

- internal staff workshops
- historical and present day maps
- existing evidence base

- area surveys
- arial mapping

- electronic mapping
- photos
- field notes / pro-forma

Title page photo: Well maintained examples of typical interwar semi-detached houses on the Great West Road to the west of the borough

Methodology

Using a morphological approach

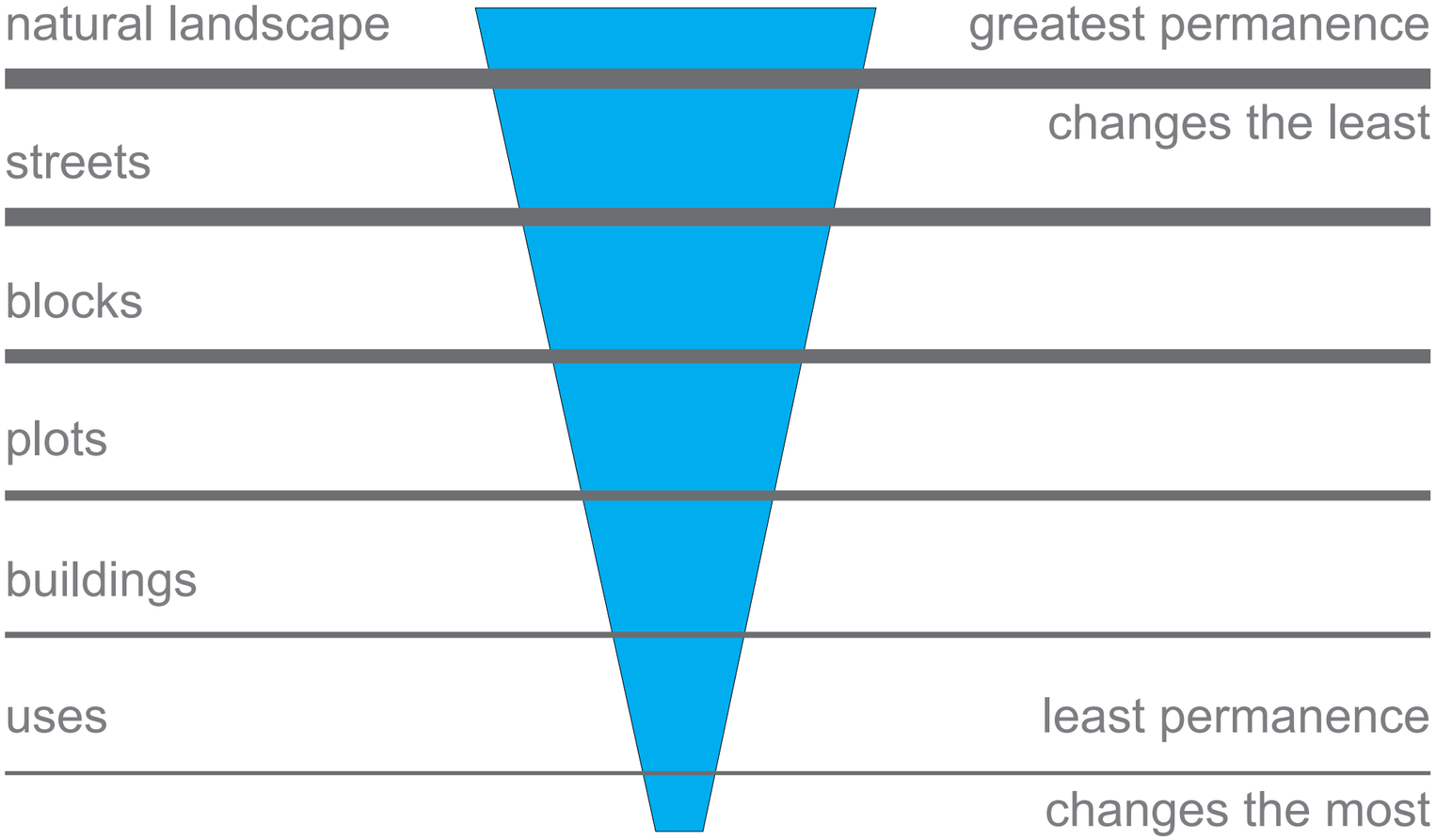
A morphological approach was adopted to identify, describe and analyse the urban structure and character of the borough. A morphological approach is concerned with identifying the structural layers that make up the city, which include:

- landscape structure and type, green spaces, waterways and bodies, trees and vegetation, natural boundaries and edges - topography and its relationship to urban form
- the movement and street network, creation of centres, edges, activity nodes and wider permeability of a place
- block pattern defined mostly by the street pattern, some block patterns are clearly defined, others much looser.
- plot pattern of land ownership describing how the urban area is divided up into land parcels.
- building pattern - the different types, periods, styles and forms
- land use patterns and inter-relationships

The morphological approach brings many benefits to understanding how cities and places work. The approach is concerned with the underlying structure of cities and places, the urban tissue or grain as it is often described. This understanding of a place's urban structure helps us better understand how a place has evolved/formed over hundreds of years, including which elements are old (e.g. Roman roads) and which are more recent (e.g. interwar housing). This temporal dimension is important to understand as it influences how easily a place does and can change. The diagram on the right shows how parts of the urban structure such as topography and street pattern change the least in contrast to uses which change more frequently as population and needs change.

An understanding of this structure, and of its evolution, is an essential prerequisite for the planning of future change in villages, towns and cities and for our ability to create places that are responsive and adaptable to change.

urban structure and degree of change over time



Methodology

Defining the study areas

For the purpose of the study, the borough was divided into 10 distinct study areas plus the linear space of the Great West Road. These areas hold no administrative or political significance but reflect social and functional geographies. However, in some cases the study areas do follow ward boundaries, but not all the time, reflecting the fact that the places people recognise do not always match with political boundaries.

A collaborative approach was taken to identifying the study areas. This involved workshop sessions with representatives from different teams in the council and the areas were repeatedly drawn and re-drawn on a map. In addition, staff who live in the borough were consulted to get a local perspective. This was tested and confirmed with local resident groups as part of the consultation process for each of the areas.

A balance was struck between identifying the physical character-istics of a study area and making decisions based on its social identity. All of the study areas have different character areas within them – for example, within the area we identified as Isleworth, there are many different and contrasting character areas. Along the river, there is a historic core with a dense, heritage rich character. Away from the river, there are areas of suburban housing with a more spacious and leafy character. However, as a resident you are likely to say you live in Isleworth whether you live in either area, as different as they may be.

The approach was iterative, with multiple versions being drawn and redrawn. After reaching a consensus, the 11 study areas were electronically mapped prior to commencing any survey work.

Surveying the study areas

Each of the 11 study areas were broken down into manageable sub-areas that could be realistically surveyed in half a day. For each sub-area there was a semi-structured approach to each character survey. This ensured a common approach across the sub-areas yet also allowed flexibility for the fact that each area is different and might require slightly different tactics. This general approach can be summarised as follows:

a. Pre-survey - this involved looking at the potential character areas on a map, speaking to officers, looking at aerial photos and street views, identifying key sites, urban form or areas to focus on, cross-referencing with the character pro-forma sheet[1] and lastly agreeing on the best route to take through the area.

b. During survey - this involved following the pre-ordained route through the sub-area taking sequential photographs along the route; noting initial feelings and thoughts, key features, land uses, functions, positive and negative qualities, landmarks, spatial characteristics and form on a 1:5000 OS map; and at the end noting any key thoughts about the area as a whole.

c. Post-survey - this involved a general debrief and collection of overall thoughts and reflections, cleaning up of survey maps, describing character area in a short summary, organising and cataloguing photographs, filling in any gaps using the prompt sheet to assist.

d. Production - the raw data from the field work needed to be cleaned up post survey and presented in a clear, consistent graphic style. Mapping the data electronically using a number of creative software packages allowed each place to be presented in a similar style and manner. Transferring this data electronically also allows future work to be added quickly and easily and most importantly stored in one place.

Identifying character areas

Once the 11 study areas had been surveyed number of character areas were identified in each place. The type and number of character areas differed according to the study area, with some study areas displaying many different character areas and great contrast and others displaying a more uniform character.

Areas of similar character were identified during and after the place survey. Identifying character is a complex task and to assist the process a number of main elements were identified:

- Historical evolution
- Natural landscape and topography
- Movement pattern
- Building, street and block pattern
- Building type and age
- Land uses
- Detailing and materials

Each character area was defined and refined during this process, with boundaries being drawn once all information had been collated and analysed.

Conserving heritage assets

This study will make an important contribution to the identification, conservation and enhancement of the borough's heritage assets as a positive means of supporting an area's distinctive character and sense of place and history.

Forming design recommendations

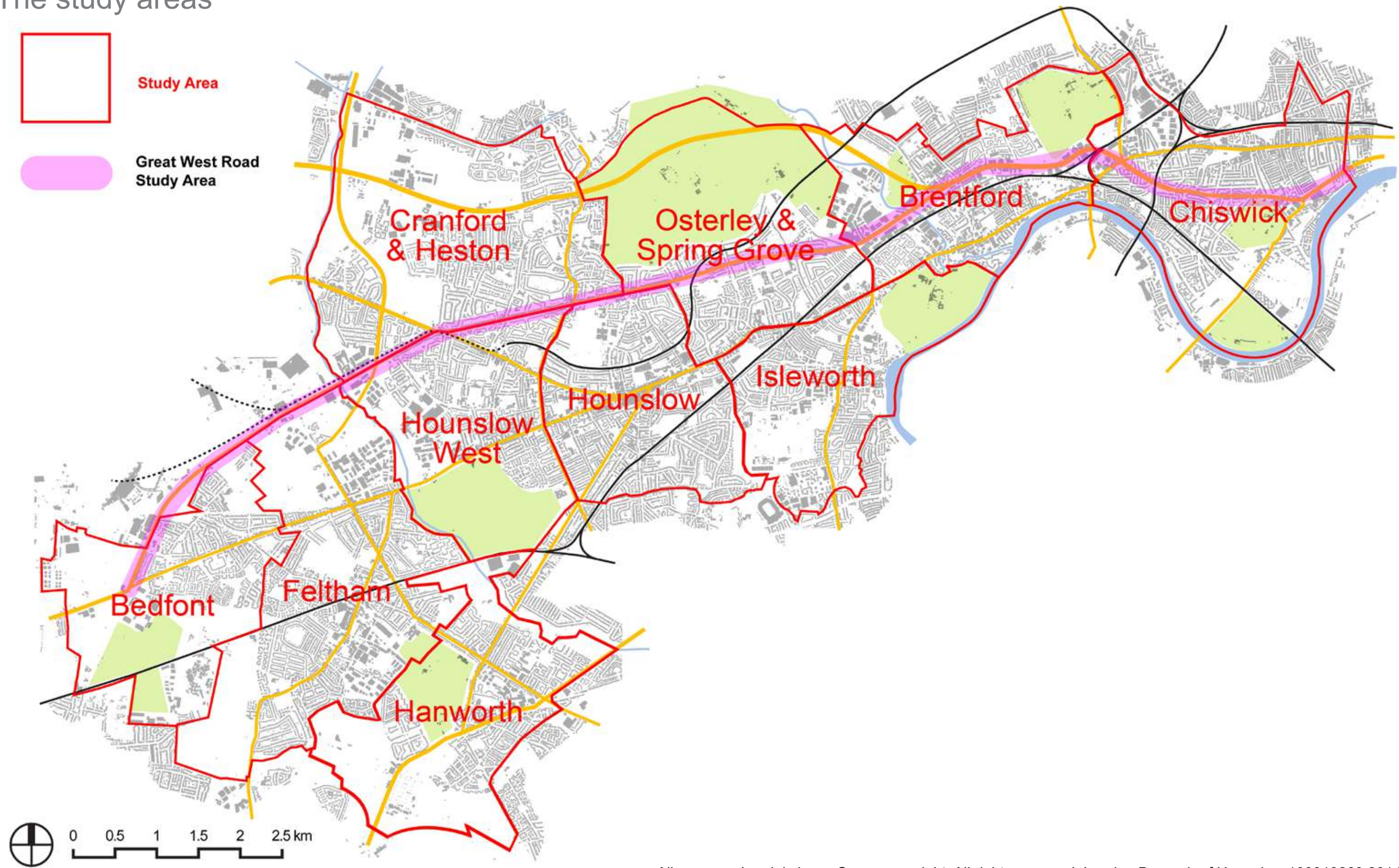
This study will ultimately be used formulate design recommendations. These will be based on the preceding character analysis and assessment at the borough, type and study area scale, alongside consultation input from local resident and amenity groups.

These design recommendations are likely to include:

- identifying distinctive elements in an area that need protection
- suggesting ways to improve the character of an area
- identifying positive elements in areas of poorly defined character that can contribute to any future regeneration projects.

Methodology

The study areas



All maps and aerial views: Crown copyright. All rights reserved. London Borough of Hounslow 100019263 2014

Methodology

Assessing each character area

Once each place had been surveyed and characterised an assessment was undertaken to assist in determining and generating an appropriate design response and range of design recommendations.

In order to identify design recommendations based on the quality of the borough's urban types and character areas and vision for the future it was necessary to assess each places against the following four criteria:

- design quality
- sensitivity to change
- permanence / stability
- suitability for tall buildings

Each place was rated low, medium or high for each assessment criterion. This helped give an overall picture of the place; its design quality, how sensitive it is to change, the likelihood it may change and its general suitability for tall buildings. This overall picture then allowed a high level design response to be generated from which design cues could be drafted to help guide future development and change in that place. It is important that urban characterisation should be placed within and as part of wider regeneration and planning strategies for places.

Undertaking this assessment process can assist in ensuring a realistic, appropriate and proportionate response is generated for each place and future design support is targeted to where it's most needed. For example, an area that is very sensitive to change and likely to undergo a great deal of change will need further design guidance in the future to ensure a sensitive and sympathetic approach is adopted. In contrast a place which is unlikely to undergo much change yet has a low urban design quality may require more proactive regeneration investment to raise overall standards and stimulate positive changes.

The process of characterisation attempts to define what makes a place special. This allows an estimate to be made of how much change, and of what kinds, a place can absorb without losing its distinctive qualities.

design quality

Once all of the character areas had been identified and described they were assessed based on the eight urban design qualities in the table to the right (adapted from By Design guidance).

By assessing each place in the same manner we are able to draw out and link the spatial form of a place and its inherent qualities e.g. its 10m street widths to a strong sense of continuity and enclosure and a pleasant microclimate.

permanence / stability

Change itself can be stimulated by a wide variety of actors, events and situations. Change may come about through public or private led proposals/schemes or a mixture of the two as is becoming increasingly common. Council and London wide regeneration priorities are likely to stimulate change and improvements in the borough network of town centres, particularly Brentford and Hounslow. Investment and improvements to infrastructure can also stimulate change and growth, particularly when it improves the Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTALs). Rises in PTALs can encourage growth, greater development densities and increase the suitability for tall buildings.

This gives us a picture for the future and allows a targeted response for those areas that may undergo significant change in the next 10-15 years. This information has been drawn from the Core Strategy and other evidence which sets out the growth strategy for the borough over the long term.

sensitivity to change

Some areas are more sensitive to change than others. Some places cannot absorb change and growth as their townscape is of historic importance, whilst other places can. It is this distinction that is important. A place is sensitive if it cannot recover from change and would be lost/severely damaged as a result.

Therefore, each place was considered against how sensitive it is to change. This sensitivity was scored from not sensitive, somewhat sensitive to highly sensitive. The criteria used to determine a place's sensitivity can be seen in the table to the right. This criterion has been developed from best practice guidance and in collaboration with English Heritage.

suitability for tall buildings

Tall buildings have been built in the past and they are likely to play an increasing part in the development of the borough in the future. It is therefore vital for this study to understand and assess the suitability for tall buildings in conjunction with the overall character and identify of the various areas of the borough.

The height of a building and groups of buildings significantly affects the townscape value of an area, making a significant contribution to the overall character, look and feel of a place. Building heights also have a very real practical impact upon the microclimate of a place, affecting wind flows, levels of daylight, temperature and general amenity.

The study defines a tall building in the London Borough of Hounslow as ***any building or structure taller than 20 metres and/or significantly taller than the surrounding townscape and/or which recognisably changes the skyline***.

In order to arrive at the above definition, the study has:

- Identified and mapped existing building heights across the borough and calculated the average building height.
- Defined an appropriate height range specific to Hounslow.
- Identified existing tall buildings within each study area.
- Assessed the suitability of each character area and the study area for tall buildings based on the criteria in the table to the right.

It should be noted that an assessment of a character area as having some suitability for tall buildings should not be taken to imply that every location within that area is suitable.

Methodology

Design Quality criteria	**Sensitivity to change** criteria	**Permanence / Stability** criteria	**Suitability for tall buildings** criteria
Character A distinct sense of place responding to local context and history.	A place with a high concentration and quality of historic buildings (particular note to buildings at risk/recently lost)	Amount and extent of development sites/ areas (either in pipeline, planned or prospective)	Natural landscape - topography, green spaces and water spaces
Continuity and enclosure Continuity of frontages and clearly defined public and private space. A place where people feel comfortable.	The quality and significance of wider townscape features	Regeneration projects/initiatives in place or planned	Urban grain - block and building pattern, existing heights, massing and scale and streetscape
Quality of public realm A place with safe, attractive, well used and successful outdoor areas.	Evidence of an historic street pattern/urban grain still intact	Planned or current infrastructure improvements including improvements to PTAL	Microclimate, shadowing and overlooking of existing buildings and spaces
Easy of movement A place that is easy to get to, go through and move around. An accessible, well connected, pedestrian and cycle friendly environment.	The quality, extent and variety of architectural periods evident and consistency of style	Identified in London Plan as an Opportunity Area or Regeneration Area	Historic environment - variety of heritage assets, conservation areas and listed buildings
Legibility A readily understandable, and easily navigable and enjoyable environment.	The range, quality, age and use of materials, detailing and surface treatment evident	Recent development pattern/past levels of growth (likelihood this will continue)	Existing views, landmarks and tall buildings in the area - their setting, backdrops, vistas, prospects and panoramas
Diversity and intensity A varied, stimulating environment offering a range of uses, experiences and choice.	The concentration, extent and quality of any conservation areas	Planning policy constraints limiting likelihood of change e.g. Metropolitan Open Land or London Heathrow Airport Public Safety Zone	Public transport accessibility, ease of movement to, through and around the area
Adaptability A place that can change easily to future needs and lifestyle demands.	The general historical importance of the area and its archaeological value		Location in relation to London Heathrow Airport Public Safety Zone
Resource efficiency A place that works with the natural landscape, has a pleasant microclimate, utilises solar potential, is comfortable to walk and cycle around, has low noise and pollution levels and is rich in biodiversity.	The concentration and quality of historic green green spaces, parks and gardens and historic civic buildings		
Successful	Sensitive to change	Unlikely to change	Not suitable
Some success	Somewhat sensitive to change	Some change may occur	Some suitability
Not successful	Not sensitive to change	Likely to change	

Borough-wide context

2

Borough overview

Situated in Outer West London, the London Borough of Hounslow, named after the town at its centre, is large, covering approximately 56 square kilometres. Stretching from Chiswick in the east to the boundaries of Heathrow Airport in the west, the transition from the urban environment of the suburbs to the semi-rural environment of the urban fringe takes place within the borough. Taken as a transect the borough is more urban, dense and compact in the east around Chiswick and Brentford, gradually changing to a more suburban look and feel as one moves westwards towards Feltham and Hanworth. The borough also has a mix of commercial and industrial land uses, is interlaced with several waterways including the River Thames, and has large areas of open space.

For many visitors to London, the borough is the gateway to the capital. It is ideally located for national transport links with easy access to Heathrow Airport and motorways linking Central London to the southwest of England, Wales, the Midlands and beyond. It is also a borough with strong heritage, represented by historic landmarks such as Chiswick House and Syon Park showing the borough's early development. More recently, the borough has grown around London's developing road and waterway networks with areas along the A4 Great West Road now functioning as one of London's strategic employment centres. Communities are focused around the four town centres, Chiswick, Hounslow, Brentford and Feltham and their suburbs, and the urban villages of Heston, Bedfont, Isleworth, Hanworth and Cranford. Each of these localities has its own character and attractions reflecting their different histories and functions.

The borough is currently home to over 255,000 people and is expected to grow by a further 30,000 to 280,000 by 2030. The people are diverse in background, age, ability and faith. By 2030, a quarter of the population will be under the age of 18 and nearly 15% will be over the age of 65, with 4% over the age of 80. This will present particular challenges in terms of community infrastructure and particularly education and health provision. The size of households is also projected to decrease leading to the 12th highest increase in the country in the number of households from 97,000 in 2011 to 113,000 in 2021, an annual average increase of 1,750 households. This level of anticipated growth is significantly above the borough's average rate of housing growth over the last eight years of 840 units per annum.

The 2011 census shows that the average household has increased in size from 2.54 in 2001 to 2.67 in 2011, indicating a rising birth rate and overcrowding because of a shortage of larger affordable family homes for families with dependent children, and a shortage of affordable small accommodation suitable for new households to form.

The latest house price data (Oct to Dec 2012) shows the average housing price for the borough is £352,106. This ranks the borough 20th in London in terms of average, and is over £100,000 higher than the UK average of £238,293. Consequently, many of the newly forming households will find it difficult to access the housing market. The 2011 census identifies approximately 85% of homes in the borough are privately owned with the remainder provided by the council or Register Providers, previously known as Housing Associations. In terms of tenure, the largest grouping is now the private rented sector which has doubled from 15.4% to 30.2% in 10 years. The next largest is the owner occupiers with a mortgage at 28.5%, which has dropped from 42.4% in 2001, followed by those who own their home outright at 26%. The doubling in the proportion of private rented housing together with the decline in the number of owner occupiers over the last ten years also indicates issues of affordability as house prices have continued to rise, as well as a change in the character of the residential population as a high proportion of private rented properties is likely to lead to a greater churn in the local population. Notably, the level of shared ownership housing remains low at 1.8% having increased from 1.5% in 2001.

The borough's economic geography is characterised by distinct concentrations of commercial and industrial activities in the borough's town centres and along the road, rail and waterway routes. These intrinsic locational advantages have enabled the borough to attract a number of major international companies that together constitute a significant element of the borough's workplace economy, alongside 10,000 smaller businesses. It is also an economy heavily influenced by Heathrow Airport, whose supply chain accounts for between 10% and 20% of the borough's economic base.

In terms of employment hubs, Chiswick is the only town centre that acts as a key employment location driven by the edge of centre Chiswick Business Park providing 200,000 square metres of high quality, modern offices. This is supported by an attractive town centre which has good underground access, restaurants and cafes, independent shops and large civic open spaces. Hounslow itself, despite being the borough's only Metropolitan town centre, has primarily secondary office stock that together with poor quality amenities, has proved unattractive to potential employers. This pattern is repeated on a smaller scale in Brentford and Feltham town centres. Consequently the borough's key employment locations are located outside of the town centres. These include major industrial sites at North Feltham Trading Estate, Transport Avenue and the Great West Road, and office locations at Bedfont Lakes, Chiswick Park and the Great West Road. These areas are also where the majority of the borough's major employers are located. In terms



The putative metropolitan town centre of Hounslow is currently a focus for regeneration



The Golden Mile through north Brentford is a place of extreme contrasts



Medieval village cores add character and landmarks to the suburban townscape

Title page photo: Brentford, looking west from Kew Bridge, the most diverse and presently the most dynamic part of the borough

of the prospects of the borough's town centres more generally, significant growth and regeneration potential has been identified within Hounslow and Brentford, whilst the approach to Feltham and Chiswick will focus on consolidation and enhancement.

The total number of employee jobs within the borough is 143,000, compared to resident working age population of 176,000, of which 133,000 are economically active. Overall unemployment levels are comparatively low at 7.4% (Sept 2012) compared to the London average of 8.9% and UK average of 7.9%. In terms of employments sectors, the borough's profile is characterised by a high incidence of transport-related activities, businesses linked to the creative industries as well as some head office functions. Importantly however, data on commuting highlights that generally the borough's businesses do not employ the borough's residents, with 60% of the people who work in the borough living outside the borough. More notably, it is also possible to identify that large numbers of the high quality jobs in the borough are taken by in-commuters, while the borough's residents work in lower paid jobs elsewhere. This indicates a need to address the mismatch between the skills of the resident population and the employment opportunities within the borough, both to reduce the levels of congestion caused by commuting and to enable the borough's residents to access higher paid local jobs.

In terms of the borough's future economic prospects, a high rate of business formation in the borough suggests the economy is highly entrepreneurial. The borough is also identified as being with the top 15% in the UK Competitiveness Index further highlighting its intrinsic competitiveness linked to its locational advantages. There is also evidence both in the London Office Policy Review 2012 and the borough's Employment Land Review of ongoing demand for the borough's high grade office space from multinational corporations in high growth sectors such as hi-tech, media and pharmaceutical companies. Demand from these companies is expected to continue to be strong to 2030.

Hounslow is ranked 118th most deprived local authority of 326 in England, based on an average score for 139 small geographical areas in the borough, each of which has about 1,500 people. Over half of the borough's population lives within the lower half of the national scale of deprivation; and 0.6% of the local population live in an area which is ranked among the 10% most deprived in England, while about 2% live in areas in the borough ranked in the 10% most deprived in London. The wards of Hanworth and Cranford are the most deprived wards locally, and along with seven other borough wards are in the most deprived half of areas in London, while no areas in the borough are considered to be amongst the 10% least deprived nationally. Hounslow South is the least deprived ward in the borough.

Hounslow, like many other outer London boroughs has developed along key road and rail routes, which now carry heavy volumes of traffic to and from central London. Heathrow Airport, immediately to the west of the borough, also generates significant traffic. Congestion throughout the day is exacerbated by peak-time commuter traffic and local traffic movement through-out the day and night. There is also considerable commercial traffic. The limitations of the local public transport, particularly for movements north-south across the main radial routes, create a local reliance on the private car. The scope for walking and cycling is limited in places by man-made and natural physical obstacles. New developments located away from town centres and from good public transport links have also resulted in people being increasingly dependent on the private car, adding to the congestion of the borough's roads. The places with the best public transport accessibility are the four town centres reflecting their role as local hubs.

Heathrow Airport immediately to the west of the borough has a significant impact on the economic wellbeing and quality of life of the community. It is currently an important source of employment and wealth generation both directly and through its use of the local supply chain – over 11,000 borough residents are employed at the airport. Yet it also causes through its very size, a distortion of the local economy in favour of a single industry, generates serious congestion on the road and rail networks and has a negative environmental and health impact in the form of noise and air pollution. The council continues to oppose further expansion at Heathrow Airport as well as seeking further action to mitigate its negative effects on the local community.

The borough has one of the largest amounts of open space in London. The Green Belt covers open space in the west of the borough whilst most of the larger open spaces in the east are designated as Metropolitan Open Land. There are also a number of smaller open spaces and parks in the borough which play a valuable role in providing for more informal recreation including dog walking and children's play. In addition to the recreational open spaces, the borough also has multiple nature conservation areas.

The Blue Ribbon Network is London's strategic network of water spaces which covers the River Thames, canals, tributary rivers, lakes, reservoirs and docks alongside smaller waterbodies. The main body of water in the borough is the River Thames which runs along the south eastern boundary from Isleworth to Chiswick. Other waterways in the borough include the Rivers Brent and Crane and the Grand Union Canal. All of the waterways are key elements of the borough's environment and make a significant contribution to the landscape, ecology and local amenity of the area.



Bedford Park in Chiswick, an early Garden Suburb



The regenerated mixed-use Feltham town centre



The celebrated Chiswick Business Park

A brief history

PRE-HISTORY ROMAN SAXON NORMAN MEDIEVAL LATE MEDIEVAL TUDOR & RENAISSANCE

UP TO 800 BC
Bronze Age burials in Cranford

300 BC IRON AGE
Enclosure near Bedfont

43 - 400 AD
Romans used their Road

1086
Survey following Norman invasion

1211
Holy Trinity Priory founded in Hounslow town

1307
Market licence for Brentford

1400
House known at Gunnersbury Manor

1415
Monastery founded at Syon

1435
St Nicholas' church built

1530
Second artificial river cut

1550
Syon House built

1570
Osterley Manor House built

1623
Boston Manor House built

1700
Walpole House Chiswick Mall

Pre-historic nomads to new-stone-age settlers used the edges and islets of the Thames and Brent rivers to live and make tools. Bronze Age dwellers placed cremation burials on higher land north of Cranford. The later scheduled ancient monuments near Stanwell may originate from before (Iron Age) and during (Romano-British) the Roman occupation.

The Romans established a direct route still recognisable from Turnham Green through Brentford and Hounslow - names include Roman, London and Bath Roads - between Londinium, via Staines and Silchester, to the West. They crossed the Brent and possibly forded the Thames at Brentford, where they also traded.

Saxons gradually settled and King Edmund fought off King Canute's Danes in Brentford in 1016. The Saxons left many lanes and names of their settlements, and later churches, amongst the good agricultural lands of the borough. Layers of settlement size (from hides or land that would support a household, to manors) were grouped for administrative purposes. The manor of Isleworth with the parishes of Heston and Twickenham were initially within the Hundred of Hounslow.

Isleworth, well-established on the riverside by the time of the Norman Conquest, was recorded as Gistelesworde in the Domesday Book survey. The 1086 survey noted the manorial areas of Bedfont and Hatton. Isleworth took over the Hundred name and duties in the area as far as the river Brent, forming the smallest Hundred in the Shire of Middlesex.

Most of the borough remained rural. Settlements continued to form at strategic places along routes, especially at crossing points and places with slipways or shallow areas of rivers, used for fishing and transport. St Mary's Church at Bedfont Green, and All Saints at Isleworth were first described from around 1150.

Weekly markets were licensed for Hounslow in 1296, then others. Strand on the Green was a fishing village. Gunnersbury Manor had a House in 1422.

The area's geographical advantages of being productive (crops, brewing and bricks), desirably upriver (clean water) and upwind (clean air) brought notable change through the establishment of royal and wealthy brick-built houses in parks. Henry VIII acquired Hanworth Park Manor for hunting over the 4,000 acre (1600ha) Hounslow Heath. Water was brought across the area for elegant landscapes and for industrial mills, including gunpowder mills. Very few timber framed properties of the villages still remain.

The main routes from Hyde Park (6 miles or 10 km east of Chiswick High Road) became busy coaching roads. Tolls were collected to maintain them. Large houses, village centres and inns to cater for travellers and goods flourished alongside.



River Thames view near Chiswick



18th century St. Dunstan's Church, Feltham

JACOBEAN GEORGIAN REGENCY VICTORIAN EDWARDIAN

1715
Fullers brewery founded in Chiswick where it remains to this day

1729
‘Palladian’ extension to Jacobean Chiswick House.

1749
Hogarth acquired and extended his house

1760s
Robert Adam remodelling of Osterley and Syon

1780
Coach & Horses Public House on London Road

1793
The Cavalry Barracks were formally constructed

1795
Canal cut to Brentford

1805 - 10
Gunnersbury replacement mansions

1835
Steam water pumping begins at Kew Bridge.

1838
Great Western Railway

1843
Turnham Green Church in gothic style

1850
The railway age begins in the area

1875
Bedford Park begins

1884
Metropolitan District Railway to Hounslow and Cavalry Barracks

1890 - 1920
Trams along London Road

1905
Old Packhorse Public House in Turnham Green

The old village of Chiswick gained taller and smarter houses along the riverside Mall. Lord Burlington and designer William Kent established the incredibly influential house and ‘English garden’ design, still world-renowned. Horticultural science expanded in the area.

Brentford’s market house was sited just off London Road with a space around it. 1759 the first Kew Bridge was built over the Thames and Brentford’s mass of activity formed a notorious bottleneck. This increased after the River Brent was canalised, linking the Midlands to the Thames. The market continued to be a civic focus in later rebuildings to include magistrates’ functions.

The Cavalry Barracks was strategically placed near the Heath and early industrial buildings had fine classical architecture: the riding school at Syon Park, 1820 and Great Conservatory, 1830s.

Industrial engine houses and London and South Western Railway’s stations in Chiswick and Kew Bridge used a classical style and elegant buildings.

In 1859 Brunel’s linking of the Great Western railway from Southall to the Thames at Brentford and other railway lines caused canal and coaching trades especially at Hounslow town to collapse. Industrial uses developed rapidly along the Thames at Brentford. Housing for workers became brick built terraces, very small and dense.

Municipal buildings in robust brick and decorative terracotta were created in Chiswick, Brentford and Hounslow, including police and fire stations, public and Carnegie libraries. Many public houses were rebuilt as larger and more elaborate buildings along the main roads around the end of the 19th century.

Housing expanded over agricultural land particularly near stations. Larger properties in Grove Park and, nearer London Road, Bedford Park, Chiswick and Hounslow developed as suburbs. Rapid urban expansion included classical and revival Gothic, later more vernacular styles. London Road, often widened to accommodate horse and then electric trams, formed most of the town centre high streets.

The age of the automobile and aeroplane began. The Great West Road was a by-pass to Brentford that became a western artery and was the catalyst for mass ribbon-development of wider-fronted housing as well as of large manufacturing buildings. The popular private offer for the commuter-generation was pairs of semi-detached houses in ’Tudorbethan’ or vernacular style, with wider windows and usually hipped-roofs. Council housing with layouts based on Garden City ideals, and linear but edge-defining developments of flats were better for place-making.

Modernist influences from America and continental Europe, in the form of geometrical shapes and flat



Osterley House, view from across the lake



Hounslow High Street with Old Ship public house

A brief history

INTERWAR | POSTWAR | LATE 20TH CENTURY | EARLY 21ST CENTURY

1925 Great West Road / A4 commenced

1928 Art deco 'Golden Mile'

1930s London Air Park in Hanworth Park

1948 Town and Country Planning Act

1965 National Building Regulations

1970 Haverfield Towers at Brentford

2002 GSK Global Headquarters opened

2013 Golden Mile Vision commissioned

1920-30 Boom of semi-detached housing and estates

1926 Kempton Park Water Works

1930s Buildings began to use concrete construction

1938 Modernist health centre in Brentford

1965 Middlesex County absorbed into Greater London, London Borough of Hounslow formed

1968 First Conservation Areas in borough: The Butts and Strand on the Green

1999 Towards an Urban Renaissance calls for people to live more sustainably and in town centres again

2007 Wallis House (a Golden Mile Listed Building) refurbished for apartments and as a focus for large mixed-use development.

concrete roofs, were found in larger buildings rather than houses, though some featured curved bays and steel windows. However the major wall material was still brick.

The extension of the railways included in 1933 the Piccadilly Line modernist architectural style when rebuilding and relocating stations at Boston Manor, Osterley and Hounslow West.

The push for health and daylight focussed on removing dense terraces through slum clearance. Replacements used new construction techniques for taller but more spaced-out buildings instead of traditional townscapes. Decoration was less and less used.

With evermore local and through traffic the Great West Road was extended in the 1950s and then widened and over-flown by the M4 motorway in 1965.

Excessive clearance led to calls for the protection of special and cherished places and resulted in the 1967 Civic Amenities Act. Collapses and poor management made tower blocks unpopular. Housing associations were formed to provide good quality alternatives to public/private standard offers and increased expectations of space and quality. There was also seen to be a need for reducing the visual monotony and environmental impact of cars and roads.

The minimalist and dour offerings from later Modernism led to a Post-modern backlash against skimpy detailing on over-large massing and poorly placed buildings. Larger roofs and more detail, albeit in modern construction, was used to make housing blocks and commercial buildings more apparently traditional. Brick and flat roofs continued to be used but walls, although modelled and sculptural, tended to be heavy in dark brick, which increase the impact on the street scene.

Many of the larger office building estates on the Golden Mile and in the town centres of Hounslow and Feltham fell vacant and appeared increasingly as blights. Because much of the 20th century housing was sited on out-of-the-way roads, reliance on car transport and parking created problems and visual blight on the streets and housing forecourts. The council ceased to build homes directly, relying on Housing Associations and agency provision and management.

Pressures on land are continuing to increase dramatically. More compact schemes and taller buildings have become generally necessary for increasing density. Tall buildings are now seen as signs of increasing prosperity and drama in some areas, but have a wide impact. Better layouts, connectivity and mixed use have helped these schemes become (within limits) more acceptable especially where there is good public transport. New building techniques are tackling sustainability, but it is harder to use materials in traditional ways and to look robust, so new aesthetics have to evolve. Housing tenure is mixed with the provision of affordable housing within schemes. The aspiration is that the difference should not be obvious. Good, thoughtful and usable public realm, which acknowledges the role of heritage and local identity are helping to make urban living more attractive.

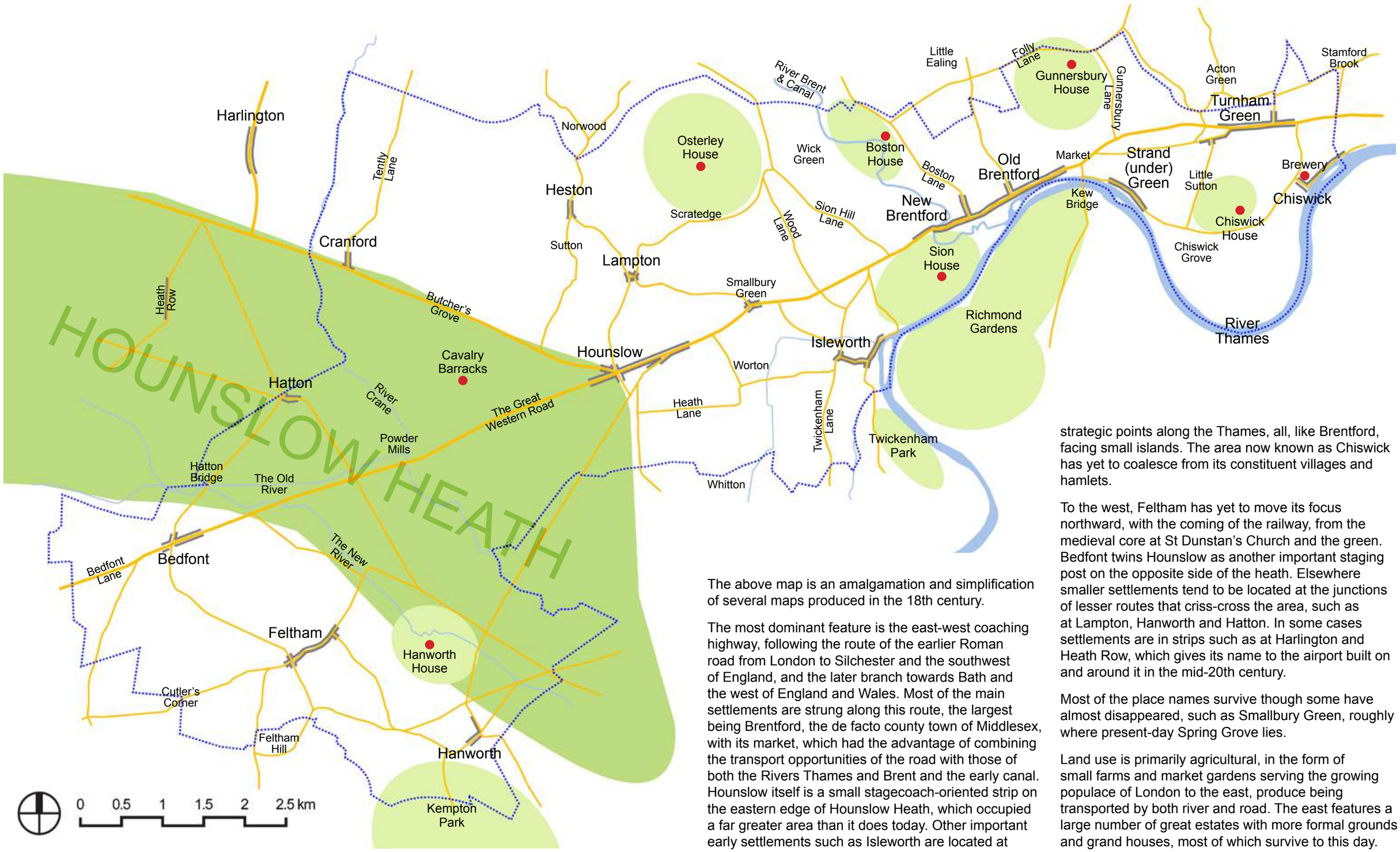


Barges at Jupps Wharf, River Thames at Brentford, c1910



Great West Road, Brentford, view looking east, 1930s

The borough area in the 18th century



The above map is an amalgamation and simplification of several maps produced in the 18th century.

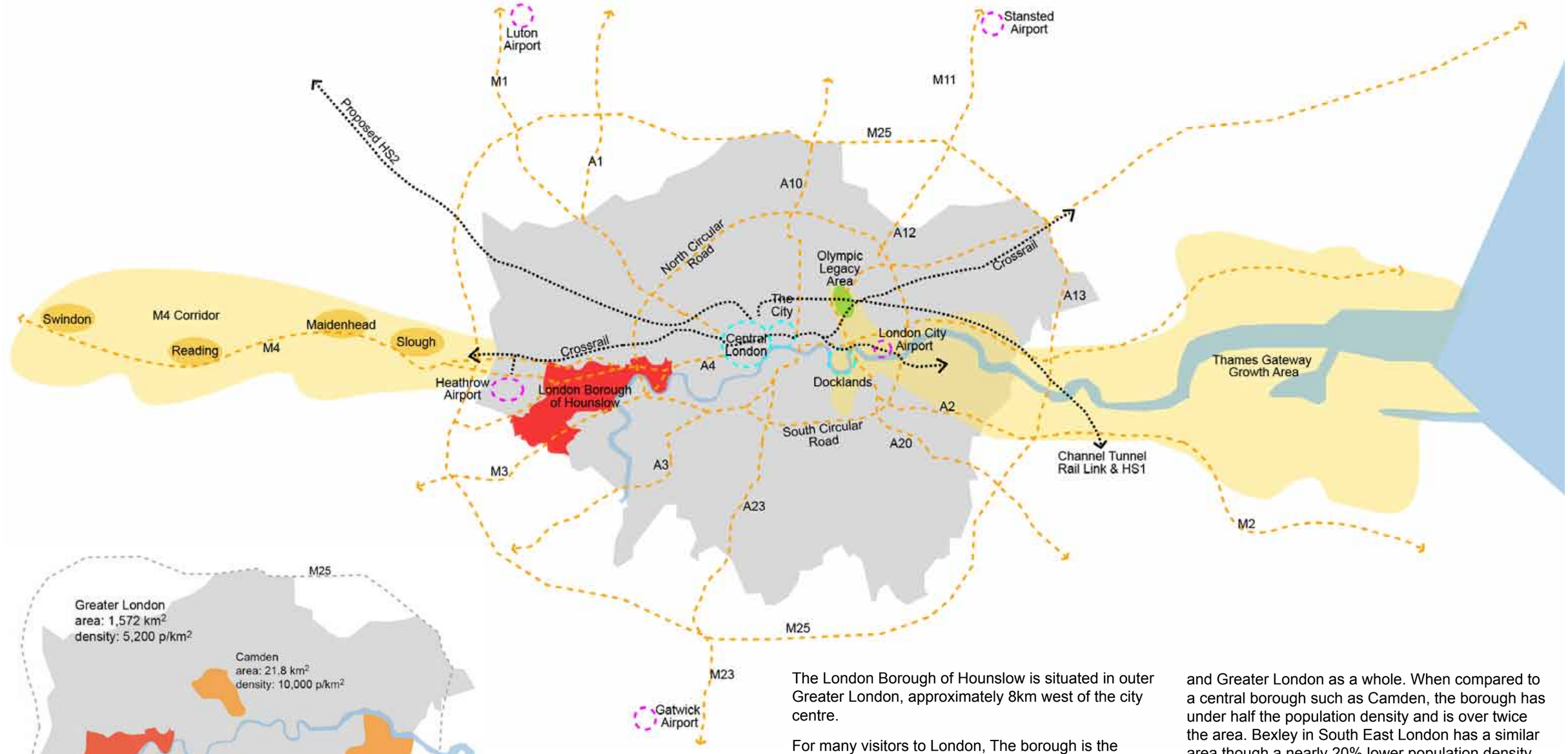
The most dominant feature is the east-west coaching highway, following the route of the earlier Roman road from London to Silchester and the southwest of England, and the later branch towards Bath and the west of England and Wales. Most of the main settlements are strung along this route, the largest being Brentford, the de facto county town of Middlesex, with its market, which had the advantage of combining the transport opportunities of the road with those of both the Rivers Thames and Brent and the early canal. Hounslow itself is a small stagecoach-oriented strip on the eastern edge of Hounslow Heath, which occupied a far greater area than it does today. Other important early settlements such as Isleworth are located at strategic points along the Thames, all, like Brentford, facing small islands. The area now known as Chiswick has yet to coalesce from its constituent villages and hamlets.

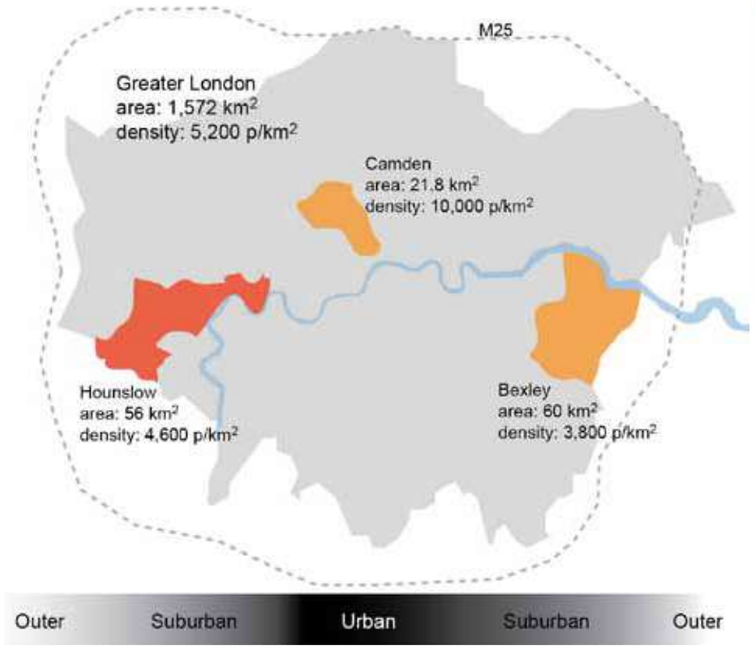
To the west, Feltham has yet to move its focus northward, with the coming of the railway, from the medieval core at St Dunstan's Church and the green. Bedfont twins Hounslow as another important staging post on the opposite side of the heath. Elsewhere smaller settlements tend to be located at the junctions of lesser routes that criss-cross the area, such as at Lampton, Hanworth and Hatton. In some cases settlements are in strips such as at Harlington and Heath Row, which gives its name to the airport built on and around it in the mid-20th century.

Most of the place names survive though some have almost disappeared, such as Smallbury Green, roughly where present-day Spring Grove lies.

Land use is primarily agricultural, in the form of small farms and market gardens serving the growing populace of London to the east, produce being transported by both river and road. The east features a large number of great estates with more formal grounds and grand houses, most of which survive to this day.

Strategic & Greater London context





The London Borough of Hounslow is situated in outer Greater London, approximately 8km west of the city centre.

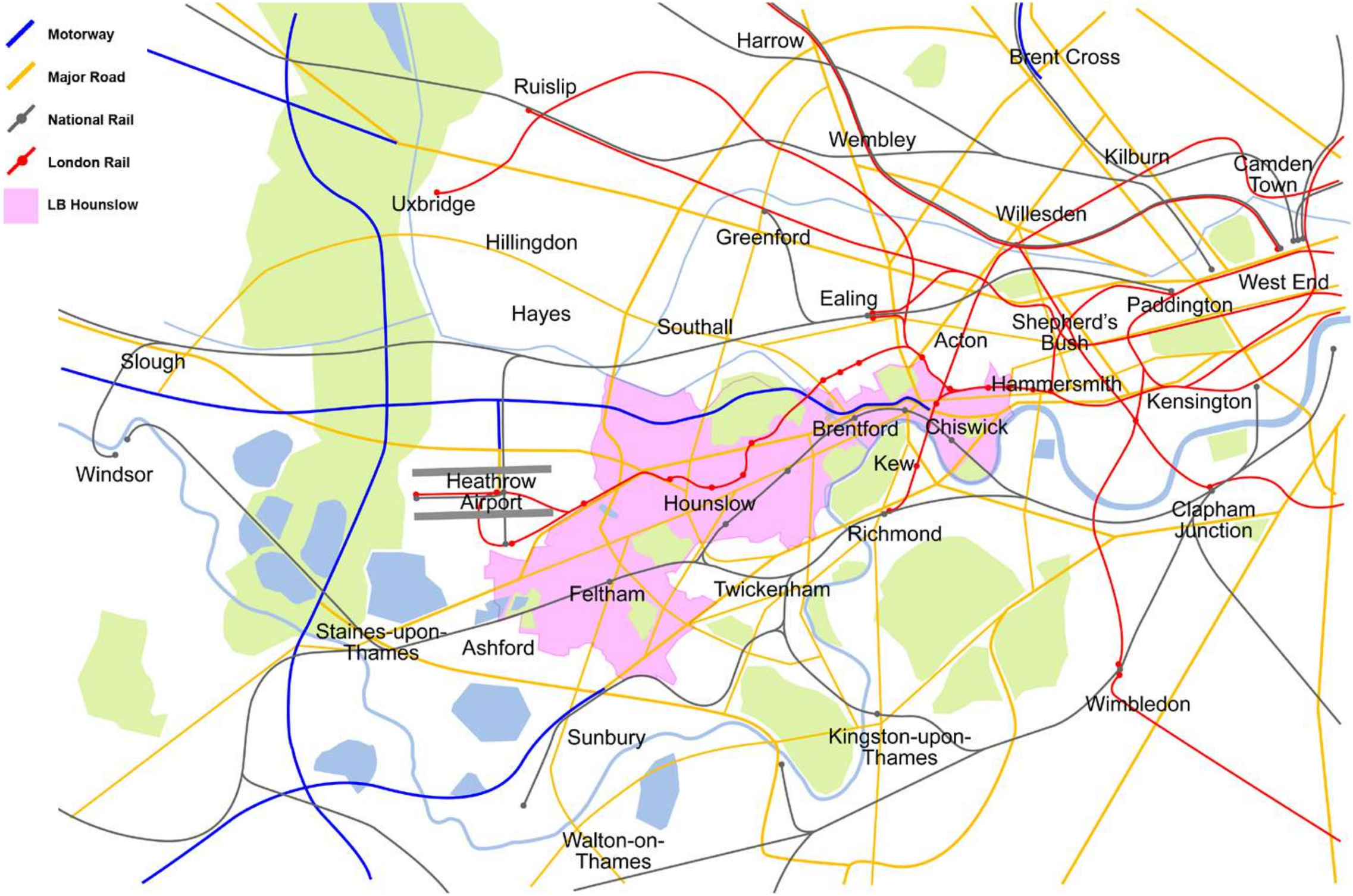
For many visitors to London, The borough is the gateway to the capital. It is ideally located for national transport links with easy access to London Heathrow Airport and to motorways linking London to the south west, Wales, the Midlands and beyond.

The borough is large and long, covering approximately 56 square kilometres and stretching from inner suburban Chiswick in the east to the edge of Heathrow Airport in the west.

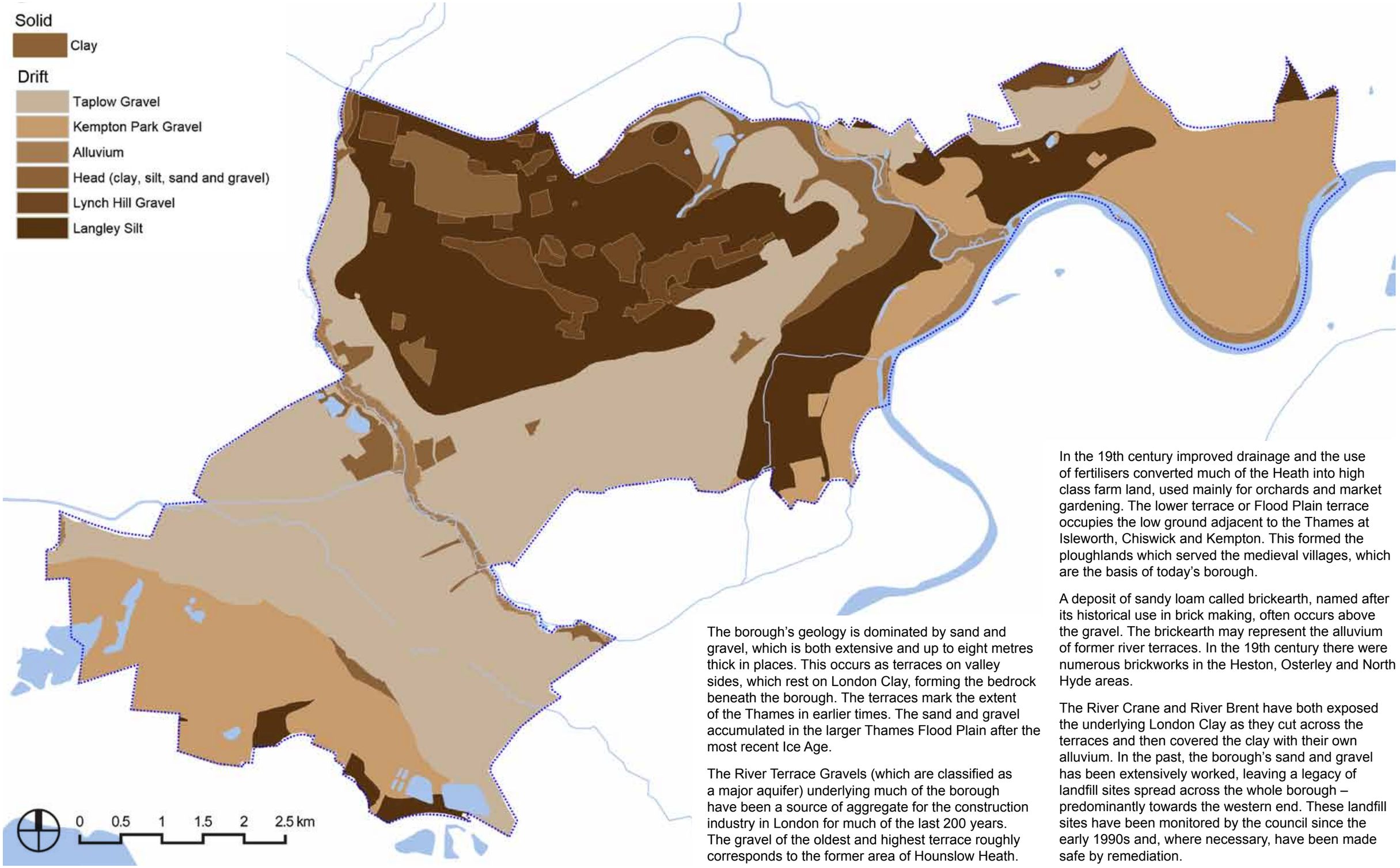
The diagram on the left shows the locations, areas and population densities of three London boroughs and Greater London as a whole. When compared to a central borough such as Camden, the borough has under half the population density and is over twice the area. Bexley in South East London has a similar area though a nearly 20% lower population density. The borough's population density is similar to the Greater London average demonstrating that London is predominantly suburban in character.

Outer West London has historically always been more developed and denser than its eastern counterpart. However this is beginning to change as more of East London undergoes development with the Olympic Games legacy and the Thames Gateway growth agenda.

West London context



Geology



The borough's geology is dominated by sand and gravel, which is both extensive and up to eight metres thick in places. This occurs as terraces on valley sides, which rest on London Clay, forming the bedrock beneath the borough. The terraces mark the extent of the Thames in earlier times. The sand and gravel accumulated in the larger Thames Flood Plain after the most recent Ice Age.

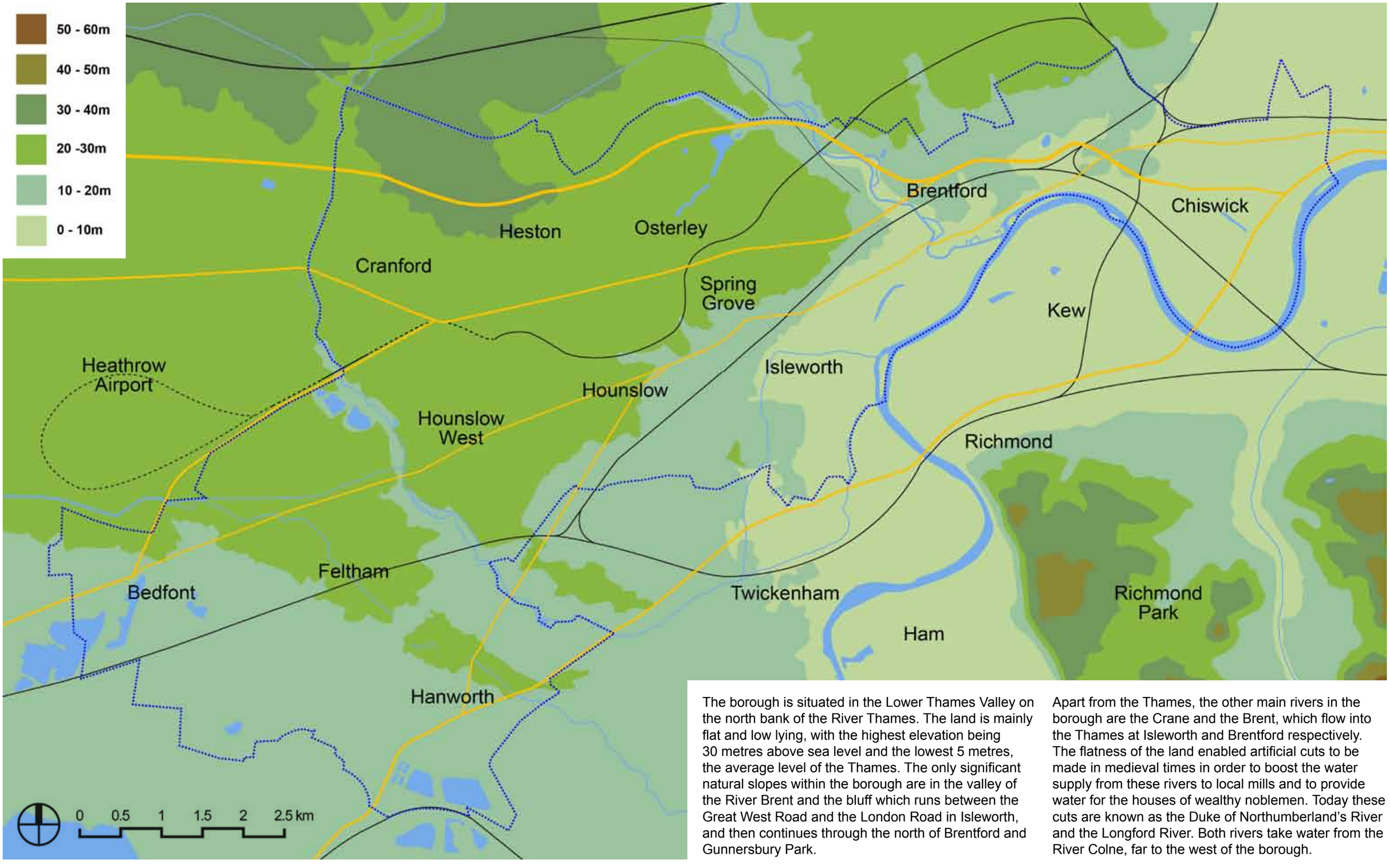
The River Terrace Gravels (which are classified as a major aquifer) underlying much of the borough have been a source of aggregate for the construction industry in London for much of the last 200 years. The gravel of the oldest and highest terrace roughly corresponds to the former area of Hounslow Heath.

In the 19th century improved drainage and the use of fertilisers converted much of the Heath into high class farm land, used mainly for orchards and market gardening. The lower terrace or Flood Plain terrace occupies the low ground adjacent to the Thames at Isleworth, Chiswick and Kempton. This formed the ploughlands which served the medieval villages, which are the basis of today's borough.

A deposit of sandy loam called brickearth, named after its historical use in brick making, often occurs above the gravel. The brickearth may represent the alluvium of former river terraces. In the 19th century there were numerous brickworks in the Heston, Osterley and North Hyde areas.

The River Crane and River Brent have both exposed the underlying London Clay as they cut across the terraces and then covered the clay with their own alluvium. In the past, the borough's sand and gravel has been extensively worked, leaving a legacy of landfill sites spread across the whole borough – predominantly towards the western end. These landfill sites have been monitored by the council since the early 1990s and, where necessary, have been made safe by remediation.

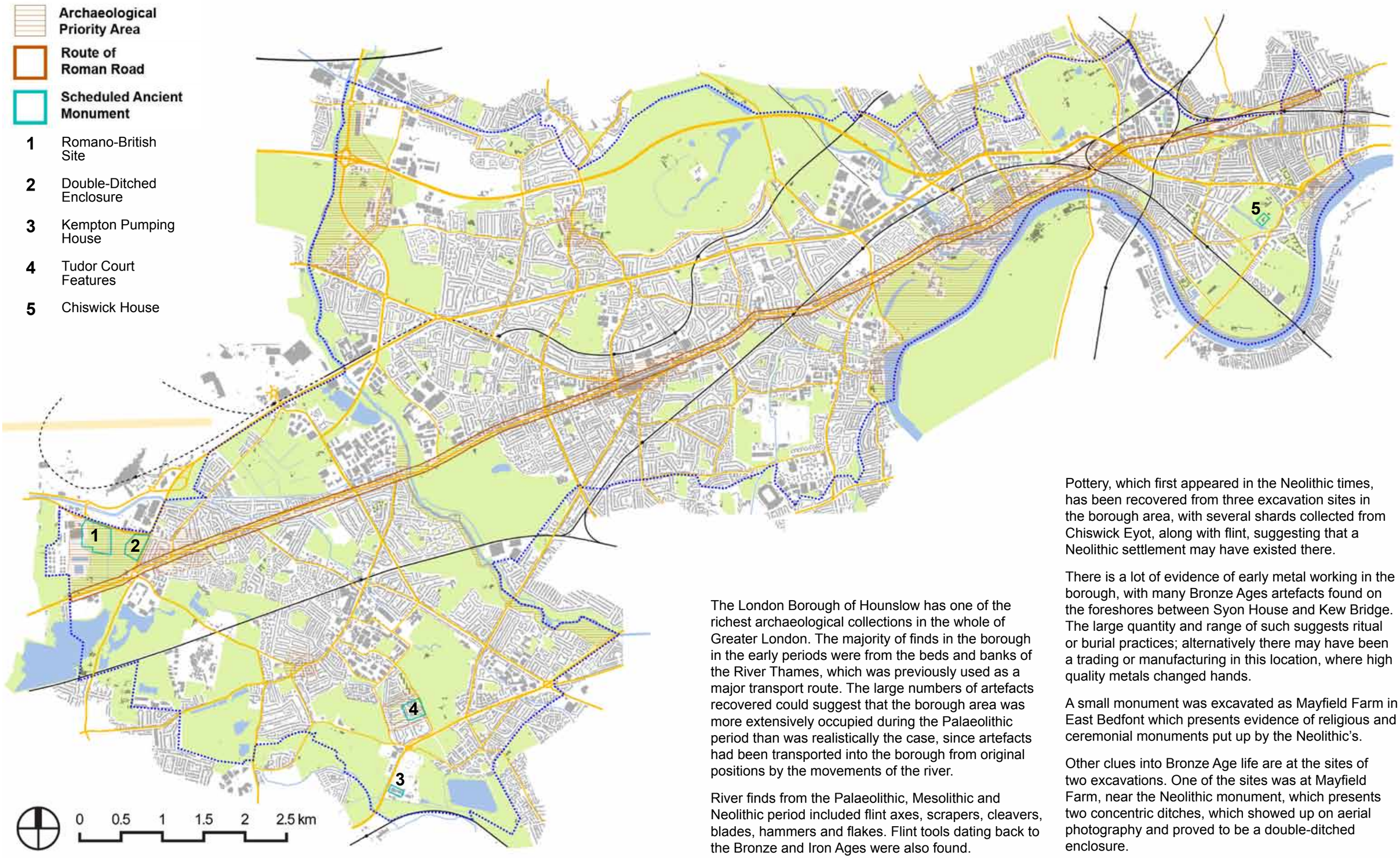
Topography



The borough is situated in the Lower Thames Valley on the north bank of the River Thames. The land is mainly flat and low lying, with the highest elevation being 30 metres above sea level and the lowest 5 metres, the average level of the Thames. The only significant natural slopes within the borough are in the valley of the River Brent and the bluff which runs between the Great West Road and the London Road in Isleworth, and then continues through the north of Brentford and Gunnersbury Park.

Apart from the Thames, the other main rivers in the borough are the Crane and the Brent, which flow into the Thames at Isleworth and Brentford respectively. The flatness of the land enabled artificial cuts to be made in medieval times in order to boost the water supply from these rivers to local mills and to provide water for the houses of wealthy noblemen. Today these cuts are known as the Duke of Northumberland's River and the Longford River. Both rivers take water from the River Colne, far to the west of the borough.

Archaeology



The London Borough of Hounslow has one of the richest archaeological collections in the whole of Greater London. The majority of finds in the borough in the early periods were from the beds and banks of the River Thames, which was previously used as a major transport route. The large numbers of artefacts recovered could suggest that the borough area was more extensively occupied during the Palaeolithic period than was realistically the case, since artefacts had been transported into the borough from original positions by the movements of the river.

River finds from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic period included flint axes, scrapers, cleavers, blades, hammers and flakes. Flint tools dating back to the Bronze and Iron Ages were also found.

Pottery, which first appeared in the Neolithic times, has been recovered from three excavation sites in the borough area, with several shards collected from Chiswick Eyot, along with flint, suggesting that a Neolithic settlement may have existed there.

There is a lot of evidence of early metal working in the borough, with many Bronze Ages artefacts found on the foreshores between Syon House and Kew Bridge. The large quantity and range of such suggests ritual or burial practices; alternatively there may have been a trading or manufacturing in this location, where high quality metals changed hands.

A small monument was excavated as Mayfield Farm in East Bedfont which presents evidence of religious and ceremonial monuments put up by the Neolithic's.

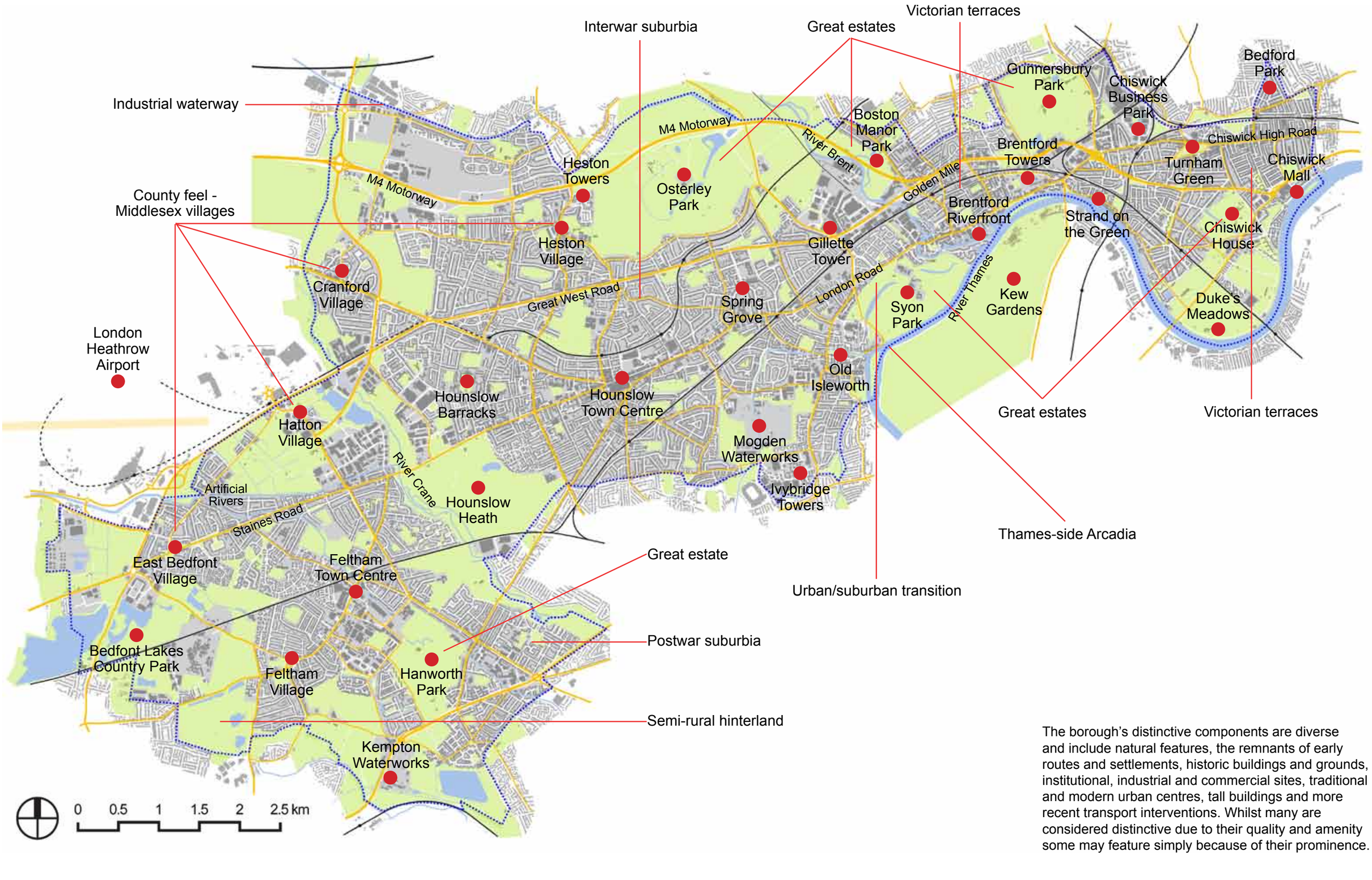
Other clues into Bronze Age life are at the sites of two excavations. One of the sites was at Mayfield Farm, near the Neolithic monument, which presents two concentric ditches, which showed up on aerial photography and proved to be a double-ditched enclosure.

Aerial view



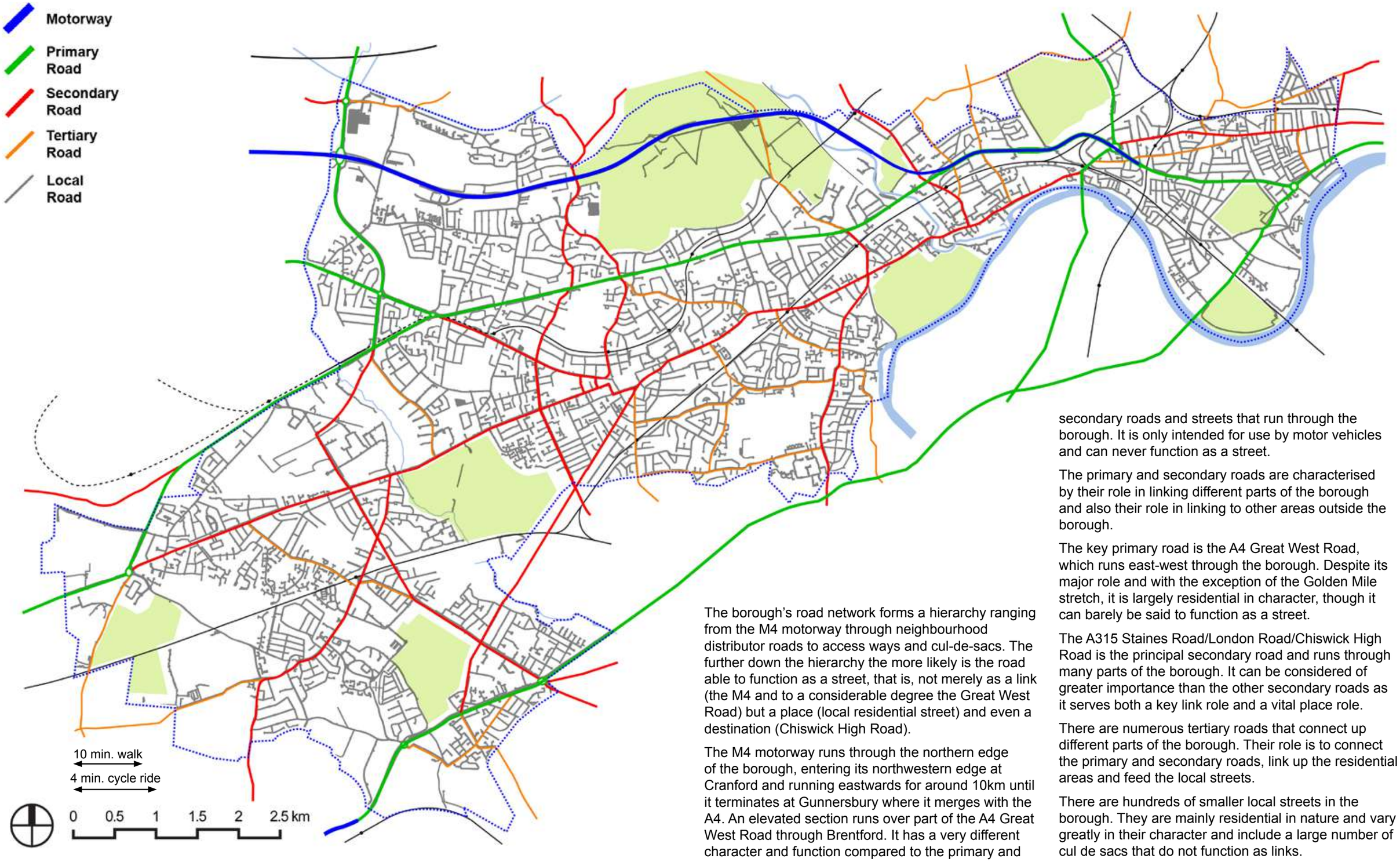
The vertical, overhead or plan-view aerial photograph offers a quick, at-a-glance overview of the borough's land use patterns and urban structure and fabric. Especially prominent are the large areas given over to big-box commercial uses, particularly to the west of the borough, the extensive green open spaces and the east-west axes of the Great West Road, the London Road, the railway line and the M4 motorway.

Distinctive components



The borough's distinctive components are diverse and include natural features, the remnants of early routes and settlements, historic buildings and grounds, institutional, industrial and commercial sites, traditional and modern urban centres, tall buildings and more recent transport interventions. Whilst many are considered distinctive due to their quality and amenity some may feature simply because of their prominence.

Road network



The borough's road network forms a hierarchy ranging from the M4 motorway through neighbourhood distributor roads to access ways and cul-de-sacs. The further down the hierarchy the more likely is the road able to function as a street, that is, not merely as a link (the M4 and to a considerable degree the Great West Road) but a place (local residential street) and even a destination (Chiswick High Road).

The M4 motorway runs through the northern edge of the borough, entering its northwestern edge at Cranford and running eastwards for around 10km until it terminates at Gunnersbury where it merges with the A4. An elevated section runs over part of the A4 Great West Road through Brentford. It has a very different character and function compared to the primary and secondary roads and streets that run through the borough. It is only intended for use by motor vehicles and can never function as a street.

The primary and secondary roads are characterised by their role in linking different parts of the borough and also their role in linking to other areas outside the borough.

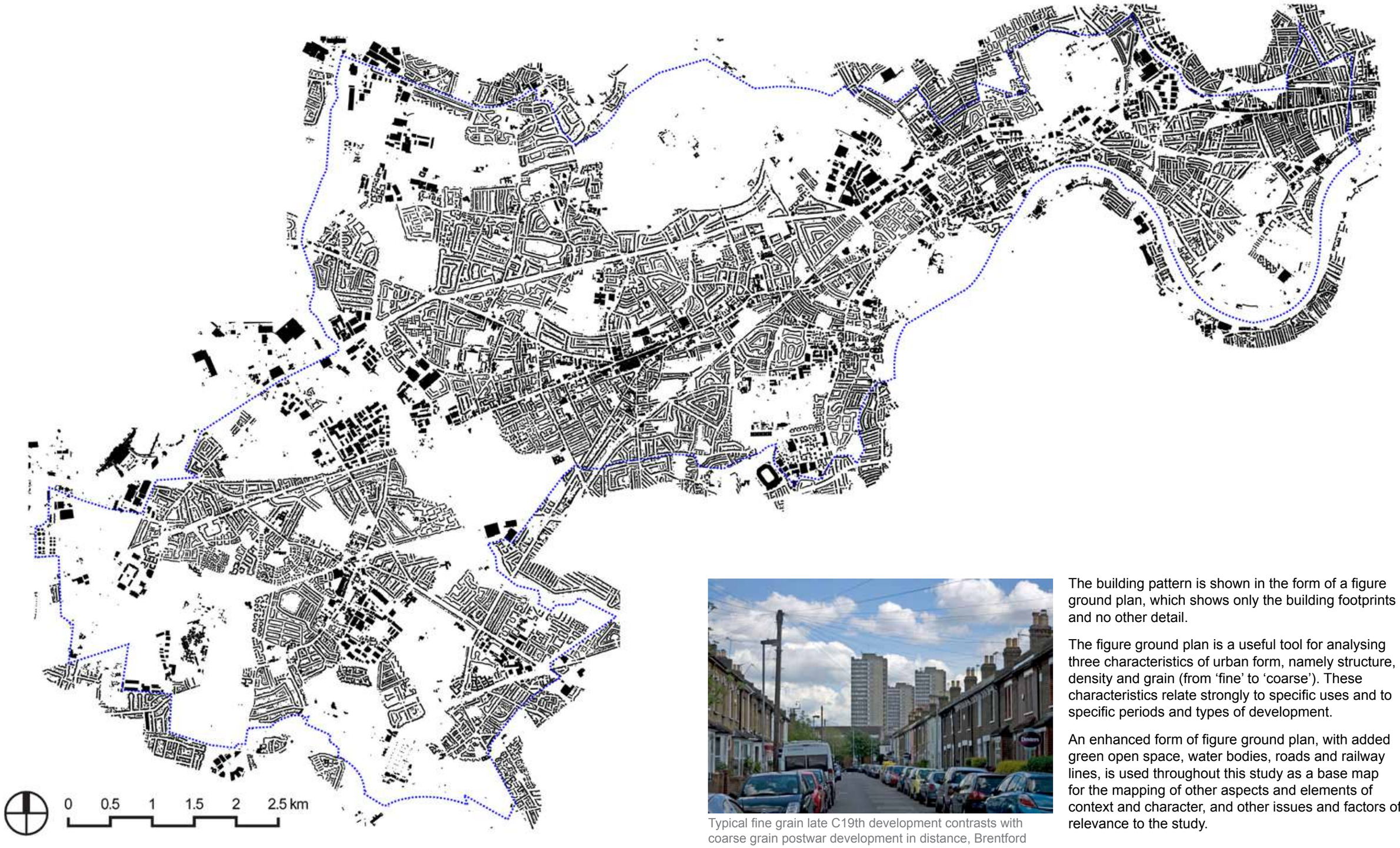
The key primary road is the A4 Great West Road, which runs east-west through the borough. Despite its major role and with the exception of the Golden Mile stretch, it is largely residential in character, though it can barely be said to function as a street.

The A315 Staines Road/London Road/Chiswick High Road is the principal secondary road and runs through many parts of the borough. It can be considered of greater importance than the other secondary roads as it serves both a key link role and a vital place role.

There are numerous tertiary roads that connect up different parts of the borough. Their role is to connect the primary and secondary roads, link up the residential areas and feed the local streets.

There are hundreds of smaller local streets in the borough. They are mainly residential in nature and vary greatly in their character and include a large number of cul de sacs that do not function as links.

Building pattern



Typical fine grain late C19th development contrasts with coarse grain postwar development in distance, Brentford

The building pattern is shown in the form of a figure ground plan, which shows only the building footprints and no other detail.

The figure ground plan is a useful tool for analysing three characteristics of urban form, namely structure, density and grain (from ‘fine’ to ‘coarse’). These characteristics relate strongly to specific uses and to specific periods and types of development.

An enhanced form of figure ground plan, with added green open space, water bodies, roads and railway lines, is used throughout this study as a base map for the mapping of other aspects and elements of context and character, and other issues and factors of relevance to the study.

Block pattern



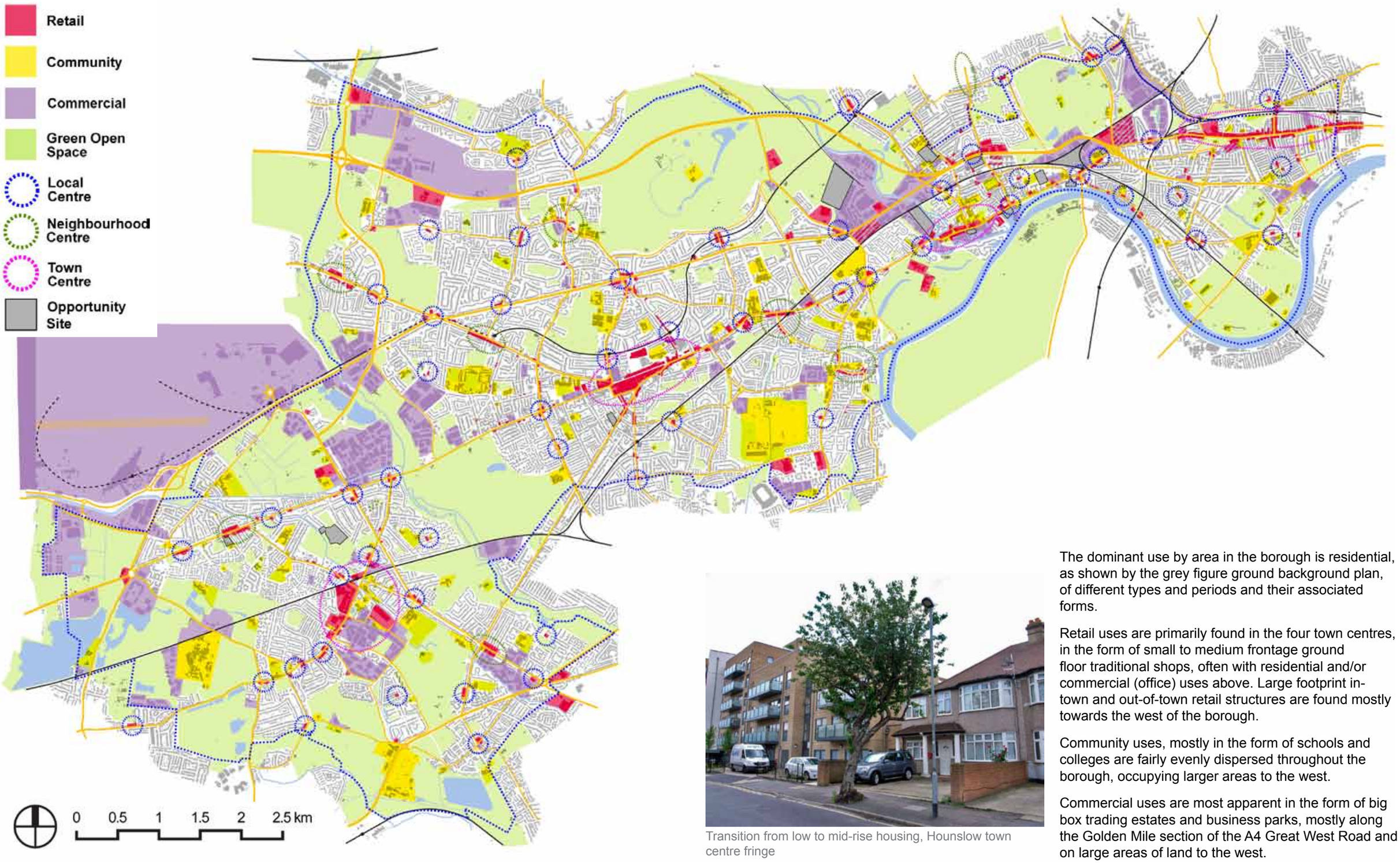
Late C20th trading estate typical of the larger block size, Feltham

The block pattern plan shows only the urban blocks as defined by the edges of highways, and offers a more movement-, connectivity-, legibility- and permeability-oriented tool for analysis of urban form.

The differing shapes and sizes of urban blocks relate strongly to specific uses and to specific periods and types of development.

An enhanced form of block pattern plan, with added green open space, water bodies, roads and railway lines, is used throughout this study as a base map for the mapping of other aspects and elements of context and character, and other issues and factors of relevance to the study.

Land and building use



Transition from low to mid-rise housing, Hounslow town centre fringe

The dominant use by area in the borough is residential, as shown by the grey figure ground background plan, of different types and periods and their associated forms.

Retail uses are primarily found in the four town centres, in the form of small to medium frontage ground floor traditional shops, often with residential and/or commercial (office) uses above. Large footprint in-town and out-of-town retail structures are found mostly towards the west of the borough.

Community uses, mostly in the form of schools and colleges are fairly evenly dispersed throughout the borough, occupying larger areas to the west.

Commercial uses are most apparent in the form of big box trading estates and business parks, mostly along the Golden Mile section of the A4 Great West Road and on large areas of land to the west.

Movement and legibility



The Thames Path at Strand on the Green, Chiswick

Legibility is the degree to which a place can be easily understood, remembered, described and above all moved through.

The barriers to movement, though discontinuous, mark distinct physical and perceptual edges which in some cases delimit and define broad areas.

Landmarks shown at this scale are prominent elements by virtue of their height and/or mass that are highly distinctive relative to their surrounding environment and create distinct visual orientation points. Landmarks provide a sense of location within the larger townscape and may act as markers of other elements, often unintentionally.

Gateways are points on a route which serve as major entries into an area. They may be marked by entrance features.

The views shown at this scale are long and broad in scope and are often of major landmarks and other distinctive components.

All of the above contribute to the borough's varying degrees of legibility.

Green infrastructure

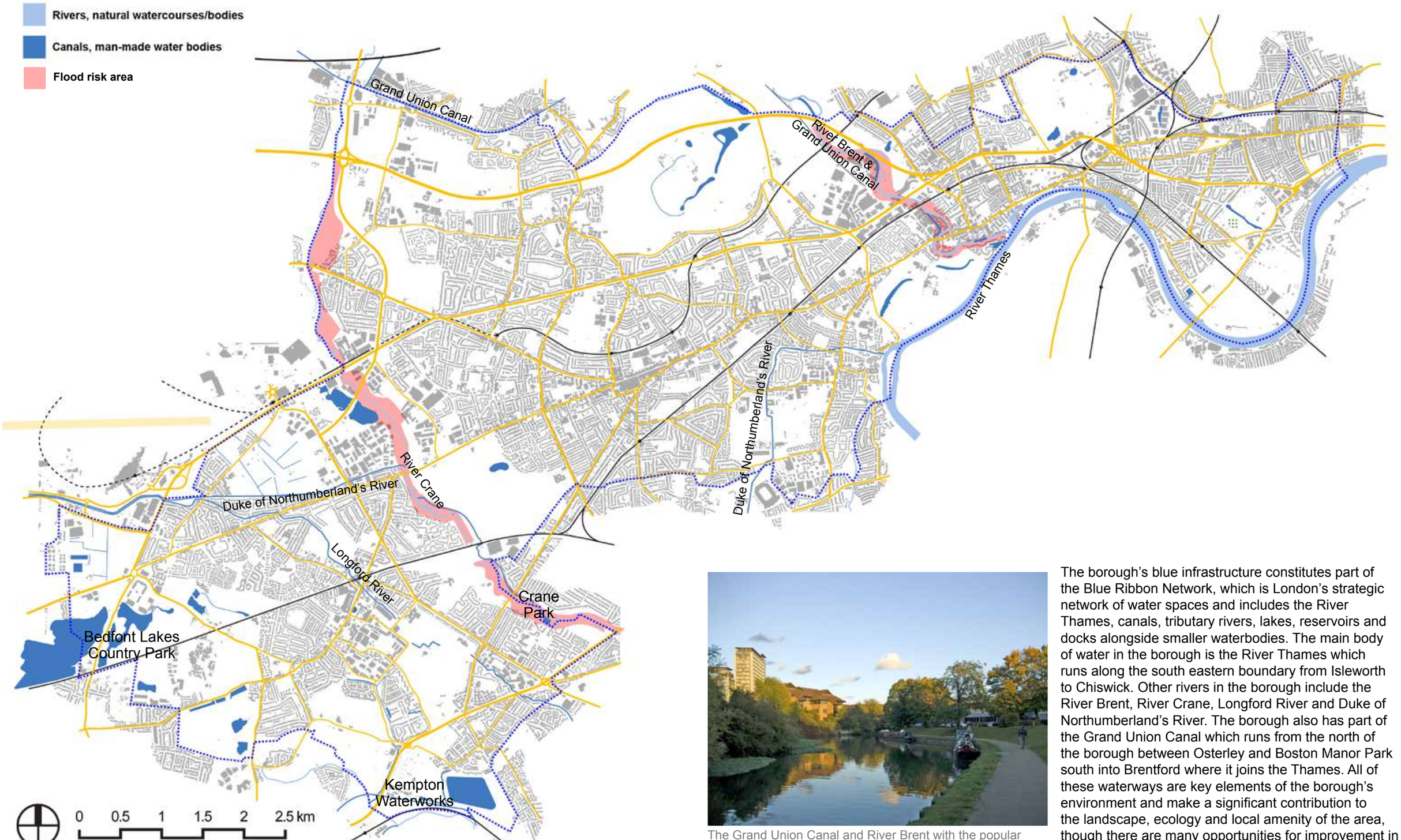


The borough has one of the largest amounts of open space in London. The Green Belt covers open space in the west of the borough up to and including Hounslow Heath, which is south west of Hounslow town centre. Most of the larger open spaces which do not sit within the Green Belt designation are designated as Metropolitan Open Land. These include Osterley Park, Chiswick House and Gardens, Duke's Meadows, Gunnersbury Park, Boston Manor Park and Syon Park. There are also a number of smaller open spaces and parks in the borough that play a valuable role in providing for more informal recreation, including dog walking and children's play. In addition to the recreational open spaces, the borough also has many nature conservation areas, the most important of which is Kempton Waterworks (including the reservoirs), situated in the far south of the borough, designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a Special Protection Area (SPA) and a Ramsar site as part of the wider South West London Waterbodies designation.

The quality of the council-owned open spaces is generally good across the borough. However there are some notable differences from west to east. There is by far the largest amount of council-owned open space in the west, which due to its location on the edge of the borough and outskirts of London forms much of the Green Belt designation. Some of the lowest quality open spaces are in the west, with the higher quality spaces located in Isleworth, Brentford and Chiswick.

Imaginatively re-used railway land at Gunnersbury Triangle Nature Reserve

Blue infrastructure



The Grand Union Canal and River Brent with the popular towpath at Brentford

The borough's blue infrastructure constitutes part of the Blue Ribbon Network, which is London's strategic network of water spaces and includes the River Thames, canals, tributary rivers, lakes, reservoirs and docks alongside smaller waterbodies. The main body of water in the borough is the River Thames which runs along the south eastern boundary from Isleworth to Chiswick. Other rivers in the borough include the River Brent, River Crane, Longford River and Duke of Northumberland's River. The borough also has part of the Grand Union Canal which runs from the north of the borough between Osterley and Boston Manor Park south into Brentford where it joins the Thames. All of these waterways are key elements of the borough's environment and make a significant contribution to the landscape, ecology and local amenity of the area, though there are many opportunities for improvement in respect of accessibility and condition.

Heritage assets

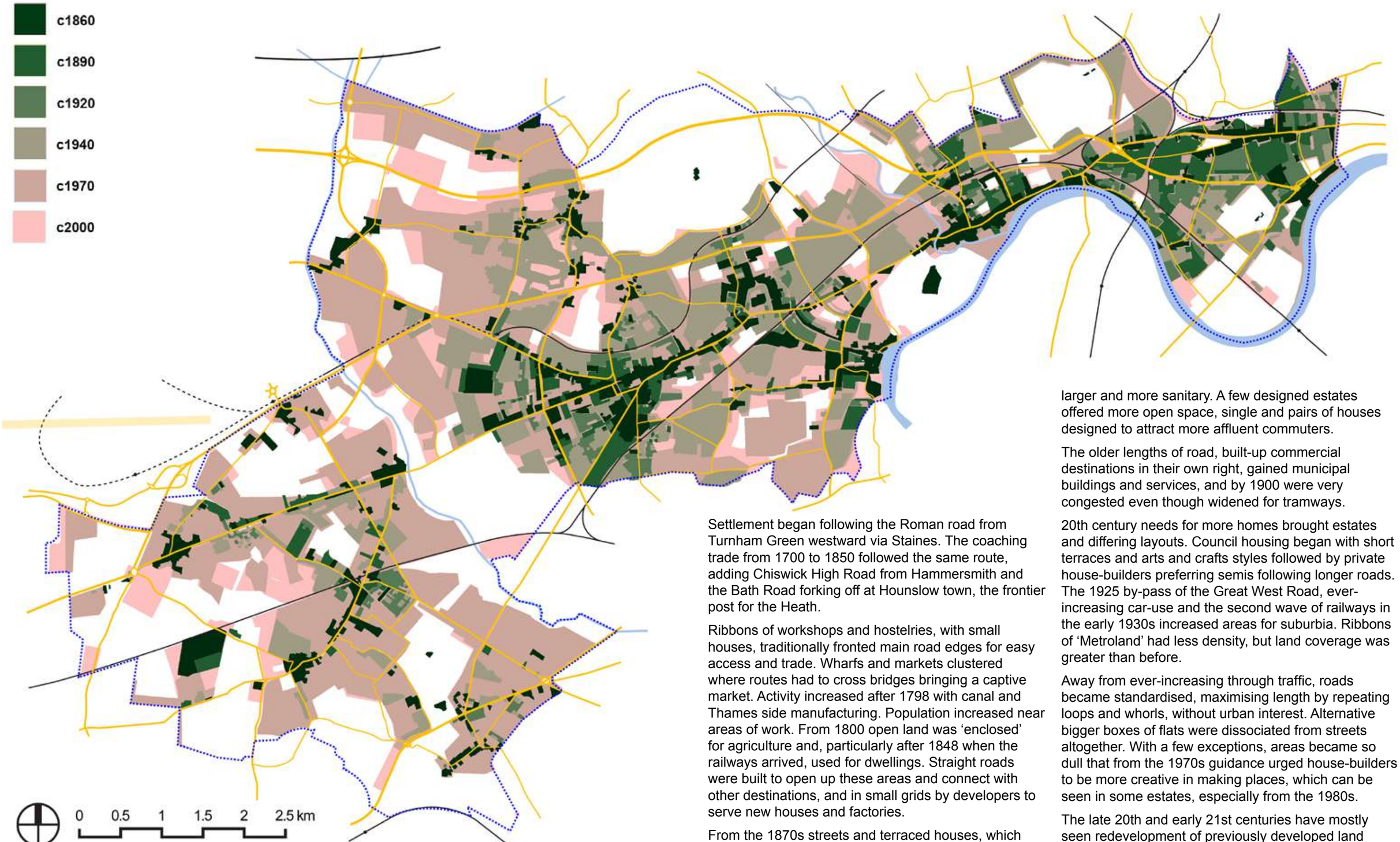


Heritage asset brought back into use as part of a new waterfront residential development, Brentford

In terms of built heritage, the borough has a rich and varied landscape including 28 conservation areas covering some 994 hectares. The majority are concentrated in the east of the borough, in Chiswick, Brentford and Isleworth. These are also the locations of the borough's five Great Estates of Chiswick, Gunnersbury, Boston Manor, Osterley and Syon, a unique and distinctive aspect of the borough which contributes significantly to the environmental and cultural wealth of the borough. There are 885 buildings both commercial and domestic which are statutorily Listed Buildings, as well as 262 locally listed buildings of townscape character. These buildings have a considerable influence on the townscape of the borough. It is important that any new development preserves and enhances these buildings and their settings. There are also a small number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and a dozen Archaeological Priority Areas. The list of h68585858eritage assets is regularly being updated demonstrating that the appreciation of special interest evolves, with new assets being uncovered and new demands and pressures on the heritage landscape requiring additional protection.

Immediately south of the eastern part of the borough lies the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew World Heritage Site, commonly known as Kew Gardens, whose buffer zone extends to the Brentford river front and across Syon Park, and which is highly sensitive to the development of tall buildings.

Urban growth



Settlement began following the Roman road from Turnham Green westward via Staines. The coaching trade from 1700 to 1850 followed the same route, adding Chiswick High Road from Hammersmith and the Bath Road forking off at Hounslow town, the frontier post for the Heath.

Ribbons of workshops and hostelries, with small houses, traditionally fronted main road edges for easy access and trade. Wharfs and markets clustered where routes had to cross bridges bringing a captive market. Activity increased after 1798 with canal and Thames side manufacturing. Population increased near areas of work. From 1800 open land was ‘enclosed’ for agriculture and, particularly after 1848 when the railways arrived, used for dwellings. Straight roads were built to open up these areas and connect with other destinations, and in small grids by developers to serve new houses and factories.

From the 1870s streets and terraced houses, which filled in market gardens, open or private lands, became larger and more sanitary. A few designed estates offered more open space, single and pairs of houses designed to attract more affluent commuters.

The older lengths of road, built-up commercial destinations in their own right, gained municipal buildings and services, and by 1900 were very congested even though widened for tramways.

20th century needs for more homes brought estates and differing layouts. Council housing began with short terraces and arts and crafts styles followed by private house-builders preferring semis following longer roads. The 1925 by-pass of the Great West Road, ever-increasing car-use and the second wave of railways in the early 1930s increased areas for suburbia. Ribbons of ‘Metroland’ had less density, but land coverage was greater than before.

Away from ever-increasing through traffic, roads became standardised, maximising length by repeating loops and whorls, without urban interest. Alternative bigger boxes of flats were dissociated from streets altogether. With a few exceptions, areas became so dull that from the 1970s guidance urged house-builders to be more creative in making places, which can be seen in some estates, especially from the 1980s.

The late 20th and early 21st centuries have mostly seen redevelopment of previously developed land though with some expansion into fringe open land.

Urban types



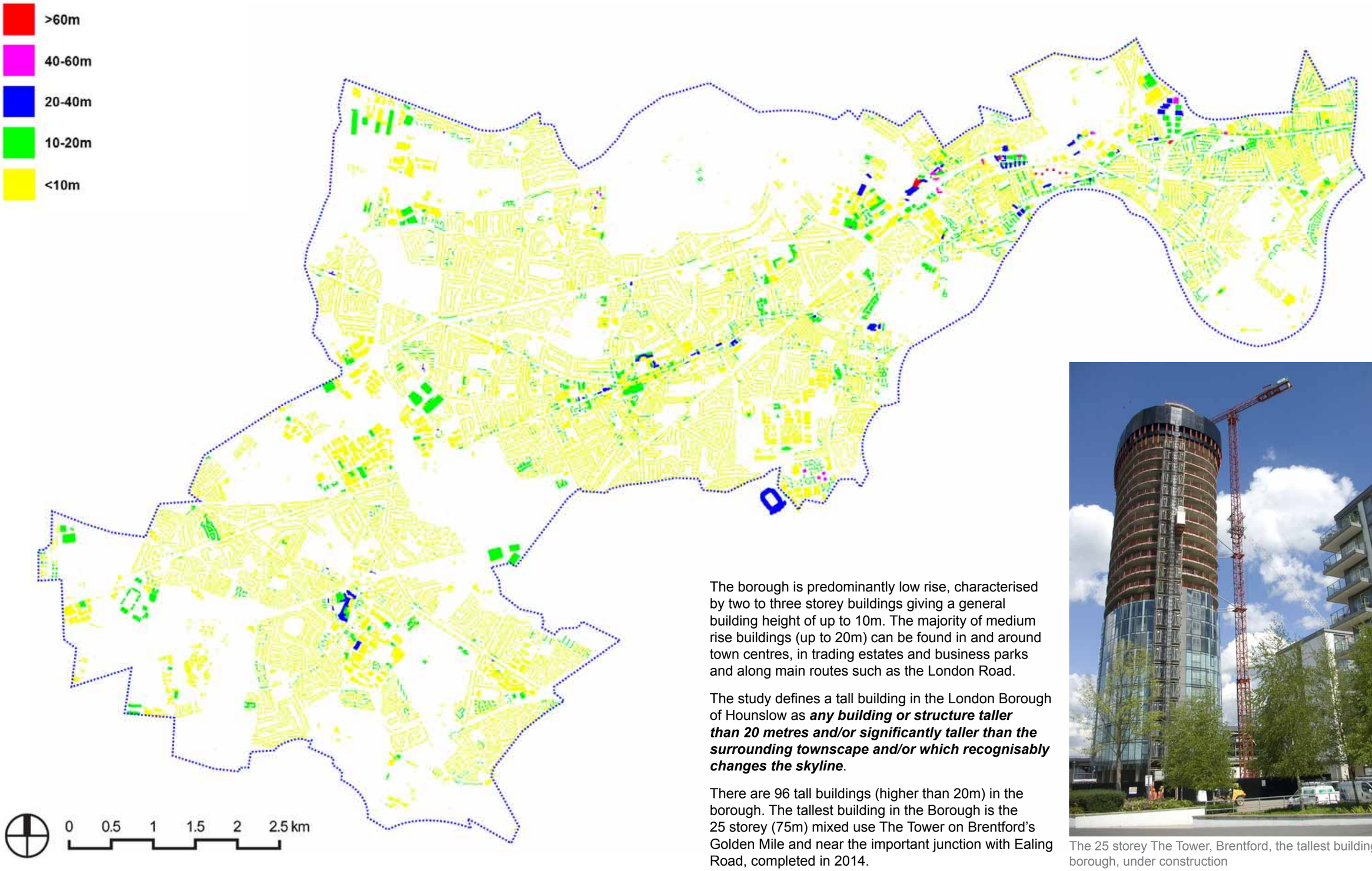
The compact grid type 1 appears around the town centres and in tiny pockets elsewhere in the borough

Seven broad urban types have been identified which are common to and may be found across the entire borough.

In Section 4: Urban Types each type is described in detail and analysed on the basis of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). This will ultimately provide a basis on which to prepare general design recommendations based on the qualities of each type along with more specific recommendations for each study area and its character areas.

It should be noted that there is often overlap between the urban types identified, for example, the compact grids of type 1 evolved smoothly into the looser grids of type 2, and the slabs and towers that characterise type 3 may contain elements of the low-rise courts and cul-de-sacs layouts of type 4. Furthermore not all examples of each type exhibit all of the characteristics in the summary of the types.

Building heights



The borough is predominantly low rise, characterised by two to three storey buildings giving a general building height of up to 10m. The majority of medium rise buildings (up to 20m) can be found in and around town centres, in trading estates and business parks and along main routes such as the London Road.

The study defines a tall building in the London Borough of Hounslow as ***any building or structure taller than 20 metres and/or significantly taller than the surrounding townscape and/or which recognisably changes the skyline***.

There are 96 tall buildings (higher than 20m) in the borough. The tallest building in the Borough is the 25 storey (75m) mixed use The Tower on Brentford's Golden Mile and near the important junction with Ealing Road, completed in 2014.



The 25 storey The Tower, Brentford, the tallest building in the borough, under construction

Housing density



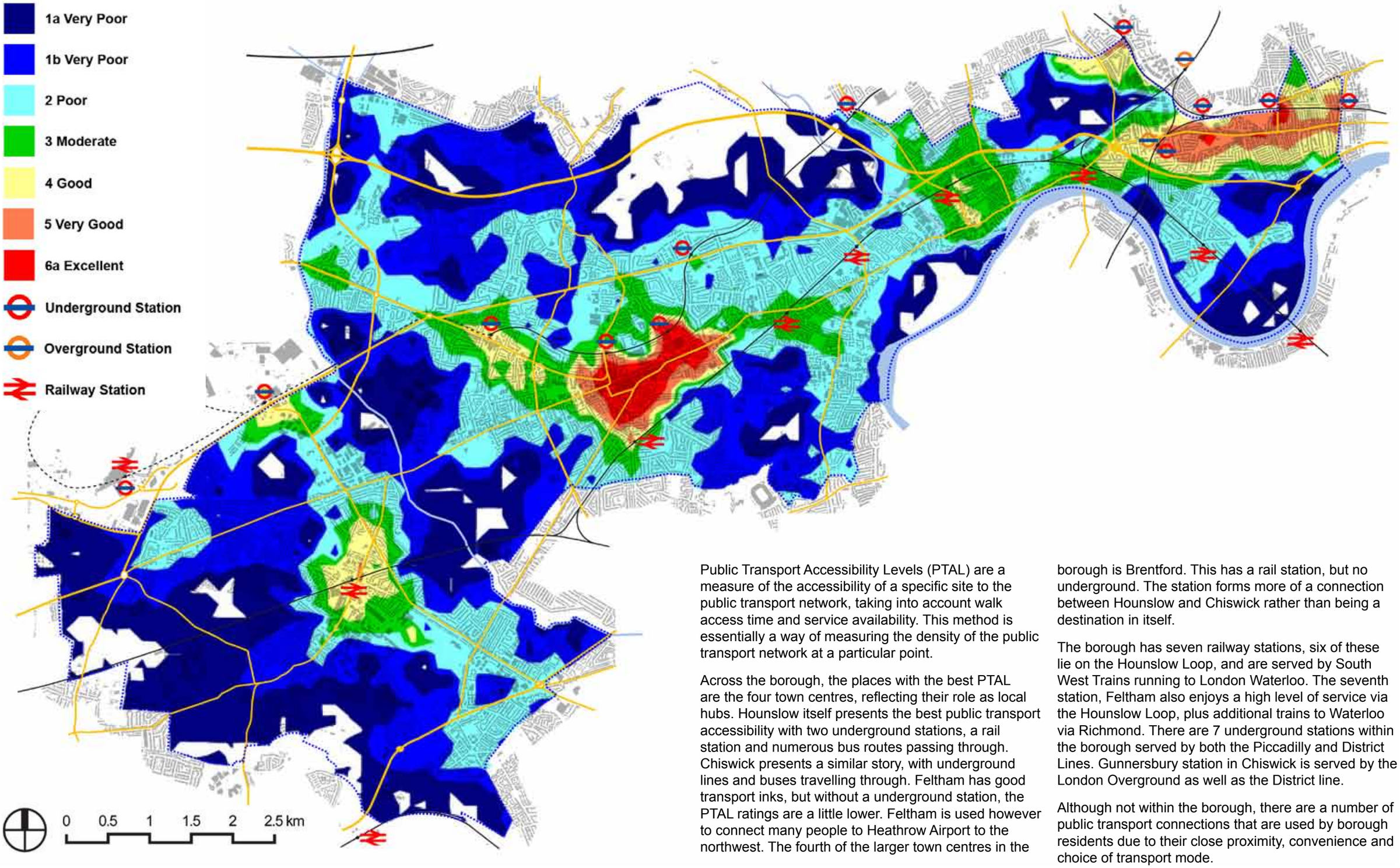
New development of 3 to 5 storey flats and town houses offering higher densities than the prevalent local type, Isleworth

The extensive residential areas of the borough are on the whole built to a low-to-medium density, characteristic of their interwar suburban origins. Higher densities are to be found in the older eastern parts of the borough and around the historic settlement cores. They are also found in the high rise 1970s estates and in the increasing numbers of urban renaissance-style c2000 developments.

The total number of existing dwellings in the borough is estimated to be 97,000 (2011Census).

In terms of dwelling type, the largest proportion of the borough's homes are provided as flats at 34.9% of the total stock. The next largest group is semi-detached housing at 29.3% followed by terraced housing at 22.9%. The fourth most significant group is shared houses, which provide 6.6% of the stock. There has been a small but significant shift in the character of housing stock as the majority of new homes are provided in purpose built blocks of flats at higher densities, a trend that is likely to continue.

Access to public transport



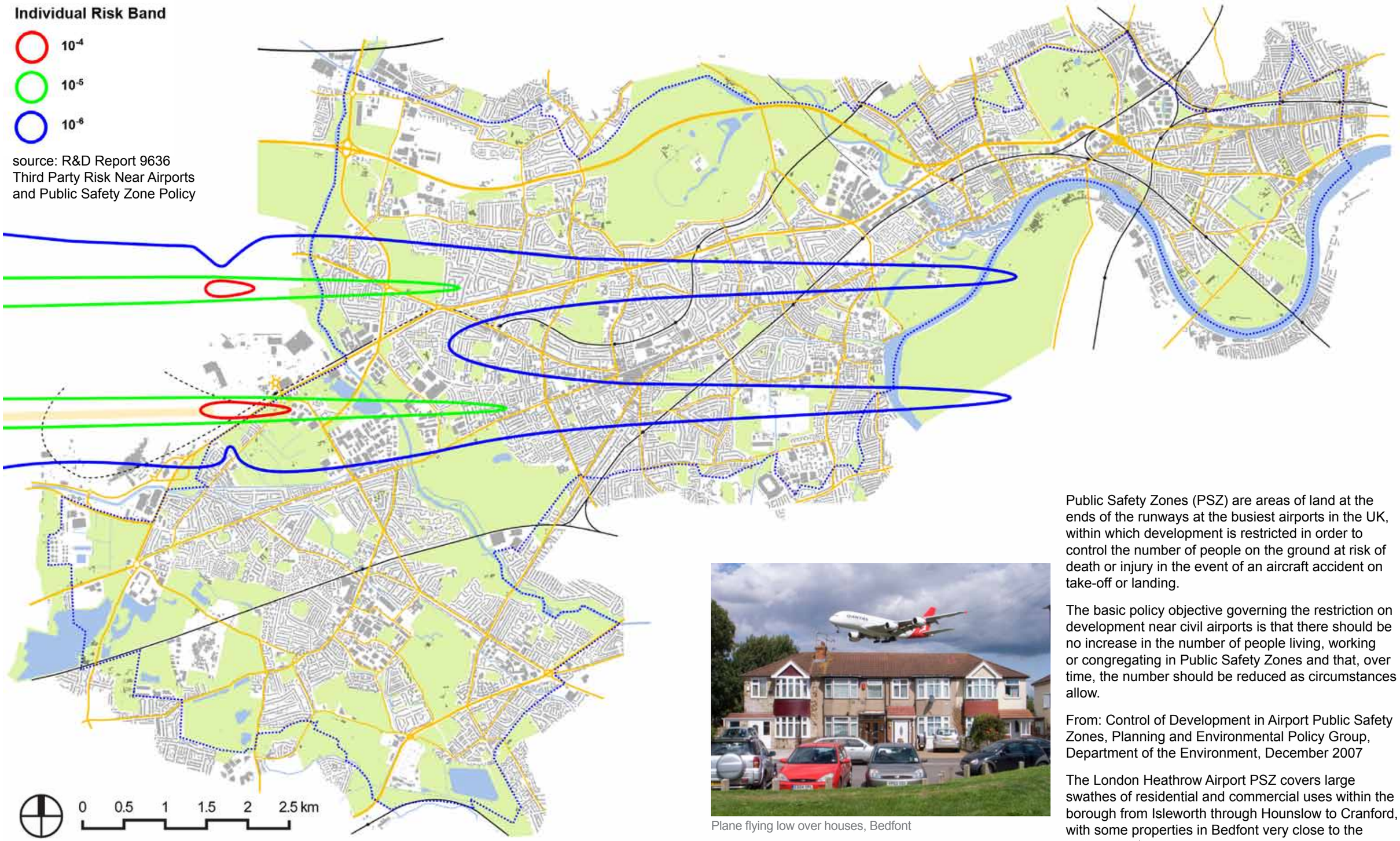
Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTAL) are a measure of the accessibility of a specific site to the public transport network, taking into account walk access time and service availability. This method is essentially a way of measuring the density of the public transport network at a particular point.

Across the borough, the places with the best PTAL are the four town centres, reflecting their role as local hubs. Hounslow itself presents the best public transport accessibility with two underground stations, a rail station and numerous bus routes passing through. Chiswick presents a similar story, with underground lines and buses travelling through. Feltham has good transport inks, but without a underground station, the PTAL ratings are a little lower. Feltham is used however to connect many people to Heathrow Airport to the northwest. The fourth of the larger town centres in the borough is Brentford. This has a rail station, but no underground. The station forms more of a connection between Hounslow and Chiswick rather than being a destination in itself.

The borough has seven railway stations, six of these lie on the Hounslow Loop, and are served by South West Trains running to London Waterloo. The seventh station, Feltham also enjoys a high level of service via the Hounslow Loop, plus additional trains to Waterloo via Richmond. There are 7 underground stations within the borough served by both the Piccadilly and District Lines. Gunnersbury station in Chiswick is served by the London Overground as well as the District line.

Although not within the borough, there are a number of public transport connections that are used by borough residents due to their close proximity, convenience and choice of transport mode.

Public safety zones



source: R&D Report 9636
Third Party Risk Near Airports
and Public Safety Zone Policy

Plane flying low over houses, Bedfont

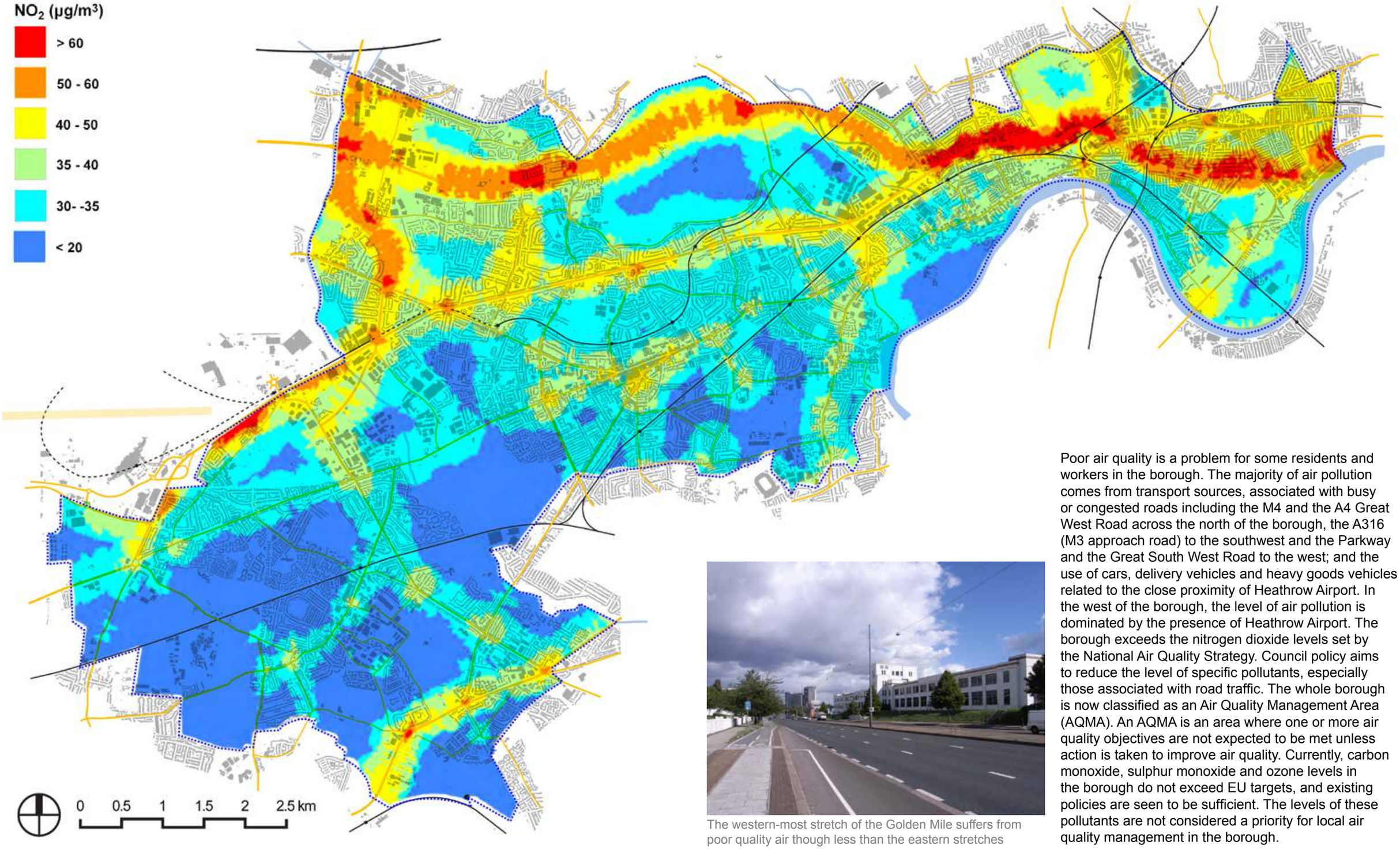
Public Safety Zones (PSZ) are areas of land at the ends of the runways at the busiest airports in the UK, within which development is restricted in order to control the number of people on the ground at risk of death or injury in the event of an aircraft accident on take-off or landing.

The basic policy objective governing the restriction on development near civil airports is that there should be no increase in the number of people living, working or congregating in Public Safety Zones and that, over time, the number should be reduced as circumstances allow.

From: Control of Development in Airport Public Safety Zones, Planning and Environmental Policy Group, Department of the Environment, December 2007

The London Heathrow Airport PSZ covers large swathes of residential and commercial uses within the borough from Isleworth through Hounslow to Cranford, with some properties in Bedfont very close to the highest (10^{-4}) risk area.

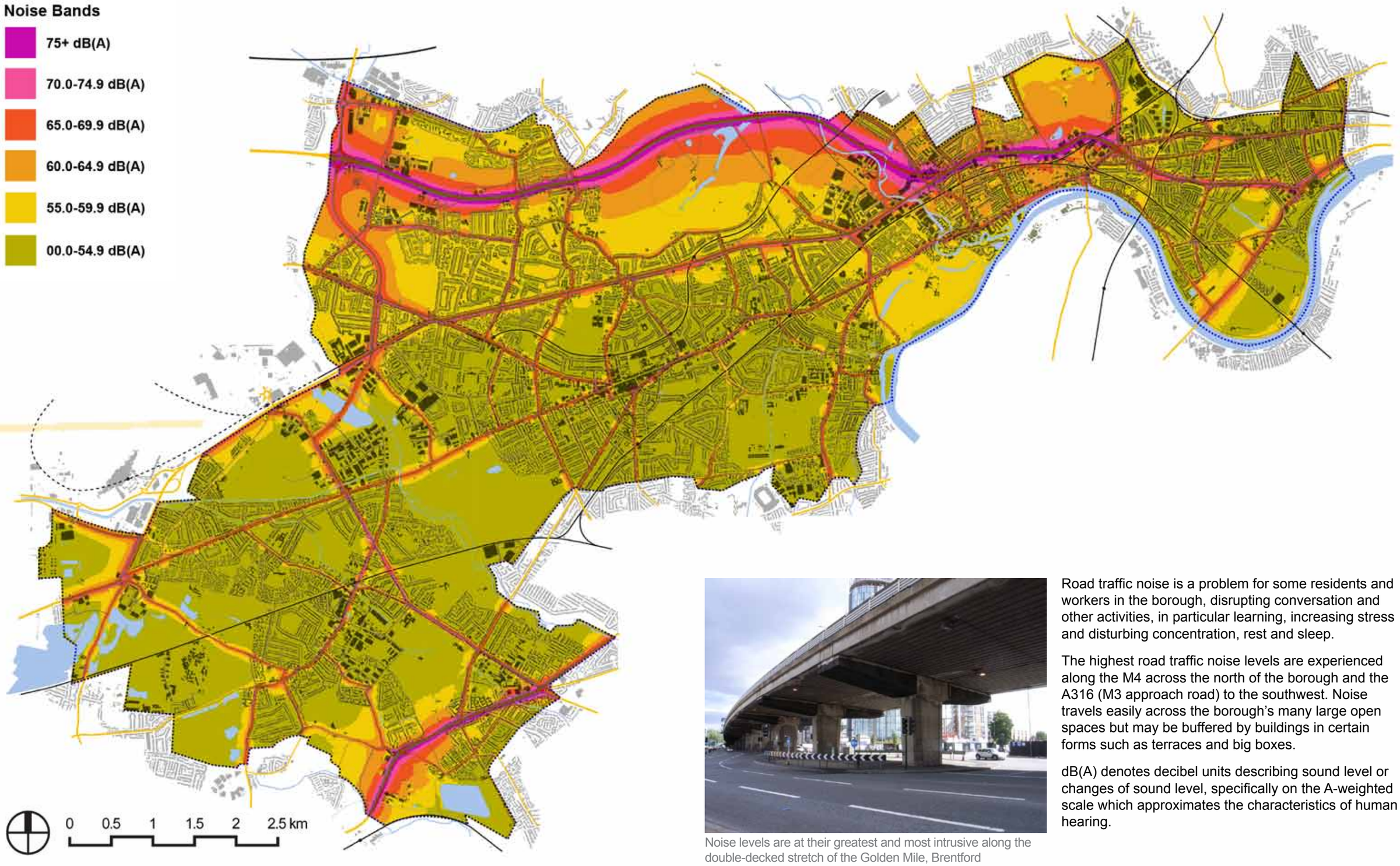
Air quality



The western-most stretch of the Golden Mile suffers from poor quality air though less than the eastern stretches

Poor air quality is a problem for some residents and workers in the borough. The majority of air pollution comes from transport sources, associated with busy or congested roads including the M4 and the A4 Great West Road across the north of the borough, the A316 (M3 approach road) to the southwest and the Parkway and the Great South West Road to the west; and the use of cars, delivery vehicles and heavy goods vehicles related to the close proximity of Heathrow Airport. In the west of the borough, the level of air pollution is dominated by the presence of Heathrow Airport. The borough exceeds the nitrogen dioxide levels set by the National Air Quality Strategy. Council policy aims to reduce the level of specific pollutants, especially those associated with road traffic. The whole borough is now classified as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). An AQMA is an area where one or more air quality objectives are not expected to be met unless action is taken to improve air quality. Currently, carbon monoxide, sulphur monoxide and ozone levels in the borough do not exceed EU targets, and existing policies are seen to be sufficient. The levels of these pollutants are not considered a priority for local air quality management in the borough.

Road traffic noise



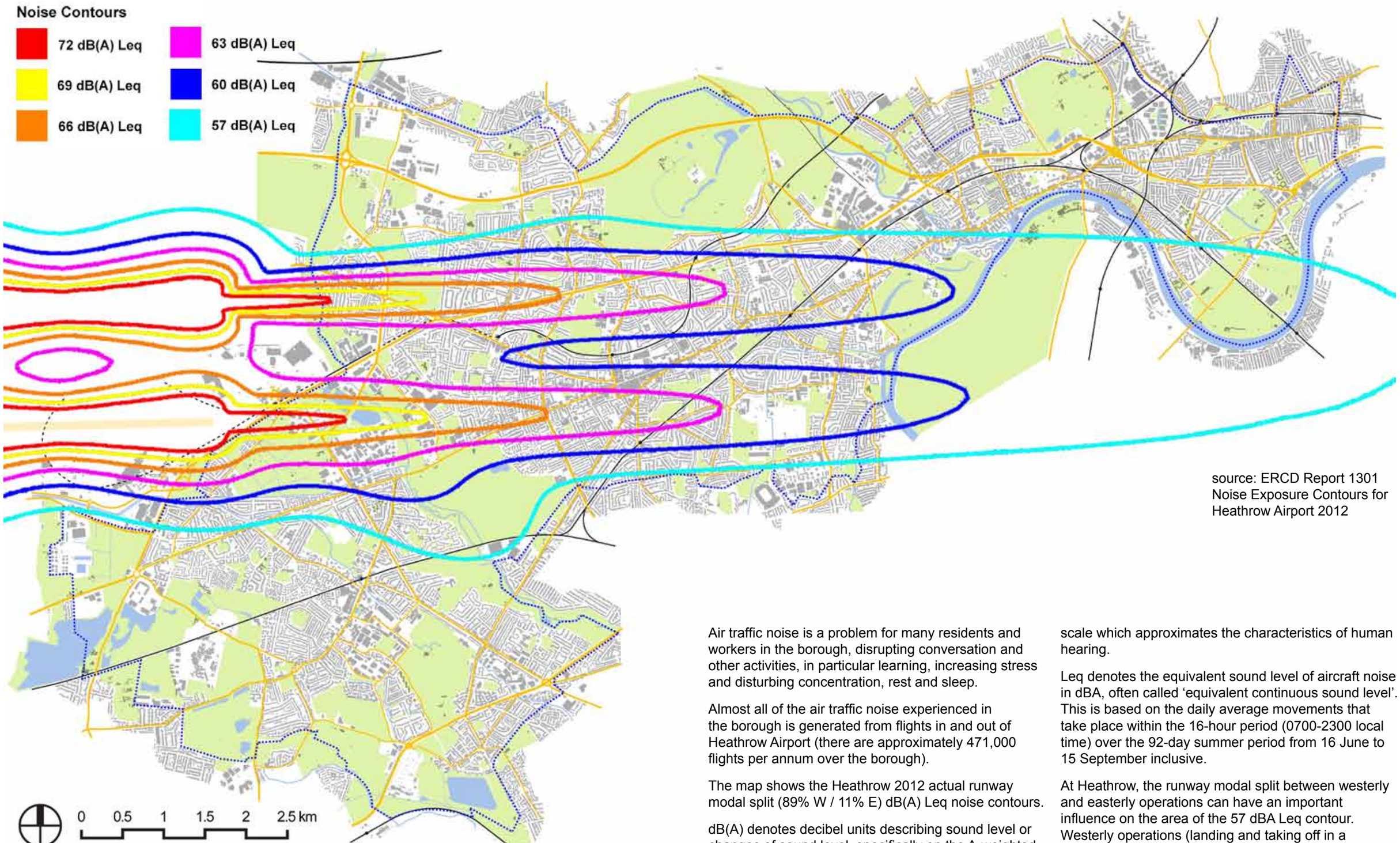
Noise levels are at their greatest and most intrusive along the double-decked stretch of the Golden Mile, Brentford

Road traffic noise is a problem for some residents and workers in the borough, disrupting conversation and other activities, in particular learning, increasing stress and disturbing concentration, rest and sleep.

The highest road traffic noise levels are experienced along the M4 across the north of the borough and the A316 (M3 approach road) to the southwest. Noise travels easily across the borough's many large open spaces but may be buffered by buildings in certain forms such as terraces and big boxes.

dB(A) denotes decibel units describing sound level or changes of sound level, specifically on the A-weighted scale which approximates the characteristics of human hearing.

Air traffic noise



source: ERCD Report 1301
Noise Exposure Contours for
Heathrow Airport 2012

Air traffic noise is a problem for many residents and workers in the borough, disrupting conversation and other activities, in particular learning, increasing stress and disturbing concentration, rest and sleep.

Almost all of the air traffic noise experienced in the borough is generated from flights in and out of Heathrow Airport (there are approximately 471,000 flights per annum over the borough).

The map shows the Heathrow 2012 actual runway modal split (89% W / 11% E) dB(A) Leq noise contours.

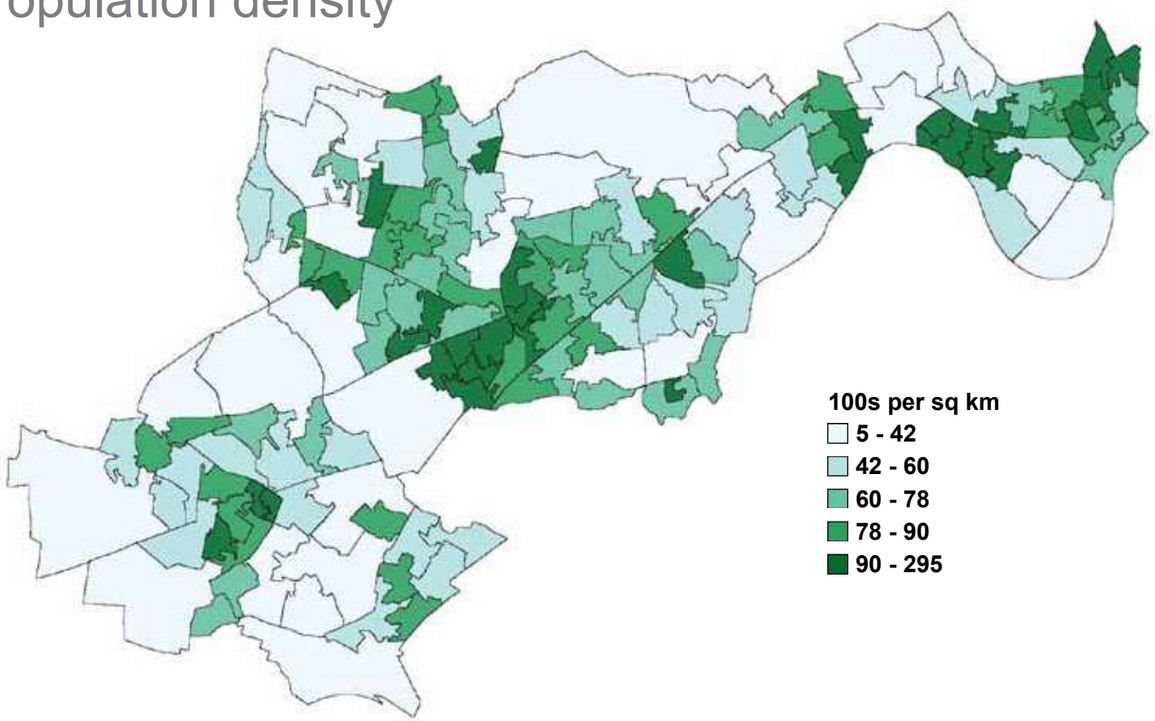
dB(A) denotes decibel units describing sound level or changes of sound level, specifically on the A-weighted scale which approximates the characteristics of human hearing.

Leq denotes the equivalent sound level of aircraft noise in dBA, often called ‘equivalent continuous sound level’. This is based on the daily average movements that take place within the 16-hour period (0700-2300 local time) over the 92-day summer period from 16 June to 15 September inclusive.

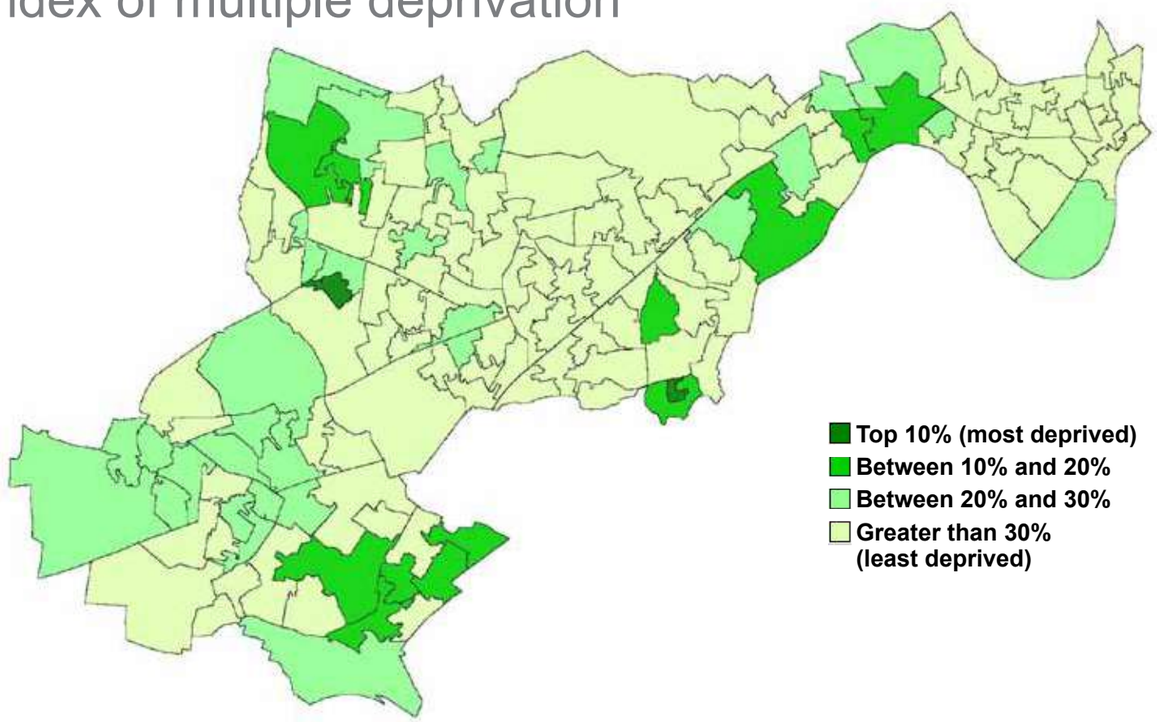
At Heathrow, the runway modal split between westerly and easterly operations can have an important influence on the area of the 57 dBA Leq contour. Westerly operations (landing and taking off in a westerly direction) are by far the most common.

Socio-economic dimension

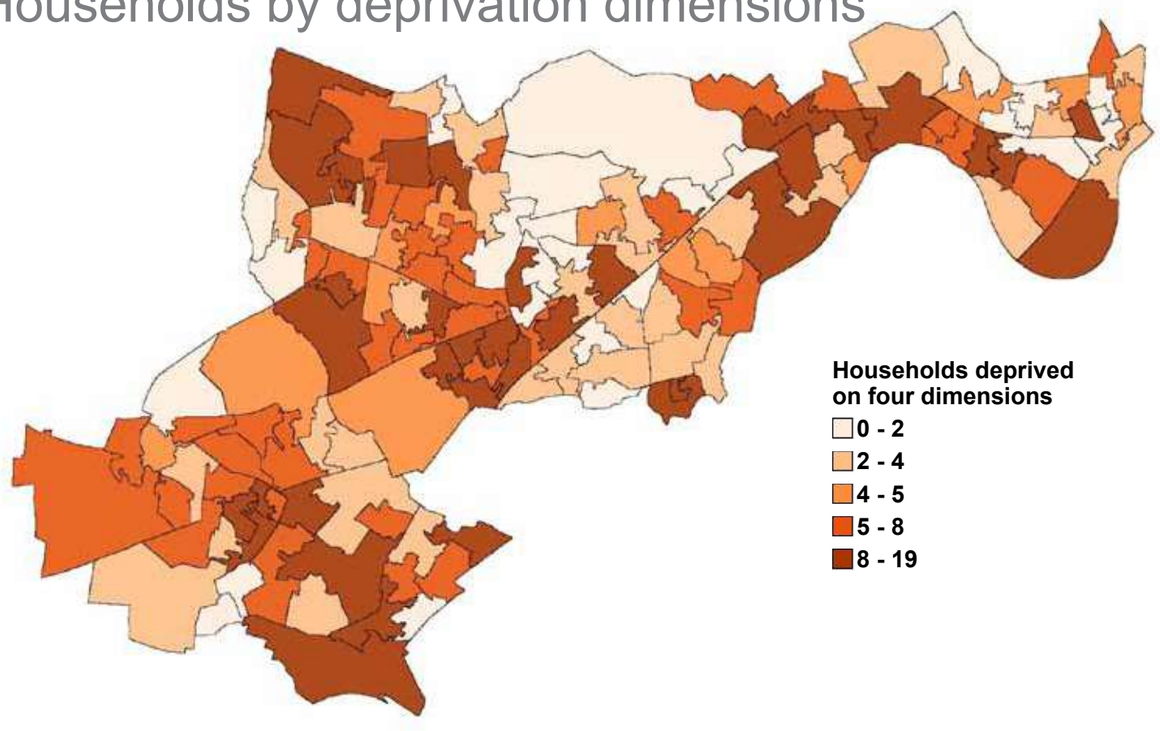
Population density



Index of multiple deprivation



Households by deprivation dimensions



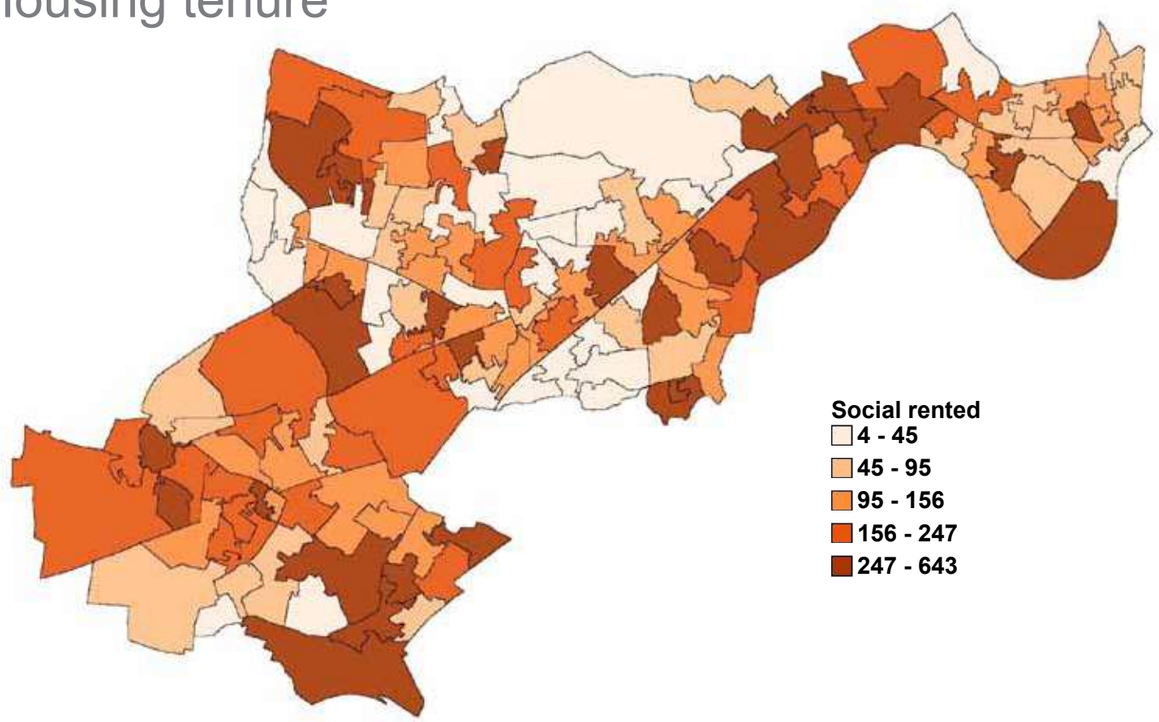
All information shown is derived from the Office of National Statistics' (ONS) 2011 Census data via the mapping service of the London Borough of Hounslow Council's GIS. Information is shown at the level of Lower Super Output Area (LSOA).

Population density refers to the number of people per unit of area, usually quoted per square kilometre.

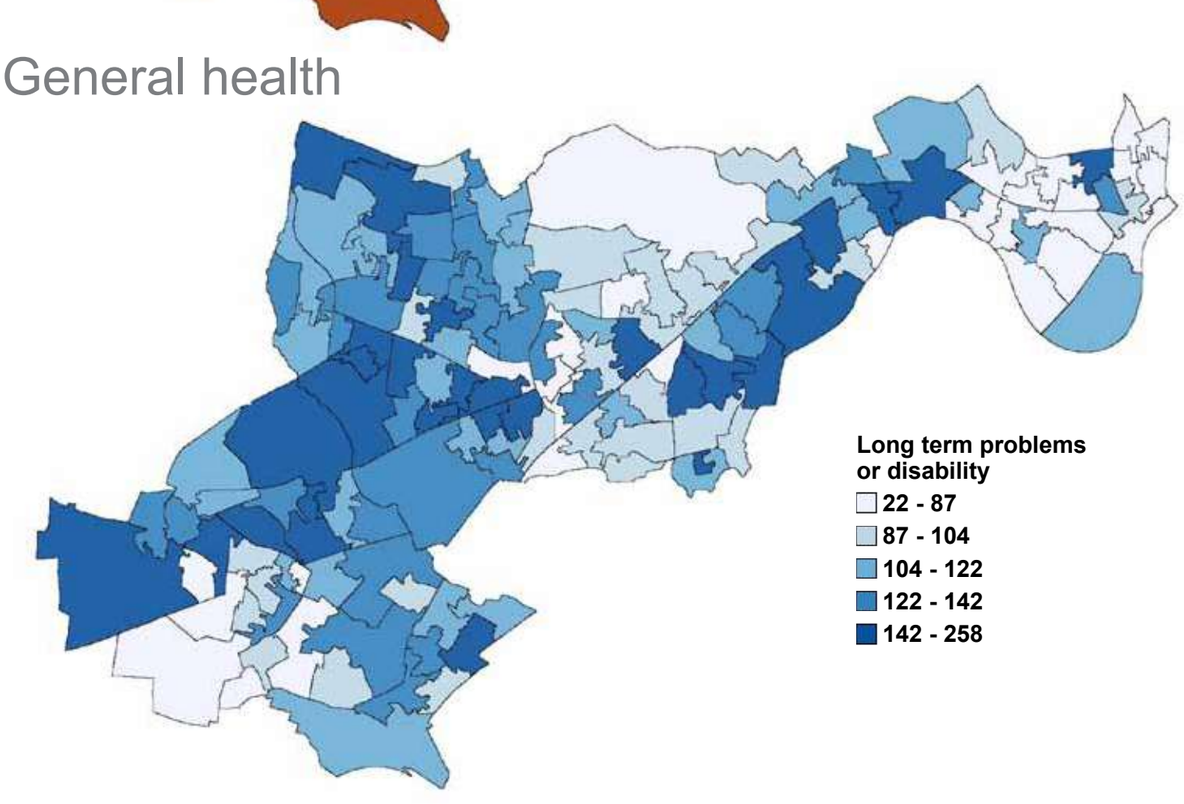
The Index of Multiple Deprivation combines a number of indicators, chosen to cover a range of economic, social and housing issues, into a single deprivation score for each small area in England. This allows each area to be ranked relative to one another according to their level of deprivation. The Index is made up of seven distinct dimensions of deprivation called Domain Indices. These are:

- Income
- Employment
- Health and disability
- Education, skills and training
- Barriers to Housing and Services
- Living environment
- Crime

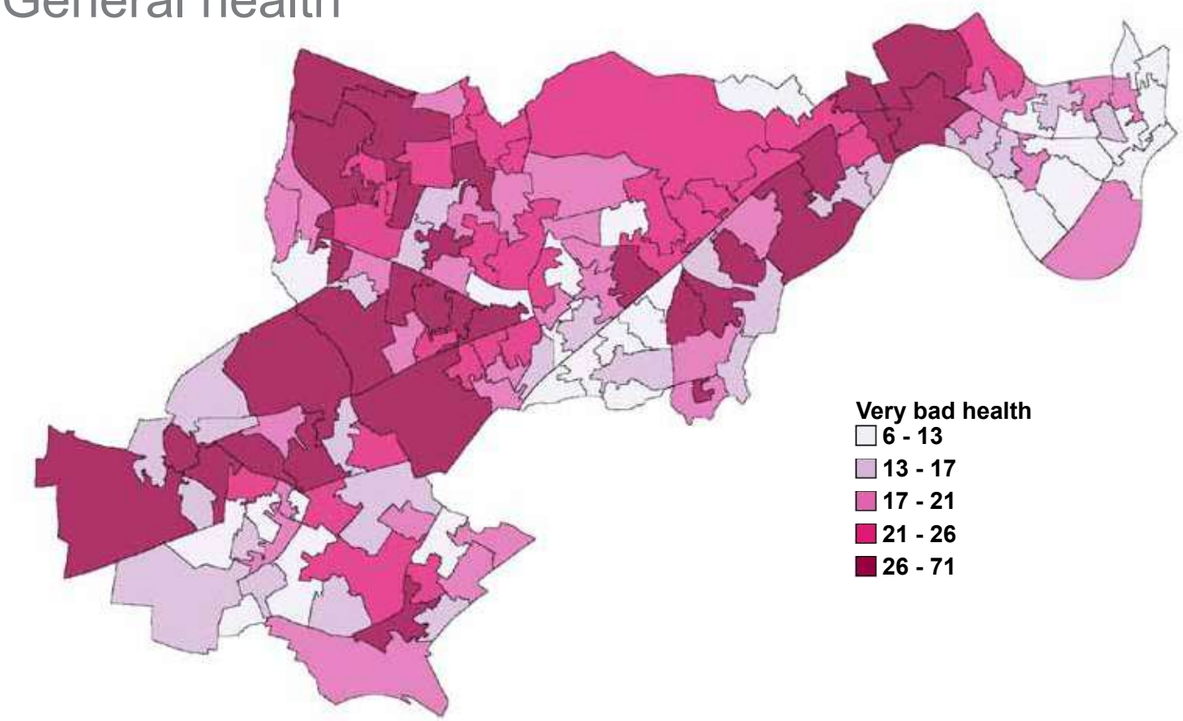
Housing tenure



General health



General health



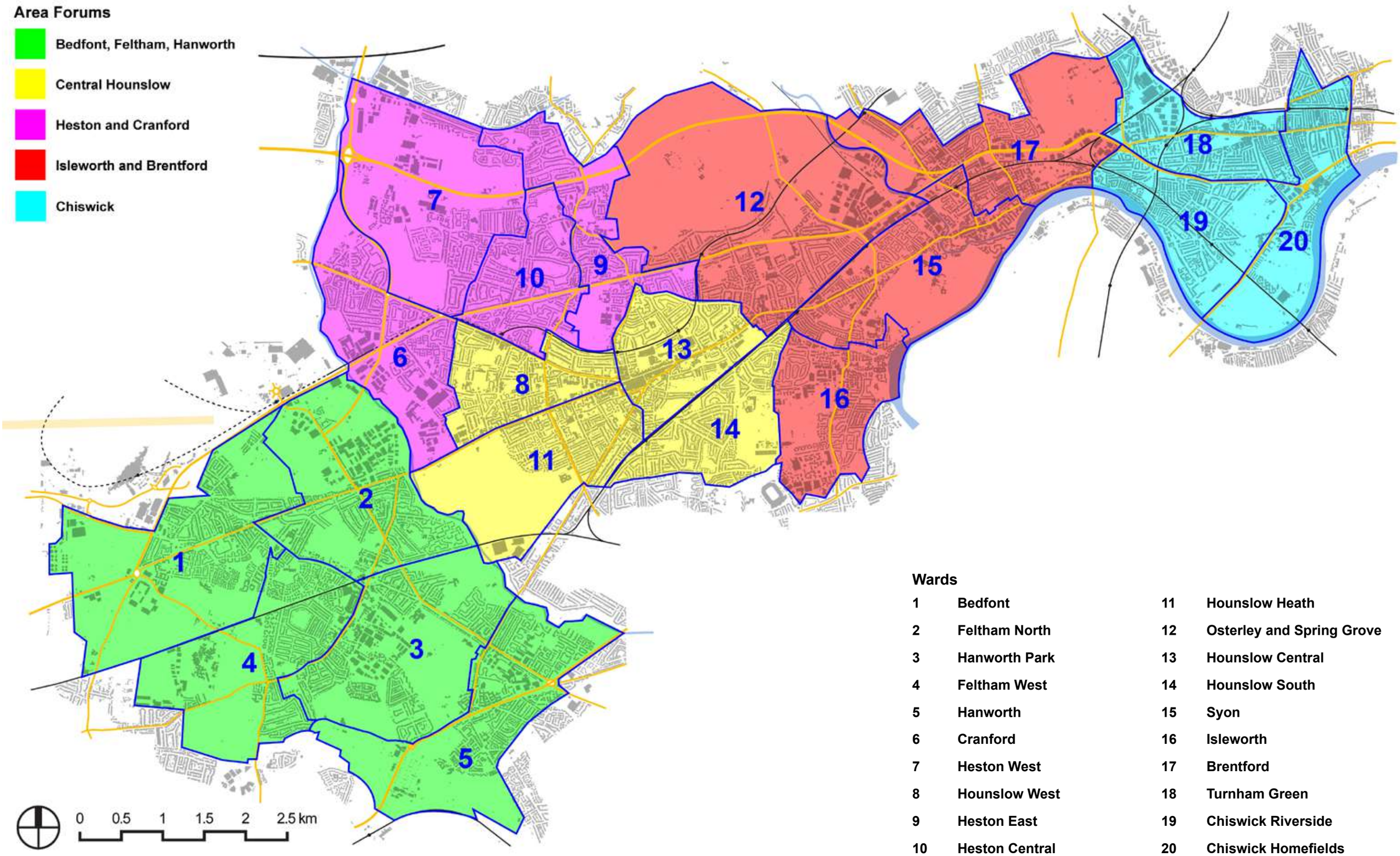
The dimensions of deprivation used to classify households are indicators based on the four selected household characteristics:

- Employment: any member of a household not a full-time student is either unemployed or long-term sick.
- Education: no person in the household has at least level 2 education, and no person aged 16-18 is a full-time student.
- Health and disability: any person in the household has general health ‘bad or very bad’ or has a long term health problem.
- Housing: Household’s accommodation is either overcrowded, with an occupancy rating -1 or less, or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating

Housing tenure refers to the financial arrangements under which someone has the right to live in a house or apartment. The most frequent forms are tenancy, in which rent is paid to a landlord, and owner occupancy. Mixed forms of tenure are also possible and are indeed becoming increasingly common.

See Borough overview for specific information on the borough’s socio-economic dimension with current and projected statistics.

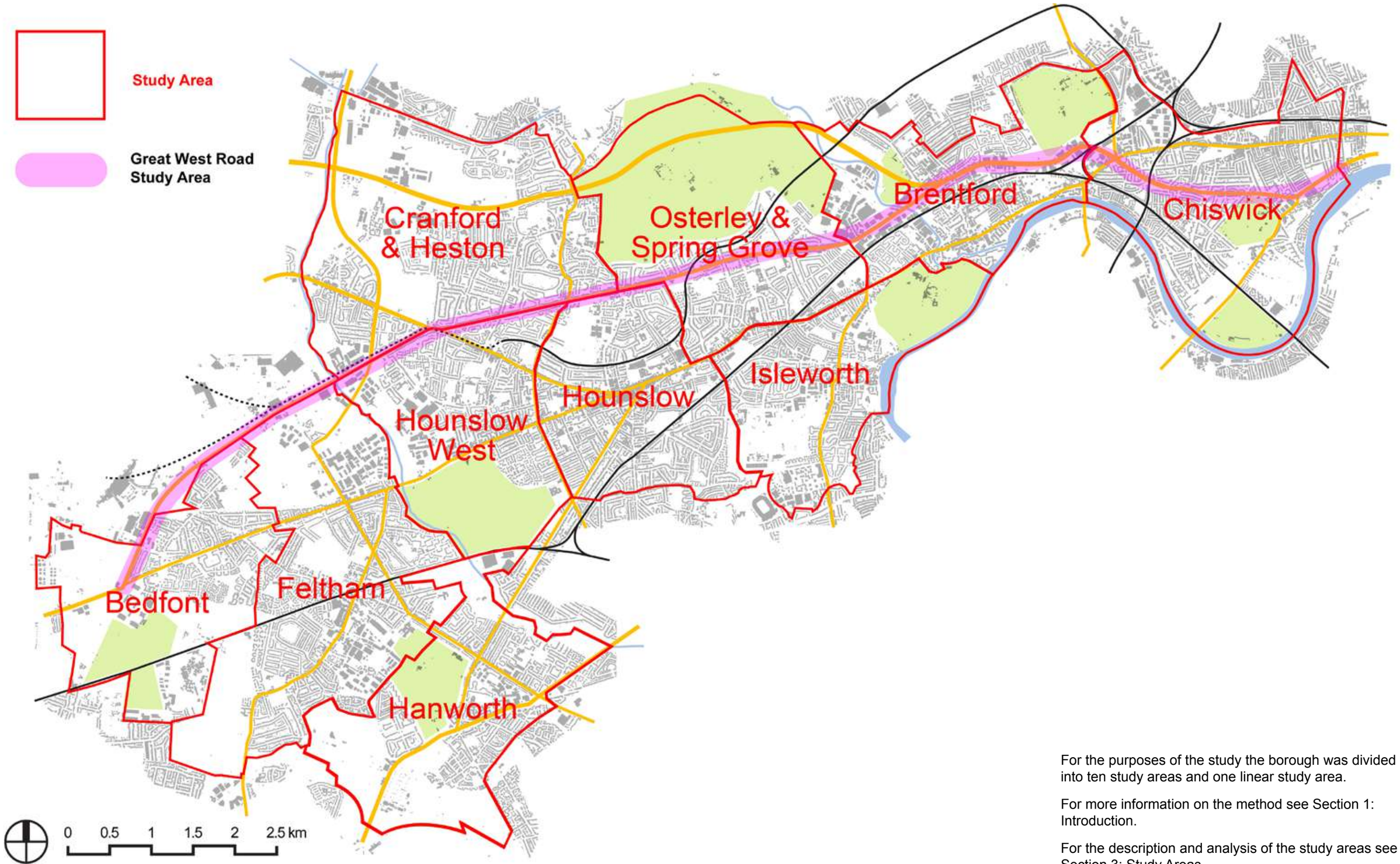
Political and administrative areas



Wards

1	Bedfont	11	Hounslow Heath
2	Feltham North	12	Osterley and Spring Grove
3	Hanworth Park	13	Hounslow Central
4	Feltham West	14	Hounslow South
5	Hanworth	15	Syon
6	Cranford	16	Isleworth
7	Heston West	17	Brentford
8	Hounslow West	18	Turnham Green
9	Heston East	19	Chiswick Riverside
10	Heston Central	20	Chiswick Homefields

Study areas



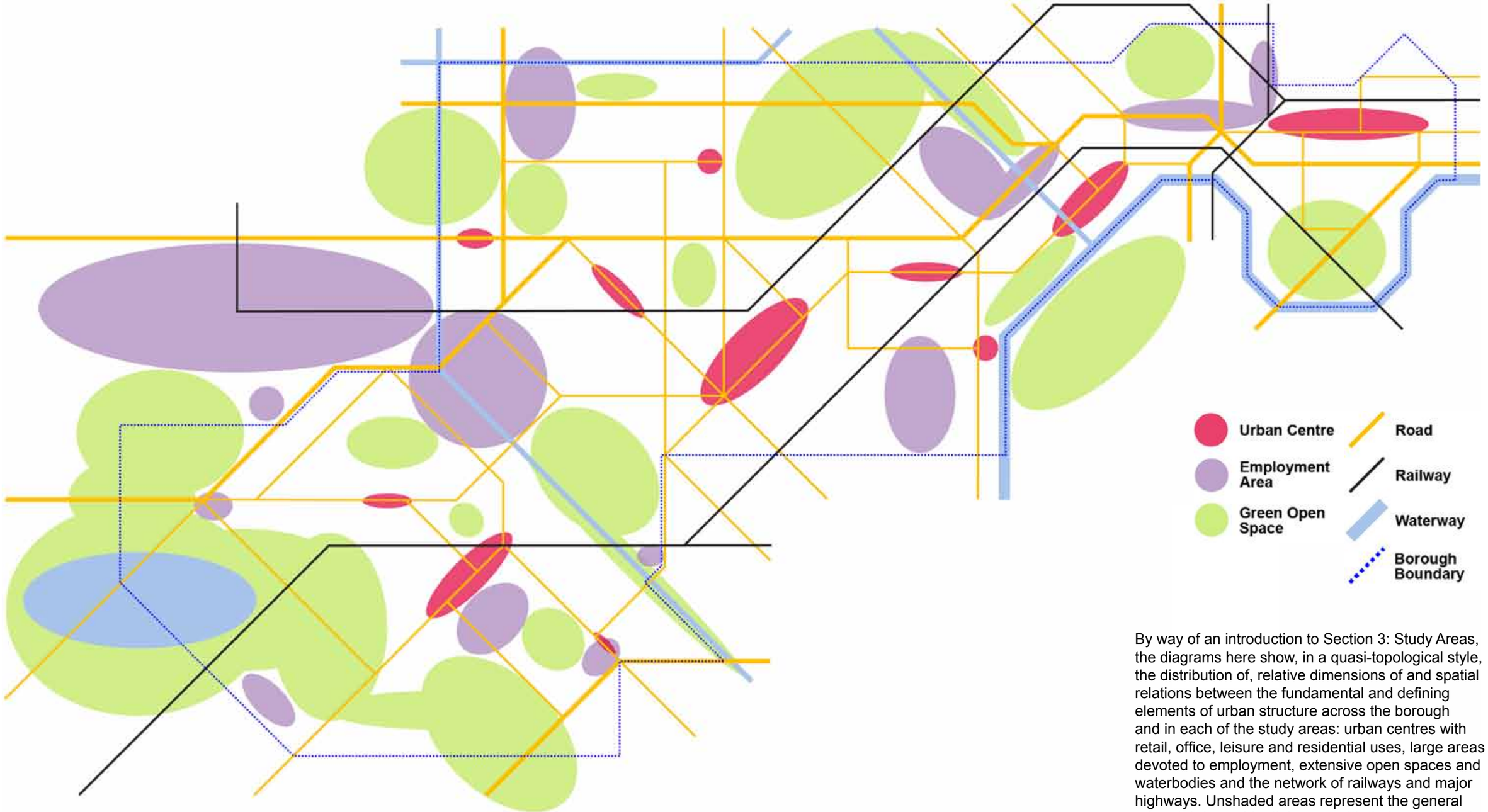
For the purposes of the study the borough was divided into ten study areas and one linear study area.

For more information on the method see Section 1: Introduction.

For the description and analysis of the study areas see Section 3: Study Areas.

Urban structure

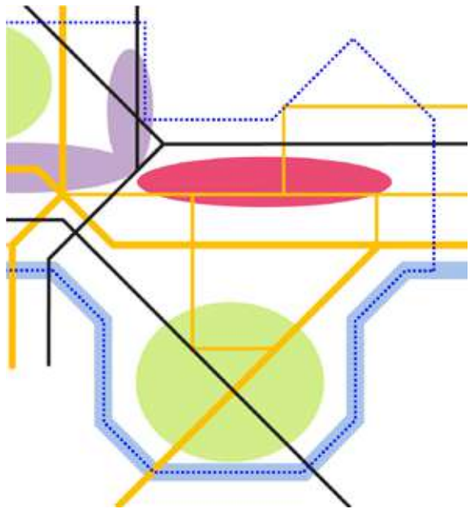
Borough-wide



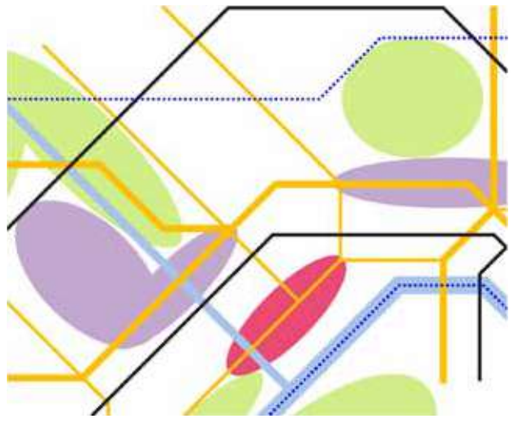
By way of an introduction to Section 3: Study Areas, the diagrams here show, in a quasi-topological style, the distribution of, relative dimensions of and spatial relations between the fundamental and defining elements of urban structure across the borough and in each of the study areas: urban centres with retail, office, leisure and residential uses, large areas devoted to employment, extensive open spaces and waterbodies and the network of railways and major highways. Unshaded areas represent the general urban fabric: residential areas with their associated services, facilities and amenities. They are all to the same scale. Essentially, the diagrams provide a simple, at-a-glance summary of the basic structure of the borough's study areas.

Urban structure

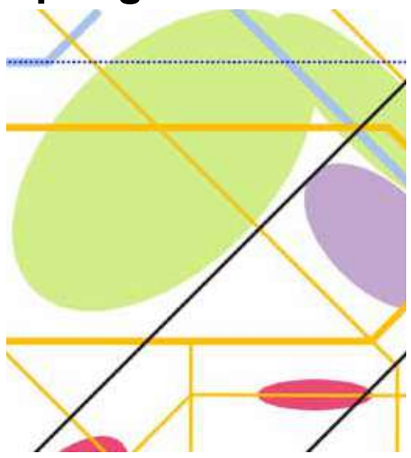
Chiswick



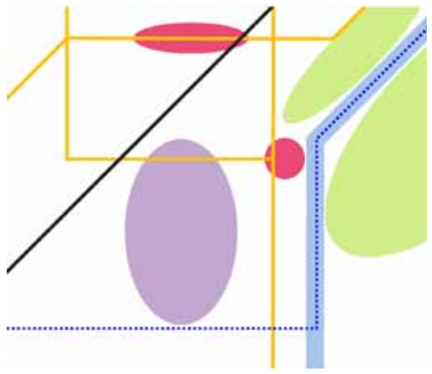
Brentford



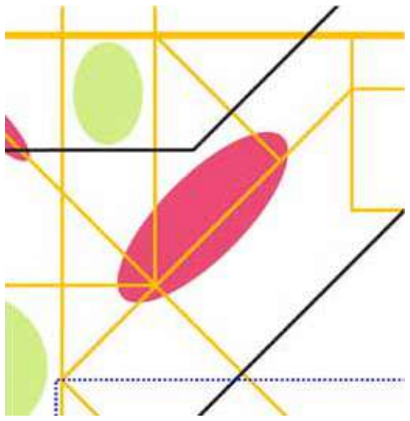
Osterley and Spring Grove



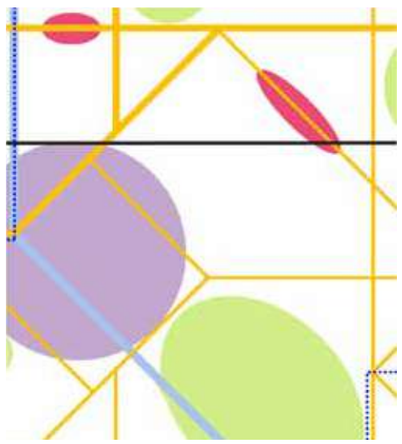
Isleworth



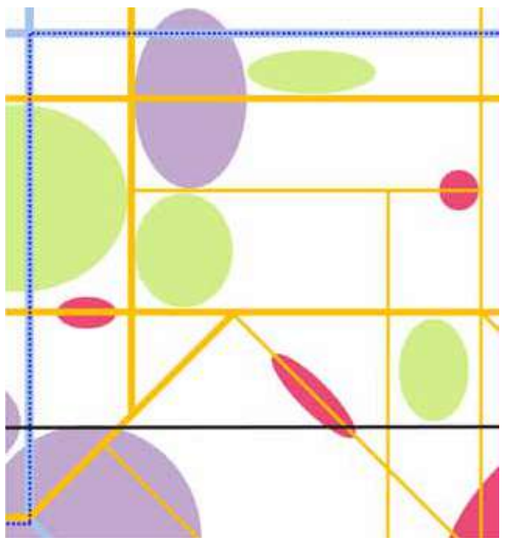
Hounslow



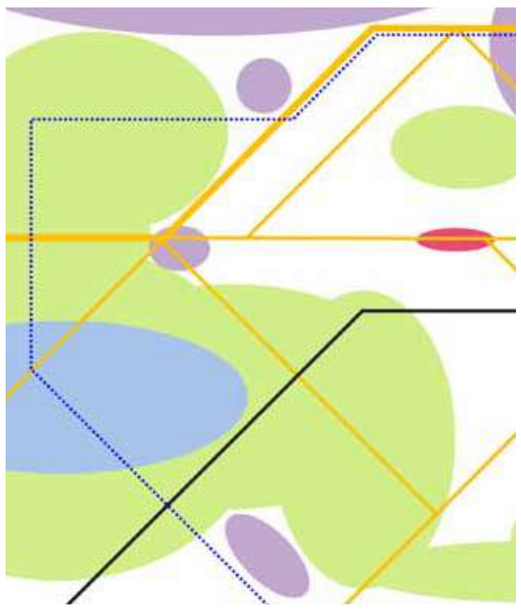
Hounslow West



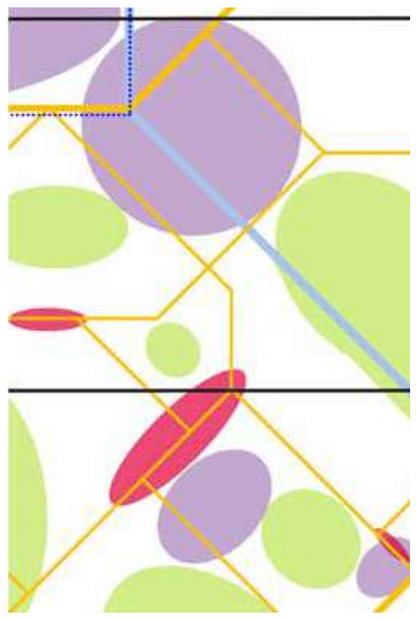
Cranford and Heston



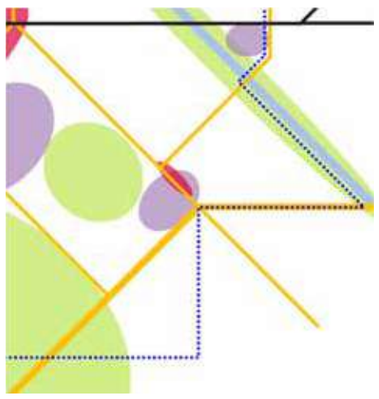
Bedfont



Feltham



Hanworth

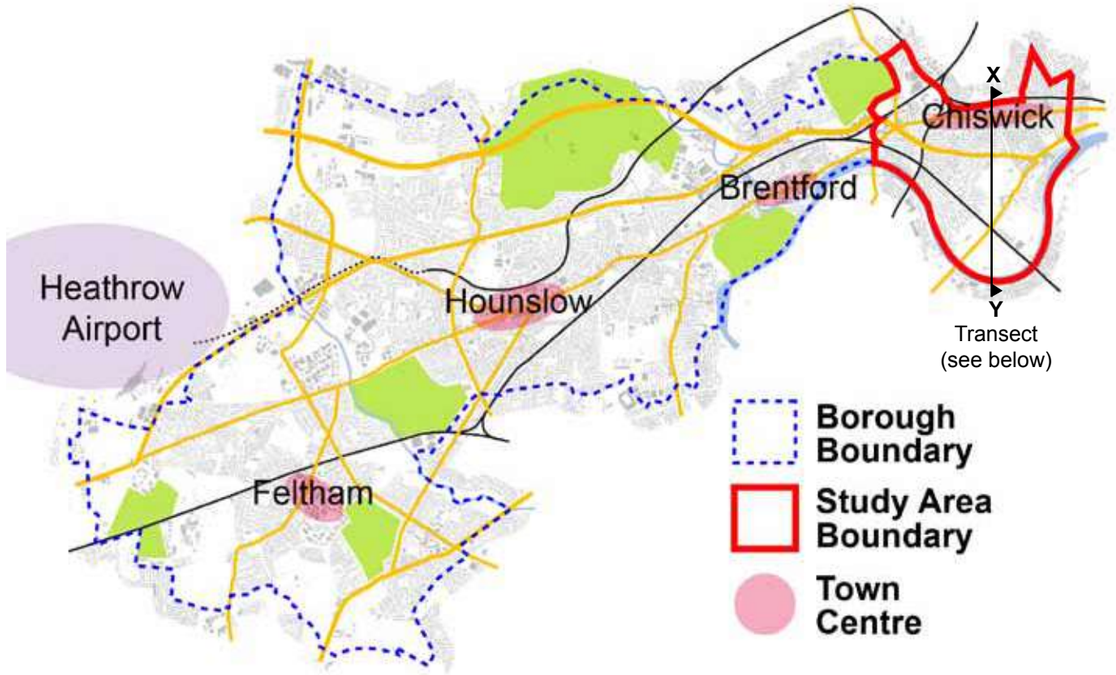




Chiswick

Chiswick

present-day context



The Chiswick study area lies at the extreme eastern end of the borough and is therefore the closest part of the borough to Central London.

It is situated next to Brentford to the west, Acton and Ealing to the north and Hammersmith to the east, with Barnes, Sheen, Mortlake and Kew across the river to the south. Its northern edge is defined for the most part by railway lines and its southern edge by the River Thames. The area popularly known as Chiswick extends slightly beyond the study area boundary into the boroughs of Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham.

The study area is pierced roughly east-west by various railway lines and the A4 Great West Road. Chiswick town centre with its western extension is a major retail, leisure and employment focus for the surrounding areas, while south of the A4 lie the mostly residential Grove Park.

Chiswick is located on a meander of the River Thames which features two small islands at the eastern and western ends. The area slopes gently downward towards the river and the more open land of Duke's Meadows.

In form, Chiswick is like a small city in its own right, with a commercial, built up core to the north which gradually gives way to residential development of decreasing age and density to the south, culminating in open fields and the riverfront. However, this apparent urban-rural fringe is a false one: development recommences abruptly just across the river.

The area is best known for its historic house and gardens, its riverfront walks and pubs and its thriving High Road. Less positively, the six-lane A4 is a major barrier to north-south movement. The urban environment is mostly of very high quality with well-proportioned, tree-lined residential streets and a fairly even distribution of local centres and open spaces. Chiswick attracts visitors to shop and to eat. It has an upmarket though welcoming feel very different to that of the high streets of neighbouring Hammersmith, Brentford or Ealing Broadway. These qualities contribute to its enduring popularity as a place to live, particularly amongst media professionals and celebrities. It is felt to be family friendly and un-threatening.

The area is mostly well-served by public transport though there are access and capacity issues in some parts.

The acoustic environment is dominated by aircraft noise and traffic noise when within 50 metres of the A4, beyond which bird song and general urban ambient sounds take over.

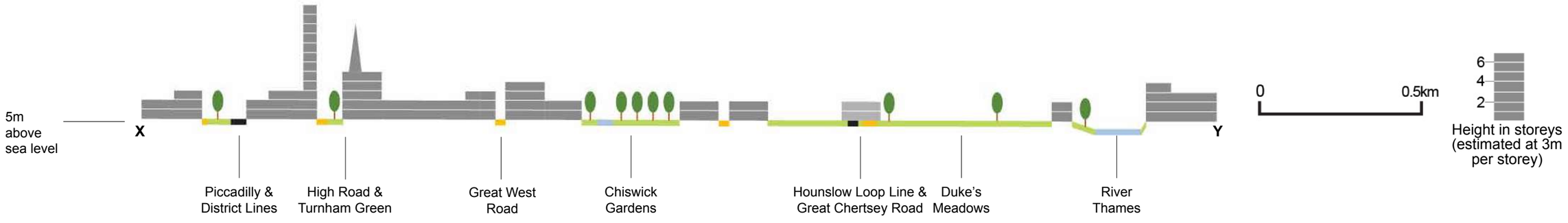


Low tide on the River Thames at Strand on the Green



The A4 Great West Road, though connecting Chiswick with Central London and the west, cuts the area in two

Title page photo: Chiswick High Road has a rich mix of chain and independent shops, bars, and restaurants



Chiswick

brief historic context

People have lived in Chiswick since prehistoric times but its place-name, meaning cheese farm, is Anglo-Saxon. Chiswick's original village street runs south past St Nicholas Church to the Thames and slipway at a protected inner bend of the river. Two roads, one Roman and one older, crossed the north of the parish, converging across a wide stretch of common land, and later became the major road from London to the West. The Thames provided easy transport for rural industries like malting and brewing and supported watermen, boat-builders and fishing families.

Villages grew up by the river at Old Chiswick and Strand on the Green. Ribbon development along the main road the saw the growth of a third village at Turnham Green, part of a larger common, with many streams and ditches now culverted, at the convergence of many routes. This became the administrative centre with the Town Hall in the C19th, and is now the main shopping area. Between the villages lay a number of mansions with pleasure gardens and parks.

The main road became increasingly important in the C18th as a major coaching route, becoming Chiswick High Road. Nearing the Thames it gave access to a ferry and from 1759 a bridge over the Thames to Kew's royal estates, rebuilt in stone in 1789, added to the importance of the route as a road and an opportunity for occupation. Existing roads had a fringe of Georgian, early and mid-Victorian buildings, although many High Road properties were cleared for late C19th widening for trams. Remaining mid Victorian villas edged the west end of the High Road near a toll gate which the (former) Gunnersbury station took over. New and replacement developments from c1900 created the current alignment. It included large pubs, shopping parades, housing and industrial uses.

Southern Chiswick remained remote and open until late into the C19th, being used for brick-earth excavation, fruit cultivation, market and horticultural science gardening. Chiswick became a desirable place to live, with many individual fine houses and large gardens. The river was used for shipbuilding and brewing from the C17th, which continues as the Griffin Brewery under Fullers.

Chiswick House and its influential gardens survived other large country houses. The Duke of Devonshire laid out Dukes Avenue to link Chiswick House with the High Road, edged later by development. He sold land in 1821 which, with enclosed common land, became Chiswick New Town (demolished) where grids of tiny terraced houses were built for working folk. Railway bridges arrived in 1849. Grove Park developed only slowly in spite of mid-Victorian attempts at an early grand estate near Chiswick station. Roads came in later from the south (Chiswick Bridge 1930).

Nearer the High Road, fields and gardens were rapidly developed into layouts in an explosion fuelled by the new railway line (1869). The Glebe Estate (1871–1901) was simple and self-contained terraced housing for artisan workers; Bedford Park (1874–1900) was deliberately aesthetic in design and mostly semi-detached. Elsewhere infill grid layouts were built up in variations of Victorian terraced and semi-detached housing of different size and spacing to suit people from all walks of life. Duke's Meadows were saved from C20th industrial proposals and purchased in the 1920s for a public park and riverside promenade.

The A4 opened in 1925 as a bypass for Brentford and was extended across Chiswick in the mid 1950s, crossing Chiswick High Road at Chiswick roundabout and, just missing Hogarth's House, connecting with the Great Chertsey Road at Hogarth roundabout. Other railway lines and main roads cut up the area, but the widened A4 road and roundabouts, particularly after the 1960s flyover added M4 traffic, physically and perceptually severed Chiswick into north and south.

More recent development has been infill between railway lines; replacement of former buildings and land used for commercial and municipal activities with office buildings in the built up areas and housing on the edges of open land; and continuing subdivision of larger house plots. Chiswick remains an area of high appeal and is therefore under constant pressure for renewal and intensification.



Strand on the Green, 1906

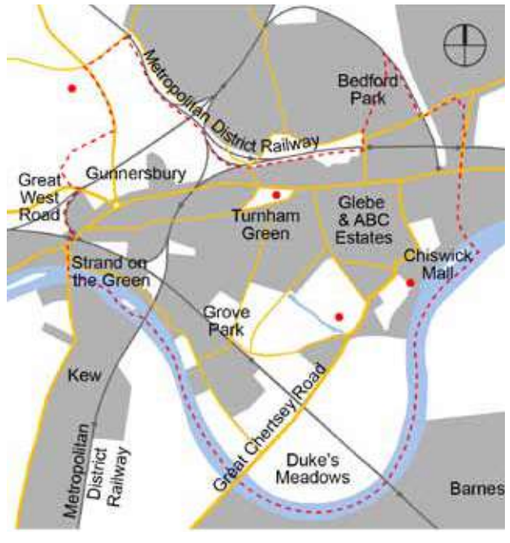


Chiswick High Road at Fishers Lane, early 20th century

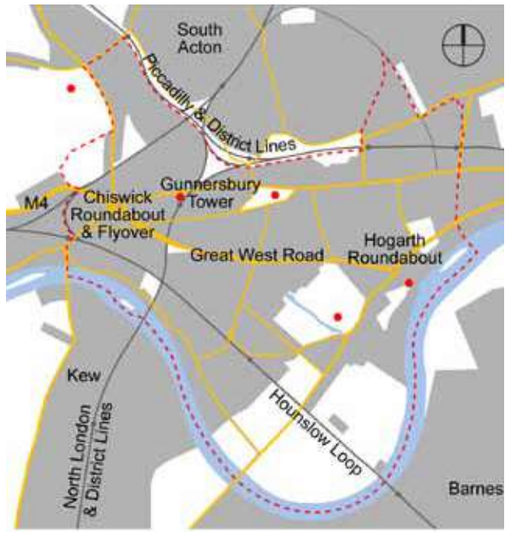
c1870



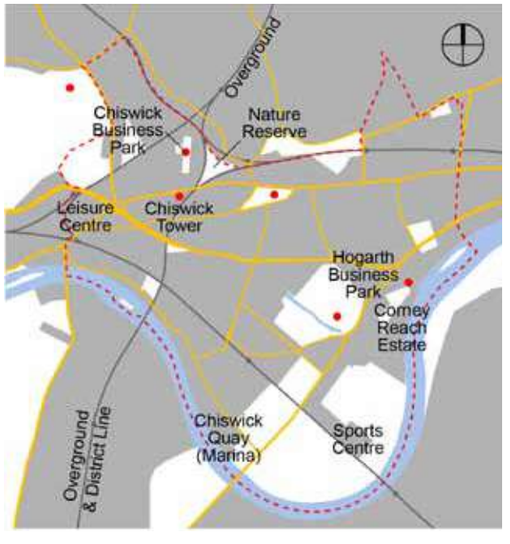
c1930



c1965

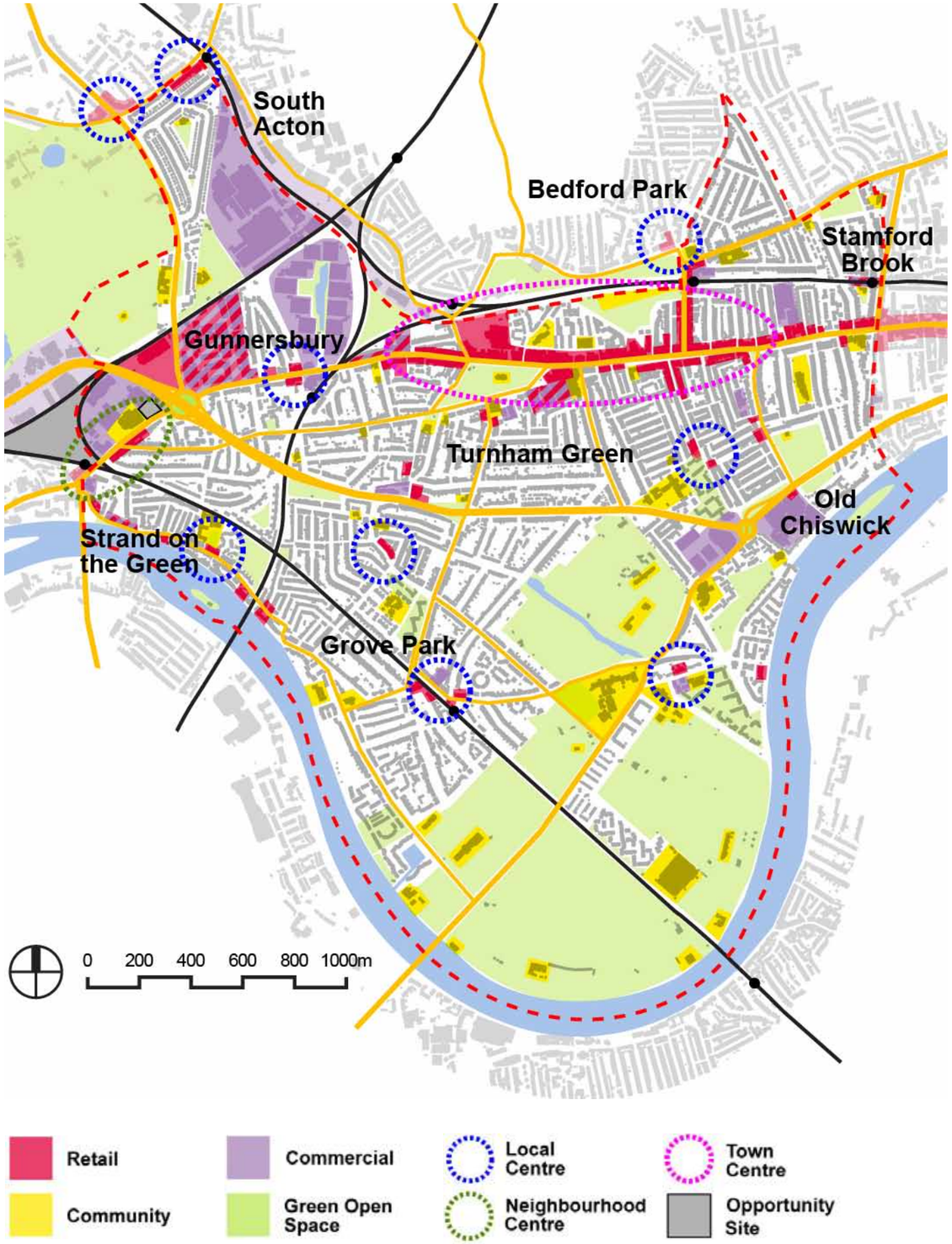


c2012



Chiswick

land and building use



The Chiswick study area is primarily residential with a traditional mixed use town centre/high street, though there are areas that are almost exclusively commercial/business in use to the northwest and very large areas of open land to the south.

The 1.5km ribbon of predominantly retail uses along the High Road is designated as one of the borough's four Town Centres and a Major Centre in the London Plan. Retail use is mainly confined to the ground floors and includes destination pubs, bars, cafes and restaurants (many with pavement seating) along the High Road itself and on the side streets of Turnham Green Terrace and Devonshire Road, with office and residential uses on upper floors. The retail offer is presently a healthy mix of chains and independents, many of which are specialised and upmarket, reflecting the local demographic, though some are under threat from rent increases. Community/institutional/civic uses (police station, library, school, health centre, town hall) appear sporadically along and behind the High Road. An ambivalently received superstore with extensive parking lies between the railway line and the traditional retail frontage on the north side of Turnham Green, which also includes an incongruous 1960s office tower.

West of the town centre and Turnham Green the High Road uses shift towards office (including the 1960s 19-storey Chiswick or BSI Tower) with some residential and a hotel, in buildings ranging from the late 1980s to the present, mostly on the north side of the High Road. Immediately opposite Chiswick Tower lies the almost completed award-winning Chiswick Business Park which combines office (with some retail and community uses) with a well-defined and well-used semi-public garden and square. The offices along the High Road give way to car dealerships which front an older Golden Mile-associated 1930s trading estate. West of Chiswick Roundabout is an incoherent mix of buildings of varying shapes and sizes in retail, employment and community use (many with consents or aspiration for redevelopment) which bear no relationship to the pressured residential areas to the south.

Elsewhere within the study area the main building use is residential. Despite a number of elegant Edwardian era mansion blocks at the extreme ends of the town centre section of the high road (and a smattering elsewhere); some interwar apartment developments; a handful of postwar local authority low and mid-rise enclaves; and a few late 20th century quasi-gated communities, the dominant residential type is the two to three storey house. These range in period from the late 19th century to the mid-1930s and tend to increase in size and grandeur (though with some exceptions) with distance from the High Road. The dominant type is semi-detached.

The large southern hinterland is mostly well-served by local shopping parades, schools and other community facilities. Strand-on-the-Green is notable for its popular pubs and eateries. As the false urban-rural fringe and the River Thames are approached uses become primarily recreational, with a number of water-sport related facilities on the riverfront.



Shops on Devonshire Road off the High Road



Controversial 1960s office block, Chiswick Tower, dominates Gunnersbury Station



Mansion blocks, west side of Turnham Green



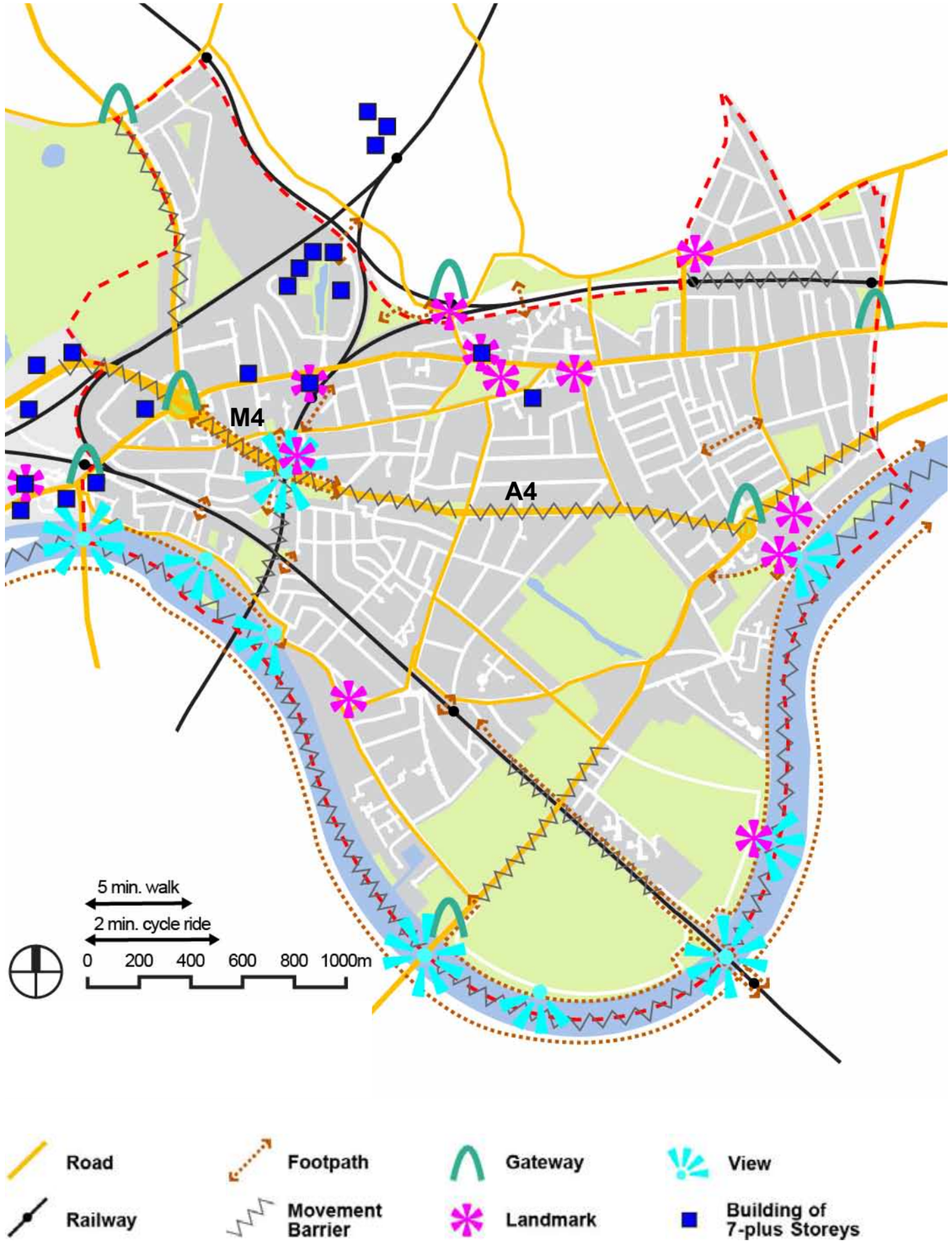
Late C19th terraces with postwar mid-rise housing estate



'Villagey' local centre, Grove Park

Chiswick

movement and legibility



The overall movement structure is dominated by the roughly east-west road and rail routes. The most defining of these is the 1950s A4 Great West Road Hammersmith extension, which leads to the elevated M4 motorway and performs a major trunk road function for London and the immediate west including Heathrow Airport. In Chiswick itself it functions as a by-pass, relieving the High Road which runs parallel to the north. Less positively, it is a major barrier to both vehicular and pedestrian north-south movement, in places quite clearly slicing the pre-existing urban fabric in two. The earlier Great Chertsey Road, running southwest, functions more formatively, having seeded inter and postwar ribbon developments into the more open land stretching towards the River Thames. The North Circular Road at the western boundary functions similarly. Lesser though often busy roads provide mainly north-south links on an irregular and sometimes character area-defining grid. Apart from a few small pockets in the southern fringes, on a local level the route network offers a relatively high degree of connectivity.

The area is mostly well-served by bus, tube and train in all directions, though Underground links to Central London could be improved and the new business park has created capacity issues at Gunnersbury Station. Some areas south of the A4 have relatively poor access to bus services. Car ownership is high.

Pedestrian movement and way-finding through the overall area is on the whole easy, the only major barrier being the Great West Road with its infrequent and uninviting/intimidating crossing opportunities. The M4/A4 has had a particular impact on West Chiswick and Gunnersbury in terms of community severance, with pedestrian access from Chiswick High Road and Gunnersbury Station retained only by circuitous or uninviting routes such as the network of footpaths along the elevated road. Lesser barriers are in the form of sections of the railway corridors and in a few cases long, unbroken residential blocks. The Thames Path is forced inland to the southwest for around 1km by riverside houses and restricted access developments.

Typically of the area's development era, the perimeter block on a fairly regular grid provides a high degree of permeability whilst not compromising security: fronts and backs, public and private space are mostly well-defined. The postwar free-standing mid-rise housing developments remain legible and on the whole relate well to the surrounding streets.

Landmark buildings are concentrated toward the west of the area and range from churches to office towers, which may often be glimpsed at the ends of streets.

The relatively flat topography precludes much in the way of views except for across the relatively open expanses of the River Thames from various strategic points along its banks and bridges. The highest publicly accessible open points are in fact artificial and lie on the footways parallel to the A4 where it crosses the railway line and roads to the west of the area, from where long distance views can be had all around.



Acton Lane, northern gateway to Chiswick



Turnham Green underground station



Generous pedestrian spaces on High Road



Serious severance in Gunnersbury - the M4



Narrow footpath, Old Chiswick

Chiswick

green and blue landscape



For the most part the provision and type of public green open space in the study area are typical for its location at the boundary of inner and outer London. Its commons and parks are generous, although (for the most part attractively) contained by buildings. The commons of Turnham Green, Chiswick and (just outside the area) Acton Green are well-used by locals, workers and shoppers as places to linger, to have a kick around, for dog-walking or as routes from one part of the area to another. All are registered and therefore protected under the Commons Registration Act 1965. South of the High Road there are four local parks of varying sizes offering informal recreation and children's play areas. The area's best-known open space is without doubt the elegantly landscaped gardens of Chiswick House, an international destination. However further south (Duke's Meadows and Riverside Lands) the feel is much more open, even rural. The spaces are larger, in some cases private, and offer more formal/institutional recreation opportunities. An important feature and local amenity are the large allotments. Dukes Meadows is one of the most heavily used and frequently visited open spaces in the Borough and is the largest centre for sport and recreation in West London. The River Thames, with its urban and arcadian views, wildlife, huge tidal variation and two small islets is an extremely popular feature of the area and is accessible via the Thames Path, except for a 1km stretch to the southwest.

More natural experiences are offered by Gunnersbury Triangle and tiny Duke's Hollow in the far south. The area's three sizable cemeteries add further variety. Gunnersbury Park, with its range of open space types and uses, lies just outside the area to the west, though access is compromised by the North Circular Road.

Chiswick is known for its 'leafy' character (a safety issue after the autumn fall and wet weather) and many streets are generously though not always uniformly or regularly tree-lined. Grass verges are only found in the interwar developments on the fringes and are generally well-maintained. Later postwar large infill and peripheral developments, typified by residential buildings standing alone in open space and undefined by street patterns, sometimes result in lifeless, un/underused green areas.

The High Road offers a sequence of more formal small urban square-like spaces with seating and planting. Perhaps the most significant addition to the area's open space network are the garden, lake and square of Chiswick Business Park at the office and commercial end of the High Road, which offer a modernist take on the picturesque garden.

Collectively, the proliferation of green (and some blue) spaces along with the strong movement axes offer opportunities for a coherent system of area and borough-wide links.



Turnham Green and Christ Church



The waterfront at Strand on the Green



Homefield recreation ground, SE Chiswick



Allotments on Duke's Meadows



Residential 'amenity space', the far south

Chiswick

heritage assets



Chiswick experienced early occupation resulting in Archaeological Priority Areas, ten and a half Conservation Areas, considerable potential for more conservation areas, and some 450 individually named Listed Buildings. Chiswick House, Hogarth's House and Walpole House are listed at Grade I as are many artefacts in Chiswick House's gardens. A further 91 locally listed buildings add to the heritage assets, and highlight the many areas retaining historic character by way of layouts, actual buildings and objects.

The linear settlement along Chiswick High Road includes a late Georgian set-piece terrace [1] and earlier shop and municipal relics (former post office, police station, library, war memorials lamp-posts and telephone kiosks [2]) and buildings such as churches and industrial (Power House tram sub-station [3]). Turnham Green [4] is fringed with Georgian terraced houses, pub, barracks, architect-designed town hall and Sanderson's Wallpaper Factory, with an early Victorian church at its heart.

Old Chiswick's [5] Church Street retains many historic buildings. C15th St Nicholas' Church tower is the oldest structure in Chiswick. Associated assets include the adjacent cemetery and lane alongside, remains of related village buildings include the former post office, fine brewery buildings and public houses and Walpole House. Remaining river-related features include the slipway, draw dock and historic withy bed on the Eyot. Strand on the Green [6] has no church or municipal buildings, its most evocative buildings being of much smaller scale with narrow passages between.

Of the manors and great estates the major formative element is the Palladian set-piece at Chiswick House and Gardens [7], which influenced design aspirations for Chiswick station and Chiswick Bridge, the leafiness of streets and quality of Victorian and Edwardian suburban housing development, and the C20th school opposite. The survival of nearby Hogarth's House [8] is remarkable given its proximity to the A4.

To the north Bedford Park [9], a speculative venture, was built between 1875 and 1886, north of the station, and as the first garden suburb its design has been influential. Listed assets include 151 houses, the Church, Tabard Hotel and a telephone kiosk. The area between Gunnersbury Lane and Acton [10] is infilled with a garden village style estate, and dotted throughout are some fine Edwardian and interwar apartment blocks [11]. At the Thames riverbank there are art deco/modern period buildings related to sports [12] which gain character from the promenade, bandstand and greenery. Amongst postwar local authority housing The Lindens [13] off Hartington Road and the mix of housing and flats on the St Thomas's Estate [14] are particularly attractive.

The distinctive nature of Chiswick High Road, with its wide pavements, derives from the merging of two ancient roads across the common land. The narrow path which still runs parallel with the High Road on the south side [15] and the line of Bath Road/South Parade to the north [16], indicate the approximate extent of these roads. Stretches of the much reduced common survive, but the northern part was split by the construction of the embankment for the District Line [17].



The celebrated C18th Neo-Palladian Chiswick House



Buildings on the south side of Turnham Green



Pub on the waterfront at Strand on the Green



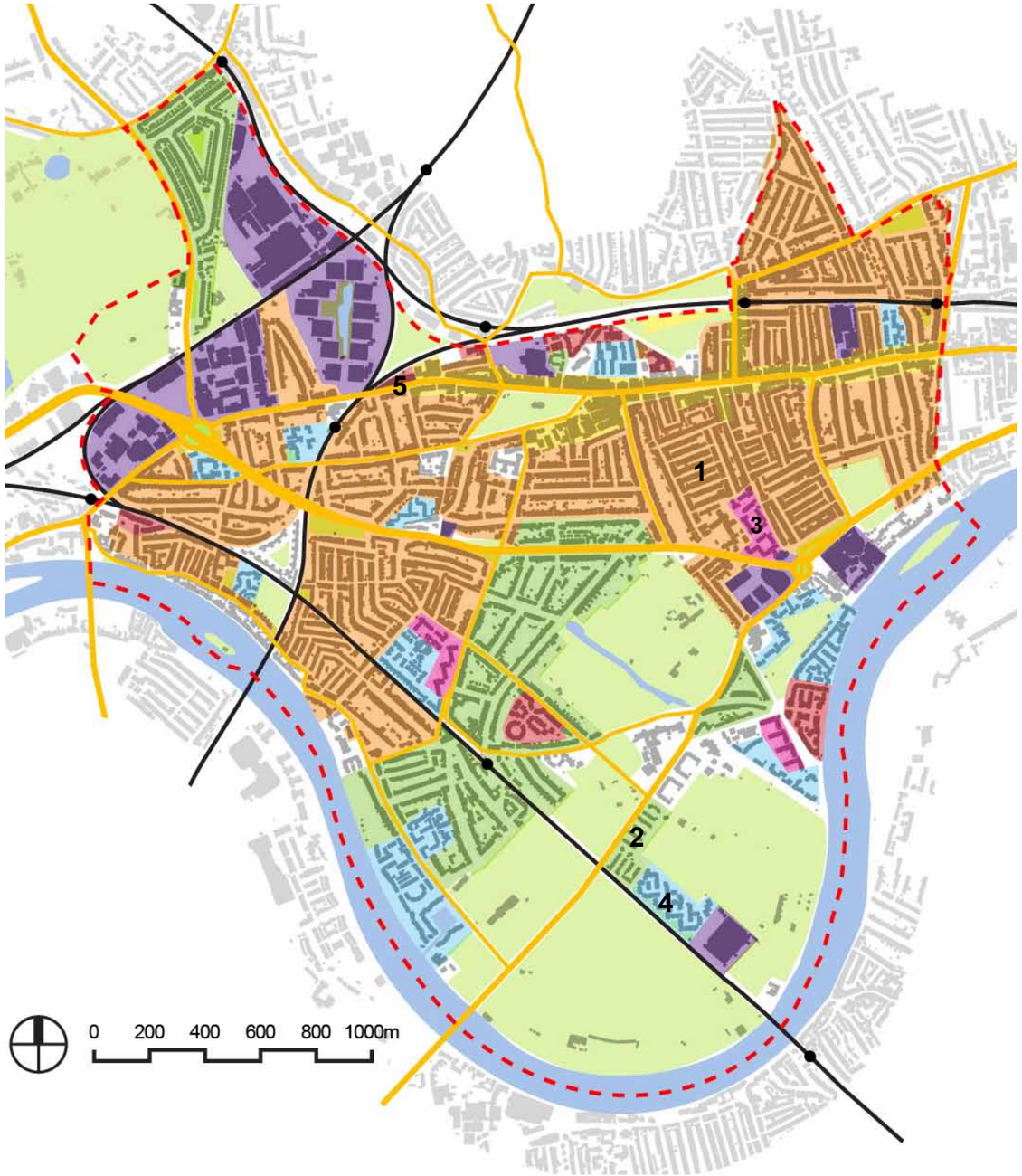
The early Garden Suburb of Bedford park



1930s apartment blocks of Chiswick Village

Chiswick

urban types



The most dominant residential urban types by area within the Chiswick study area are the late Victorian and Edwardian era compact grid (type 1) and to a lesser extent early interwar examples of the loose grid (type 2). The slabs and towers (type 3) and courts and cul-de-sacs (type 4) of the postwar years and the 1980s appear as infill and urban fringe developments. The exclusively commercial/retail big box (type 6) appears, perhaps appropriately, mostly on the urban fringes particularly to the northwest of the study area. Pockets of urban renaissance (type 5) have appeared more recently, on the edges of the original historic urban centre (type 7) and more unusually as infill and urban fringe developments.

Urban types in Chiswick which are atypical of the borough as a whole are in the form of late prewar mansion-style and interwar modernist apartment buildings and complexes which are dotted across the study area, and the pre-Victorian riverside strips at Strand on the Green and Chiswick Mall.

The earlier types (1 and 2) are chronologically located roughly concentrically outward from the linear urban centre along Chiswick High Road, with the other later residential types occupying mostly infill and comprehensive redevelopment sites across the study area, a pattern which is continuing.

For more information on general urban types found in the borough, including historical development, aspects of form and SWOT analyses, see Section 4: Urban Types.


Type 1


Type 2

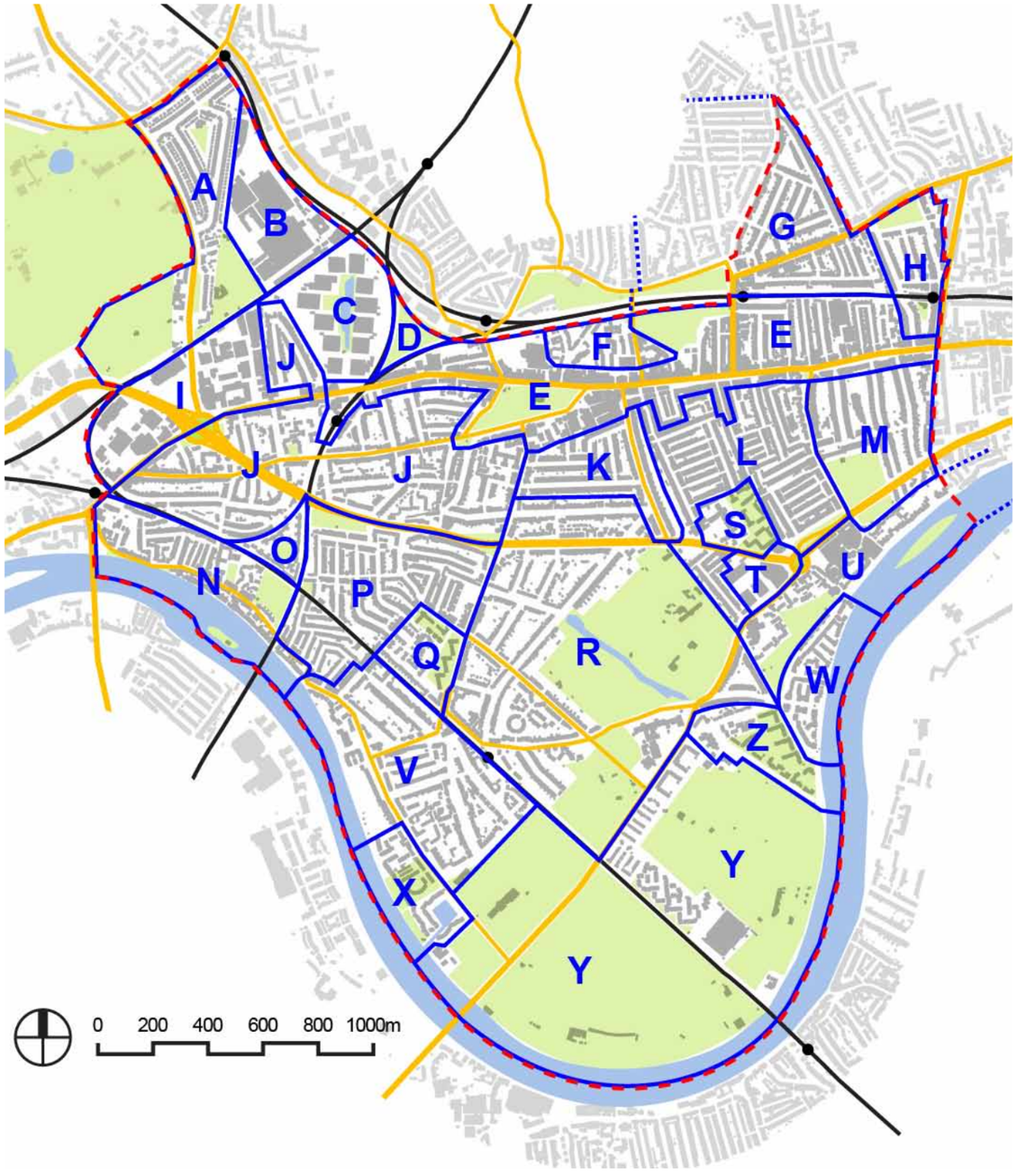

Type 3


Type 4


Type 5

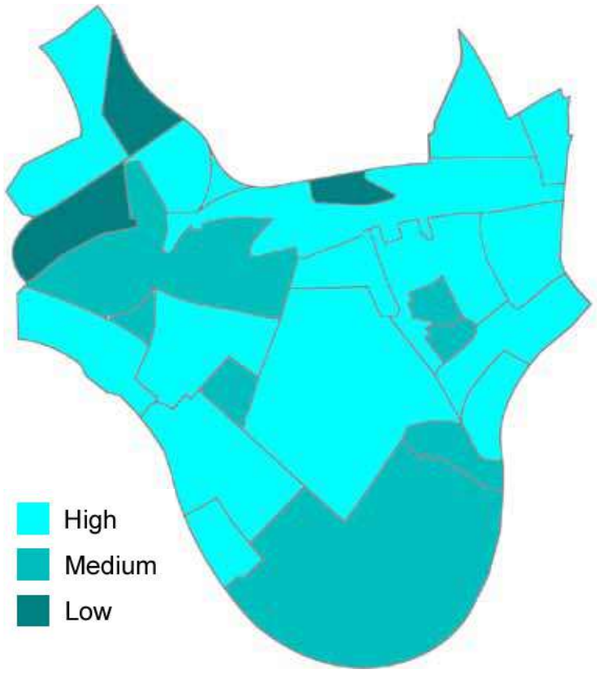
Chiswick

character areas and assessments

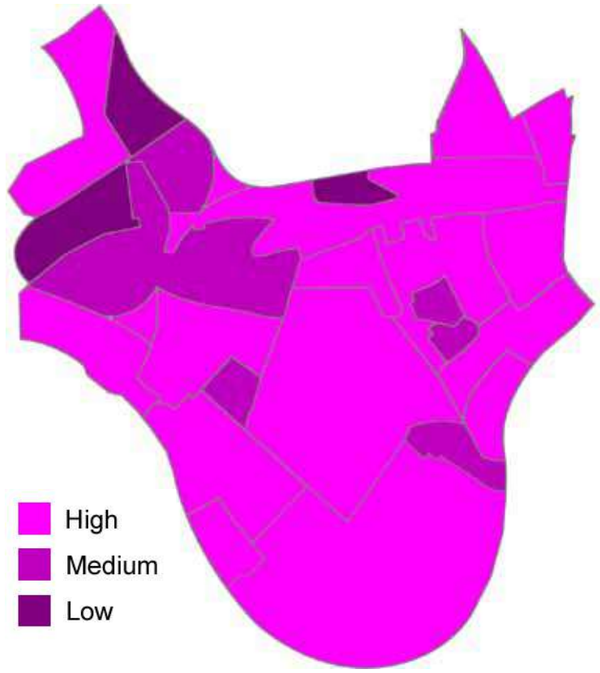


A Character Area

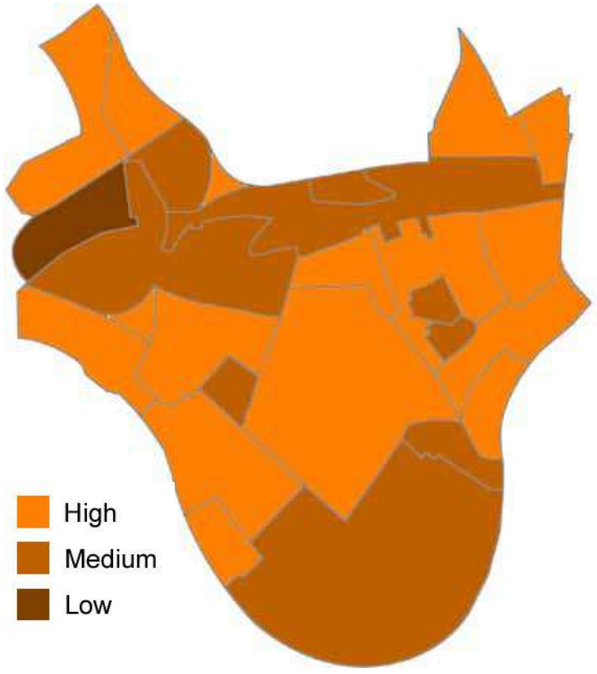
For more information on characterisation and assessment see Section 1: Introduction - Methodology



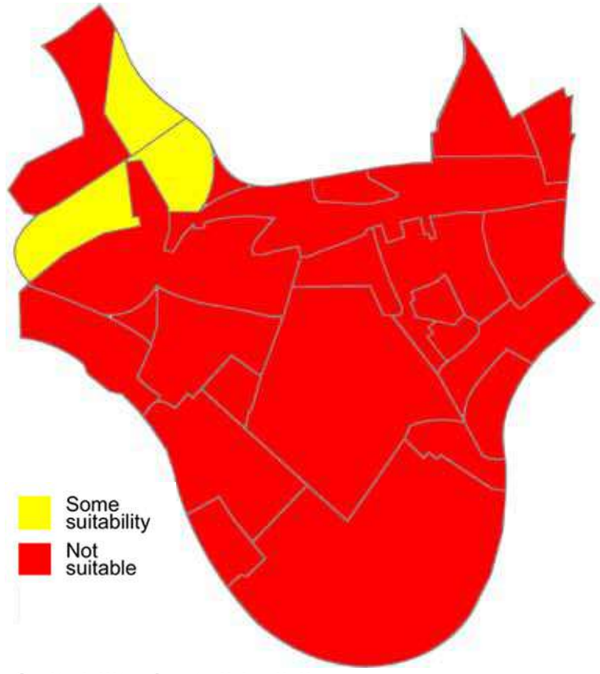
Design Quality



Sensitivity to change



Permanence



Suitability for tall buildings

Chiswick

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
A		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Primarily residential with school, sports facilities and cemetery. Well laid-out early interwar estate of 2 storey semis and short terraces with rear access lanes; neat verges with trees; well-tended corner green spaces; and central sports ground with pavilion. Attractive postwar three-storey interwar moderne-style apartment blocks with parking and green space, to south. Served by local shops and underground station to north. North Circular Road creates strong severance to west and Gunnersbury Park.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
B		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Urban type: Type 6	London Underground maintenance facility, inaccessible to public. Exclusively low-rise, very large footprint sheds. Site bounded entirely by railway lines with some planting on edges. Restricted vehicular and pedestrian access from north and southeast.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Some
C		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Pod-like enclave Urban type: Type 6	Chiswick Business Park. Extensive 2000s office development off High Road. Cluster of 12 mid to high rise buildings enclosing permissive public space. High quality architecture and hard and soft landscaping with lake. Open areas accessible to and popular with local public. Currently vehicular access from south only with pedestrian and cycle-only from north. Well served by public transport in terms of its proximity to stations and bus routes though there are serious capacity issues at Gunnersbury Station to the south. Number of workers estimated to rise to about 10,000 on completion of the last two buildings (9 and 12 storeys).	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Some
D		Extreme uniformity of use. Isolation Nature conservation area Urban type: Atypical	Gunnersbury Triangle Local Nature Reserve (LNR). Small woodland, former railway land, saved by the local community through a Public Inquiry in 1983. Managed by the London Wildlife Trust for nature conservation, quiet recreation, community activities and environmental education. Valued for its ‘countryside’ character, as an oasis, a place of peace and tranquillity for people and wildlife, so close to the centre of Chiswick. It comprises a variety of habitats, supporting a wide range of wild plants, birds, amphibia, butterflies and small mammals. Appropriately for its use it is single-access only, from northeast, outside the borough, via Bollo Lane.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Chiswick

character area

E









defining characteristics & types

General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, use and period.

Town Centre/High Street function

Accessibility/location of residential areas in relation to main route.

Urban type:
Type 7, 1, 6 and 4

description

Chiswick High Road and immediate environs including closely related open spaces and housing. Dominant (ground floor) use is retail, including destination pubs, bars, cafes and restaurants along the High Road itself and on Turnham Green Terrace and Devonshire Road, with office and residential uses on upper floors. Elegant Edwardian-era mansion blocks feature at the eastern end of the High Road and on the west side of the open space of Turnham Green.

Building quality and consistency are generally high though become less so further west, where uses shift towards office (including an incongruous 1960s office tower overlooking and the 19 storey Chiswick or BSI Tower which hides Gunnersbury station beneath) with some recent residential. The retail offer is a mix of chains and independents, a largely hidden superstore and two much-appreciated street markets.

The area is well-served by bus and rail but is felt to be not served by a car park commensurate with a popular shopping street. The footway is wide (in places enough for set-back seating areas), comfortable to use, mostly well-planted though at times cluttered. The two large urban green spaces of Turnham Green Common and Chiswick Back Common are well-used though the latter is at risk of insensitive development around its edges.

The area includes the c1900 crescent and cul-de-sac residential streets to the east and a crescent to the south, which are only accessible from the shopping streets. Though not designated as a Conservation Area these streets and their often ornate Edwardian houses are considered to have some heritage value.

assessment

Design Quality - High

Sensitivity to change - High

Permanence - Medium

Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Chiswick

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
F		General uniformity of scale, density, layout and building type. Distinctiveness from character of nearby main route. Urban type: Type 5, 4,2 and 1	Late C20th residential enclave north of High Road, with community uses. Mainly small estates (some gated) of 2-3 storey houses and 3-4 storey flats/maisonettes in narrow range of conservative styles from 1980s/90s with on-street parking. Includes contemporary health centre and c1900 school and 2 storey terraced housing.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
G		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Distinctive appearance. Urban type: Type 1	Southeastern part of Bedford Park. Late C19th seminal example of Arts & Crafts-style Garden Suburb residential estate with integral church, pub, shops and School of Art. Mostly 2-4 storey houses (includes dormers) with 3 storey linear mansion block to southeast. Strong street trees and general planting. Late C20th street of 2 storey short terraces and 3 storey flats to southeast is successfully integrated.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
H		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Shared movement axis Urban type: Type 1	Primarily 2 storey residential with some 3 and 4 storey mansion blocks to eastern edge near Stamford Brook Station and Stamford Brook Common. Pre-war houses south of railway give way to early postwar houses to the north culminating in Stamford Brook Common. The Common is the oldest and most established part of the area and has influenced and characterised the layout and location of the buildings around it.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
I		General uniformity of use. Moderate uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type. Location on major route Urban type: Type 6	Mostly commercial/employment sites at extreme western end of study area on north side of Chiswick High Road. To the west, a mostly late C20th incoherent mix of buildings of varying shapes and sizes in office, industrial, retail, employment and community (sports centre) uses. To the east, Power Road is a self-contained, low-rise commercial estate of car showrooms, offices, small business units and some interesting 1930s Art Deco factories now in mostly trade retail uses, behind a late C20th strip of 4-9 storey offices and hotel on High Road.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Some

Chiswick

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
J	 	General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Location along and around historic route Urban type: Type 1, 4 and 5	Primarily residential area flanking Wellesley Road from Turnham Green Common to Kew Bridge Station and including the Thorney Hedge/Silver Crescent development north of the High Road. Mostly 2 storey semis and terraces dating from the mid to late C19th but with numerous exceptions. To the immediate east of Chiswick Roundabout the High Road is lined with 4 storey villas and to the west with a 3 storey terrace with ground floor shops. One of the earliest major developments in Chiswick, the area has seen much infill development over the years, of varying size and quality, which continues to this day. There is little public open space (including children's play space) other than that associated with postwar developments and with a few exceptions, notably on the High Road, street tree distribution is patchy. One of the area's most significant features is the severance caused by the A4 Great West Road as it morphs into the M4 motorway and rises above the western end of the area to cross the intensely busy and urban fabric-deforming Chiswick Roundabout.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
K		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Urban type: Type 1	Known locally as Devonhurst, a residential area to the immediate southeast of Turnham Green Common. 2 storey semis and 8-12 unit terraces of highly uniform appearance on a regular street grid. Architecture is of high quality overall though some buildings have suffered from insensitive roof extensions. Strong coherent street trees.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
L		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Urban type: Type 1	Residential area comprising the Glebe and ABC Estates and an earlier street south of A4. 2 storey continuous terraces with very shallow front spaces on a highly regular orthogonal grid of streets, dating from late C19th. Amongst the smallest scale, finest grain and highest density developments in the borough. Sporadic street trees, heavily parked. Connects to High Road via retail off-shoot of Devonshire Road. Small local centre to south. Merges well with postwar estate to south. Small green strip acts as buffer to busy A4.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Chiswick

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
M		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Urban type: Type 1	Residential area to the immediate south of the eastern end of Chiswick High Road. 3 storey Edwardian semis give way southward to early interwar 2 storey semis and short terraces, all with modest front spaces, on a highly regular grid of streets. Interwar development and park are severed by A4 but continue briefly on the southern side. Merges well with taller mansion buildings on south side of High Road. Small disconnected postwar infill on eastern flank.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
N		General uniformity of use. Moderate uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type. Location on riverfront Urban type: Type 1, 5 and 4	Riverside village ribbon development C18th and early C19th. Buildings were originally fishermen's cottages, boat builders' sheds, public houses, maltings. Larger, more elegant private houses added later. Only a narrow walkway divides the buildings from the river. Between the main through road and the railway line are fine grained developments of small late C19th and prewar terraced houses with some late C20th infill. The area's riverfront pubs and views make it a popular destination. Other uses include a small parade of shops (including a post office), schools and a park with allotments.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
O		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Urban type: Atypical	Chiswick Village, 1930s continental-style apartment block development in former railway triangle. Three linear groups of notched red brick buildings ranging from 4-6 storeys in height (tallest to southeast) arranged around a formal triangular garden, the 'village green', and focussed on one free-standing building (6 storeys) in southeast apex. Notching gives strong impression of individual buildings. Limited parking provision: on-street around garden, to rear of apex building and to north of site. Particularly cut off from High Road and Gunnersbury Station by M4/A4, with pedestrian access only via uninviting or circuitous routes.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
P		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Urban type: Type 1	Northwestern half of Grove Park. Almost exclusively residential with local shopping parade, local park and some small community uses. Strongly bounded to north by A4 and to west by railway. Mostly late C19th 2 storey semis and detached houses with some less frequent long terraces, highly uniform in appearance on an irregular but permeable and legible street grid. BSI Tower may often be glimpsed at the northern ends of its streets. Elegant mansion blocks fit in well to northeast. Strong coherent street trees - the epitome of leafy Chiswick.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Chiswick

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
Q 	General uniformity of period and use. Contrast with surrounding character. Urban type: Type 4 and 3	Montgomery Court Estate, 1960s local authority social housing, Grove Park. In two distinct parts: four 4-6 storey and one 2-4 storey L-plan slab blocks set in green open space with surface parking; and 2 storey terraced housing on more traditional street grid with generous amenity spaces. Spaces are on the whole in good condition and blocks are coherently laid out providing good legibility. Modest scale and massing of mid-rise part works well with surrounding context, the low rise part less so.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
R  	General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Urban type: Type 2 and 5	A primarily residential area surrounding and strongly related to the grounds of Chiswick House, with a large school and grounds and a modest local focus at Chiswick railway station to south. It is characterised by broad tree-lined streets with grass verges and relatively deep setbacks on a more spacious, looser layout than the neighbouring character areas to the north and west. This character continues north across the A4 despite the severance created by the arterial road. Mostly consists of late prewar and early interwar 2 storey semis with some terraced and detached houses with later infill. Some surprising exceptions include a row of interwar moderne houses on the A4 and a large 1990s Palladian-style infill development to the south.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
S 	Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Contrast with surrounding character. Urban type: Type 3 and 1	Hogarth Estate, 1960s local authority social housing at southern end of Glebe Estate. 2-6 storey and one 2-4 storey slab blocks set in green open space with surface parking. Spaces are on the whole in good condition though blocks are incoherently laid out resulting in poor legibility. The two broken perimeter blocks are pleasanty landscaped and feature children's play areas. The area includes a modern school and some older buildings to the southwest. The nearest local facilities are shared with Area L.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Chiswick

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
T		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation. Contrast with surrounding areas. Urban type: Type 6	Hogarth Business Park. Small trading estate/business park wedged between A4 Great West Road and A316 Great Chertsey Road behind Hogarth Roundabaout. Comprises a squat 4 storey office building at the apex, three regularly laid out large footprint shed structures behind and a much earlier 1930s art deco factory building further back along the A4, which hints at the developments along the Golden Mile further west. Area includes historic Hogarth House and its grounds	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
U		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Location on riverfront. Overall sense of history. Urban type: Type 6 and 4 (majority is atypical)	Old Chiswick. The remnants of a Georgian riverside village of prosperous merchants, writers, politicians and others. Church Street features early C17th and C18th houses leading south to St Nicholas' Church, the riverfront and Eyot. Eastwards, along the river, Chiswick Mall has large C17-18th houses with fine Victorian and later houses interspersed. The Mall being the old river frontage is flooded by periodic high tides. Westward is the cemetery with its narrow, walled path. Near the centre-north of the Mall, the breweries give this area a C18th-19th industrial appearance. There is postwar and late C20th infill development to the north.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
V		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Urban type: Type 1, 2 and 4	Southeastern half of Grove Park. Almost exclusively residential with local shopping parade and station to northeast, some small community uses but poor access to informal green space (though private gardens are plentiful) and largely cut off from riverfront by long residential strip. Similar to its northwestern counterpart (Area P) though earlier, more varied in style and type, more generously spaced and with generally larger houses. There are striking Gothic villas and Art Deco flats to the south and modest postwar infill developments to the east.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
W		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Location on riverfront. Urban type: Type 4 and 5	Corney Reach, late C20th neo-Georgian waterfront residential enclave. 'Urban village' of 3 to 6 storey townhouses and apartments in terraces and blocks on quasi-regular street grid with courtyards, a square with leisure uses, a waterfront promenade and a central circus. Surface and some undercroft parking. Central axis terminates in pier. Earlier small gated townhouse development to east.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

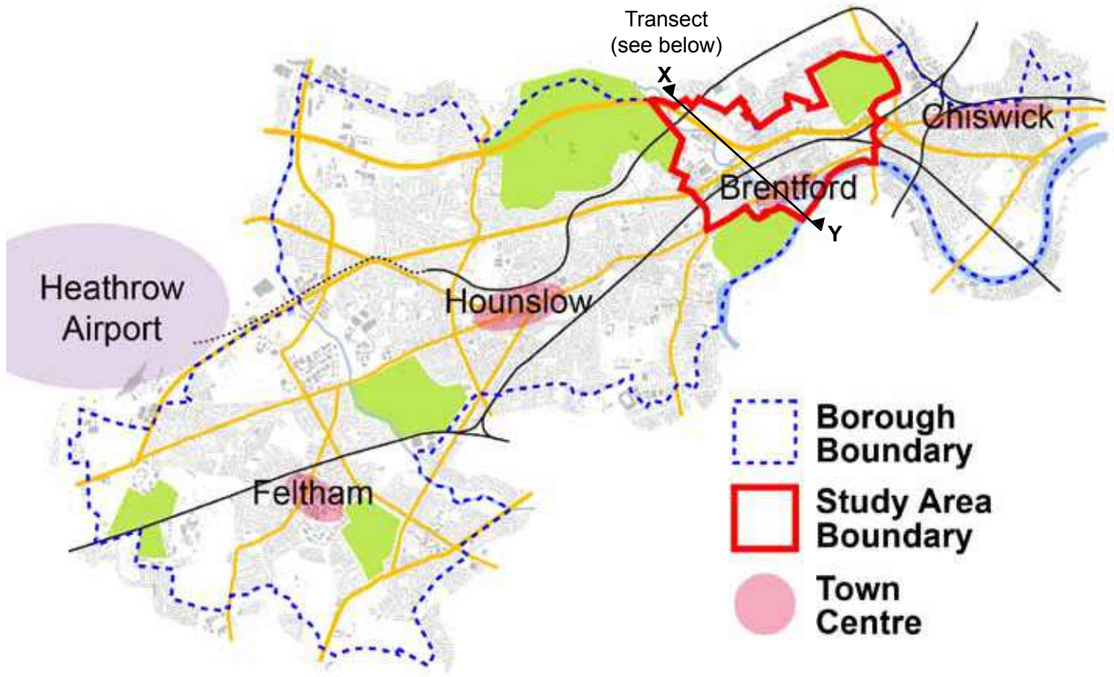
Chiswick

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
X 	General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Location on riverfront. Urban type: Type 4	Mix of postwar, limited public access riverfront residential developments on false urban-rural fringe. Three discrete and distinct small estates, each with single access off main local through road. Chiswick Quay (easternmost) has more modernist feel, surrounds marina and allows public access to riverfront. Thames Village (central) has a more postwar garden suburb feel and is set in grassed space. Chiswick Staithe (westernmost) is a noted development of 3 storey townhouses on Radburn (vehicle and pedestrian segregated) layout.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Y  	General uniformity of use. Location at urban-rural fringe Relative isolation Metropolitan Open Land with nature conservation area Urban type: Type 2, 4, 6 and Atypical	The area is almost entirely open space at the false urban-rural fringe of Chiswick, known as Duke's Meadows. It is pierced by the railway line and the Great Chertsey Road resulting in three distinct areas with limited connections to one another but which share largely recreational uses. The easternmost of these contains an exclusively residential L-shaped ribbon development along Great Chersey Road and railway line, mixed in style and era, extending into the isolated open space. It features three discrete areas, two of which are more in keeping with the outer areas of the borough: a pair of interwar 3 storey apartment buildings in a horseshoe plan; plain interwar 2 storey semis on a short cul-de-sac layout; and 1970s 2 storey terraces on broad cul-de-sac/courtyard layout, some accessed from pedestrian ways only (quasi-Radburn) with cluster of 3 storey flat blocks. The southernmost part is particularly isolated and feels particularly out of character with rest of the study area. Further south are an unconnected large leisure facility and formal recreation spaces. The river-facing open space with is Metropolitan Open Land and is therefore protected from development.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Z 	General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Urban type: Type 4, 3 and 2	Predominantly 1960s local authority social housing. Four 3-5 storey L-plan slabs and three 3 storey linear slabs set in green open space with surface parking. Later 1980s smaller flat blocks along southwestern edge. Spaces are on the whole in good condition and blocks are coherently laid out providing good legibility. Poor relationship to river and adjacent Corney Reach. Substantial local neighbourhood focus at northern edge with shops, school, swimming pool, small office complex (which includes the Moldovan Embassy) and bus terminus.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Brentford

Brentford

present-day context



The Brentford study area lies toward the eastern end of the borough approximately 12km from central London. It is situated next to Ealing to the north (with which it merges imperceptibly), Chiswick to the east, and Isleworth and Osterley to the west. Within Brentford's historic boundaries is the Gunnersbury Park estate, while to its west lie Osterley and Syon Parks. Kew Gardens, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, lies across the River Thames to the south.

The study area is traversed roughly east-west by a railway line, the A4 Great West Road and the elevated M4. The Grand Union Canal/River Brent runs north-south through the west of the area to join the Thames south of the High Street.

The stretch of predominantly retail uses along the High Street is designated as one of the borough's four Town Centres and a District Centre in the London Plan.

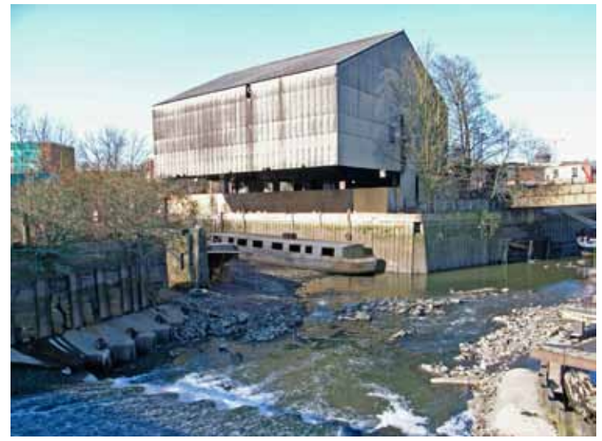
Brentford is located at the confluence of two major waterways and on a meander of the River Thames which features two wooded islands. The waterways and their banks are Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The highest ground lies to the northeast in and around Gunnersbury Park. The whole of the Thames frontage in Brentford is included in the Thames Landscape Strategy (Hampton to Kew), with its 100 year programme to restore bio-diversity, open up the historic vistas and limit waterside development.

The area is predominantly built up in 2 storey terraced housing and suburban estates. It has a unique and varied townscape with distinctive built and natural environments that are significant to its identity and sense of place. These include waterways and waterside environments, historic buildings, the A4 Great West Road 'Golden Mile' which functions as London's western gateway, and a large number of cultural and recreational assets.

There is a rich mix of residential and commercial development interspersed with open space. Large commercial developments dominate the Great West Road. The town centre provides for smaller commercial and retail development and is flanked by new high density residential development.

Brentford is subject to a significant amount of development pressure within a relatively small area. Negative characteristics include high levels of traffic and aircraft noise, air pollution, and a social and physical infrastructure that struggles to match the pressures placed on it.

The overall townscape lacks cohesion, with high quality historic and contemporary development fragmented by areas of lower quality.

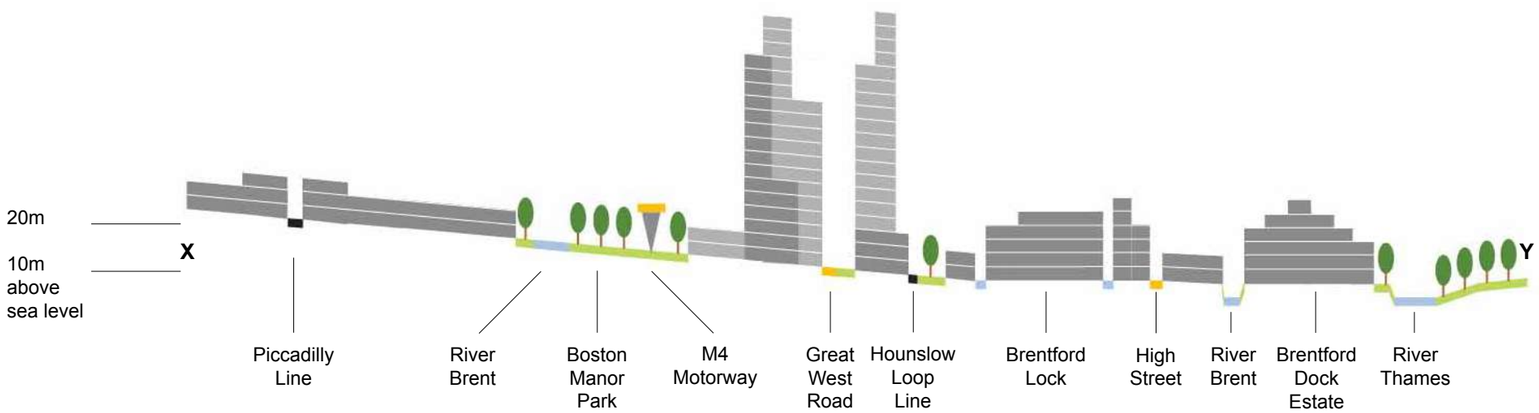


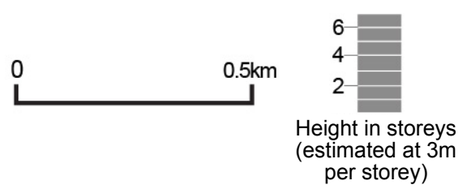
Sheltered boatyard, Old Brentford



Late Victorian terraces, car parking and park, St Paul's

Title page photo: The Pool of Brentford Lock with residential developments and GSK building in background





Brentford

brief historic context

The area's better drained and higher land alongside the Thames has been a place of occupation and activity from prehistoric times. Brentford was a Roman roadside station on the road from London to the West. Key to the location was crossing the River Brent at a fordable point before its delta converged with the Thames. The area as a whole provided valuable fisheries in the Middle Ages, whilst the ford had given the settlement its name by about 700. The angled crossing above the Brent's horseshoe loop enlarged habitable land to its east and the area continued to be occupied through the Saxon period. A bridge was in place by 1224 and the High Street took commercial advantage of the strategic route, with market, fairs and inns recorded along it by 1306. The bridge was rebuilt in stone, as was St Lawrence's church tower nearby, in the C15th. Brentford End on the western side of the bridge formed an early suburb.

Shelter and shallow water made the Thames-side a natural port, used also by horse and foot ferries. River access in the middle ages was available to substantial plots of land on the south side of the High Street where properties also had a street frontage. As well as a public wharf, successive sub-divisions into narrow yards allowed off-loading into shops and the market on the north side of the High Street.

In rising land to the north, winding Saxon lanes linked hidden villages, farms and larger houses in an agrarian landscape. Roads from Hanwell, Ealing and Acton joined to meet the High Street, the most built-up area, with larger houses and suburbs developed at various times between them. Associated crafts and industries followed very early on. By the C17th it was a centre for the nursery and market garden trade. Brick making used locally extracted clay.

Expanding C18th coaching trade, use of the street for markets, goods transfer and industry all increased congestion and the main road had developed on both sides by 1746. Kew Bridge, displacing the ferry from 1758, attracted malting, beer houses and market enterprises. In contrast to the Kew side, industry colonised the Brent side of the Thames, including water and wind mills, a tannery, malt-houses, timber yards, a soap works, a brewery and a turpentine distillery. The Brent was cut to form the Grand Junction Canal to the Thames. Opened in 1800, this brought new trade, with coal and iron trans-shipment.

Industrial and transport developments escalated after 1820. The water works relocated upriver from Chelsea to Kew Bridge to supply London's growing suburbs. A gas works opened in 1821 on what is now mostly Watermans Park. The Brentford branch of the Great Western Railway from Southall took much of the canal's trade after opening in 1859 to feed Brentford Dock.

By 1850 the passenger railway loop line trade brought stations at Kew Bridge and Brentford, which immediately encouraged housing development. C19th expansion of local industry brought workers and demand for homes. Terraces were densely laid out nearby. To combat squalor and poverty a Local Board and later the Urban District Council provided good municipal buildings and infrastructure in the form of late Victorian housing with a church, a library and parks in the St Pauls area.

The whole main road was intensively built up with trams arriving by 1905. Half Acre was similarly congested and had to be widened to permit trams along Boston Manor Road. The new Great West Road (A4) allowed through and heavy traffic to by-pass Brentford from 1925. American manufacturers in particular rapidly brought electric powered works in fine buildings along the new route, nick-named the Golden Mile.

Estate land was purchased in the 1920s for public parks at Boston Manor, Carville Hall and Gunnersbury. House building over agricultural land continued throughout the interwar period. Considerable clearance for widening came to the High Street in the 1950s-60s.

Redevelopment has continued in cleared industrial and commercial areas, now with a strong residential bias. The six Brentford Towers were placed into the former Kew Bridge reservoirs, the remaining reservoirs now also being built upon. The built infrastructure of the railhead was redeveloped for 590 context-specific homes around a marina in 1978-80. The canal wharf redevelopments north of the High Street are nearing completion with clearance continuing for the land to the south. Large sites along the Great West Road, peppered with significant listed buildings and overlain with the elevated M4, are presently being redeveloped.

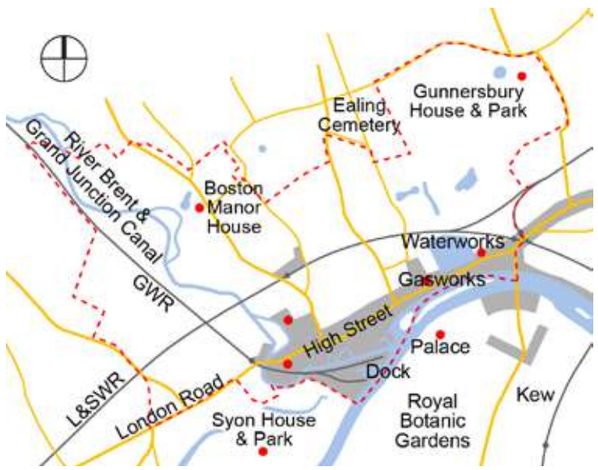


Brentford Docks, view across basin to warehouses, mid 20th century

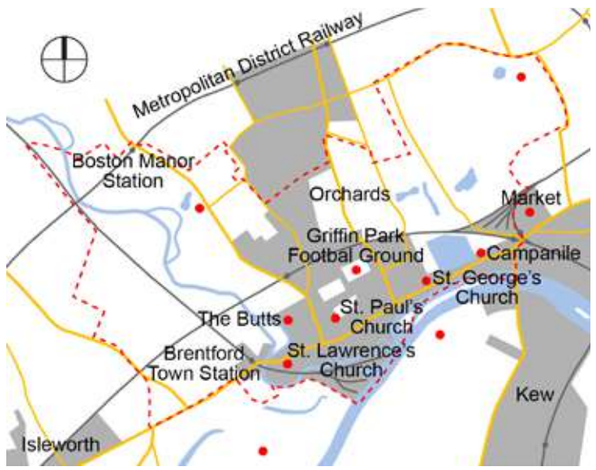


The Castle public house and T-type tram, Brentford High Street, 1950s

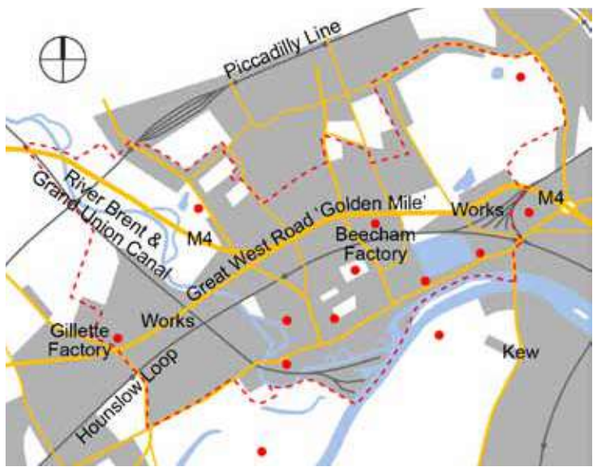
c1870



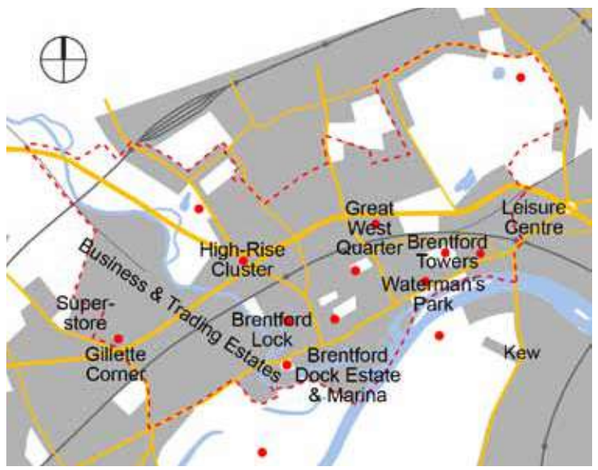
c1920



c1965

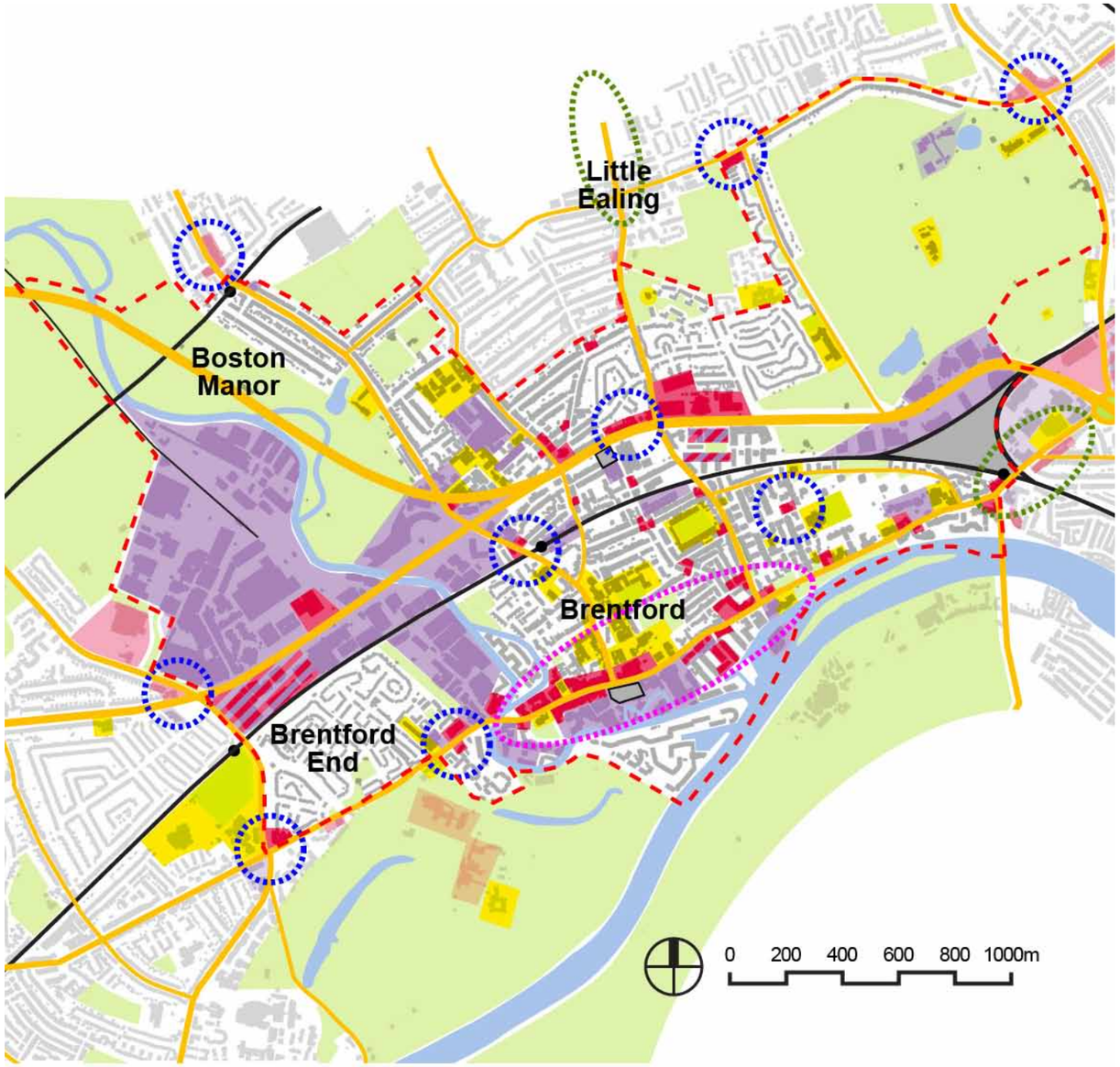


c2010



Brentford

land and building use



Brentford owes its unique overall character and identity as much to its huge variety of uses, building ages, styles, materials and layouts as to its natural setting. This variety has created distinctive local townscapes, ranging from local concentrations of particular styles, such as the Georgian housing in the Butts, to areas of considerable diversity such as the Ham with its eclectic mixture of old and new, residential and commercial. The different character areas in Brentford are an outcome of the evolving spatial pattern of development over time in relation to predominant land use, and the functional relationship between land use and building design.

The study area features a rich mix of residential and commercial development interspersed with open space within the context of the historic estates. Large commercial developments dominate the Great West Road, providing a mix of old and new accommodation and a number of large sites providing regeneration potential. Use becomes more uniformly residential north of the Great West Road and M4 and southwest of the town centre. The town centre provides for smaller commercial and retail development and is flanked by new high density residential development which has taken place along the River Thames to the East (Ferry Quays) and the Grand Union Canal to the West (Brentford Lock). The area provides a wide range of large scale art and entertainment facilities that not only cater for local residents but also attract visitors from outside of the area. Over recent years there has also been a significant growth in hotel development. The area's waterside character is shaped by its canal and riverside buildings, its remaining active boatyards and the variety of established residential moorings. Residential types vary enormously and include 2 storey late C19th terraces, early interwar garden suburbs, 1970s tower blocks and 2000s urban renaissance mid-rise apartments. The residential areas are served by a fairly even distribution of local centres in the form of shopping parades. A particular characteristic of its older areas are the many public houses, dating from the time when Brentford was a changing point for carriages and coaches on the Bath Road, some of which are under threat of redevelopment.

Brentford currently struggles to perform its function to provide local goods and services with regards to both the quantity and quality of floorspace provided. The town centre, though undergoing transformation, also has an incoherent and run-down appearance and suffers from a constant stream of traffic travelling along the High Street.



Commercial uses on the Great West Road



Regular terraces in St Paul's, a complete Late Victorian New Town



New residential development, Kew Bridge



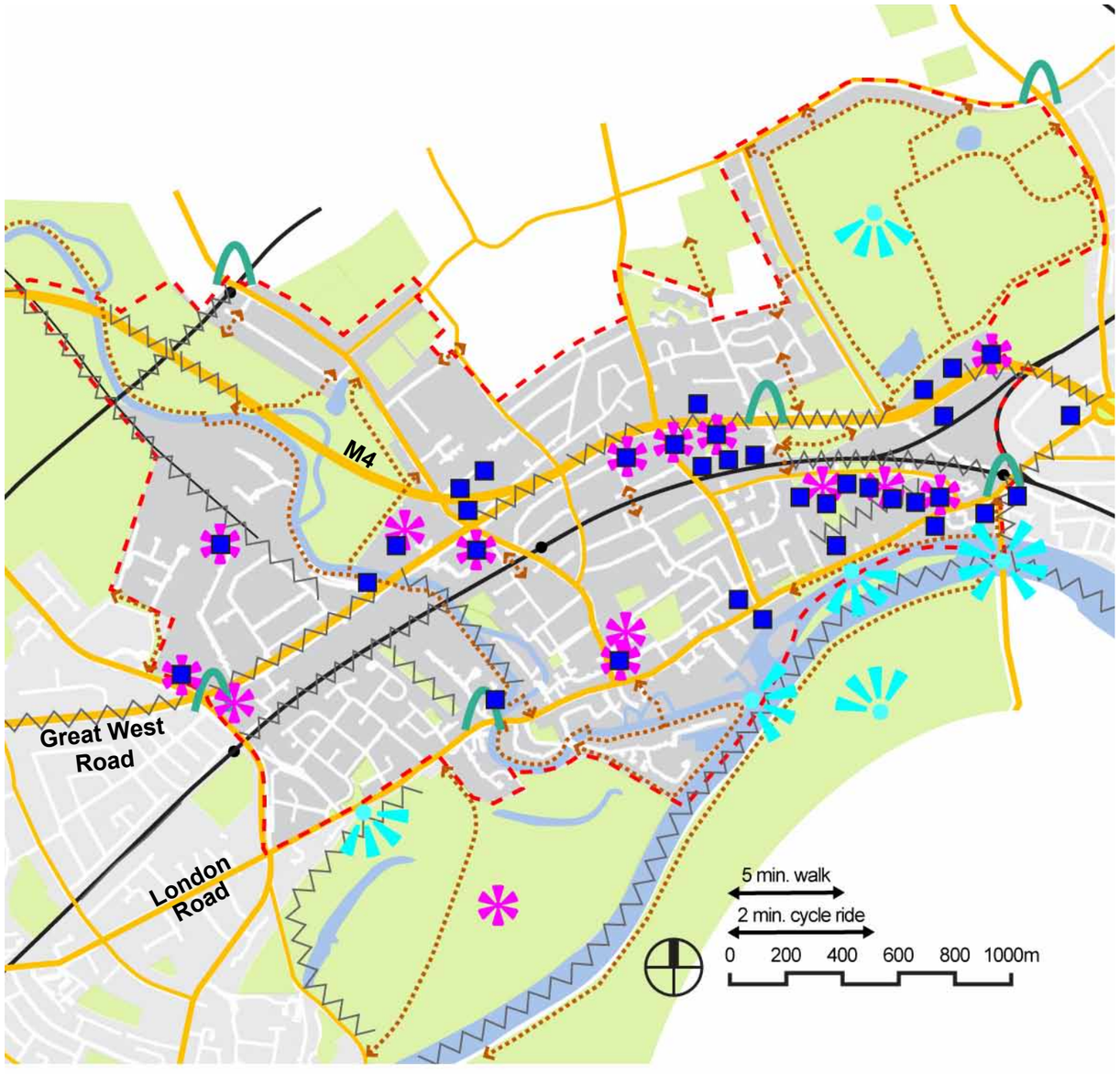
Local shopping parade, 1970s housing estate



The south side of the High Street

Brentford

movement and legibility





The overall movement structure is dominated by the east-west road and rail routes. The A4 Great West Road/M4 provides a key commercial area to the north of Brentford town centre and an important gateway to and from London particularly from the West and North West of the UK and indeed the rest of the world through Heathrow. Brentford's economic success in the past has been based in part on these excellent links. Less positively, the A4/M4 is a major barrier to both vehicular and pedestrian north-south movement, in places quite clearly slicing the pre-existing urban fabric in two. For example Carville Hall Park South is separated from Carville Hall Park North and Gunnersbury Park by the A4 dual carriageway and the elevated M4 which is particularly wide at this point due to the junction ramps either side and creates a large gloomy undercroft. The Hounslow Loop rail line runs east west through the area and stations at Syon Lane, Brentford and Kew Bridge provide connections with central London, other parts of the borough and parts of Surrey. To the south the area is crossed by London Road/Brentford High Street/Kew Bridge Road. The North Circular Road forms part of the eastern boundary, where the River Thames is crossed by Kew Bridge. Lesser though often busy roads provide mainly north-south links on an irregular and sometimes character area-defining grid. On a local level the route network offers a relatively high degree of connectivity.

Brentford is an area that experiences a large number of cars travelling to and through the area which results in high levels of congestion, poor air quality and unacceptable levels of traffic noise, all major concerns to local residents. Furthermore, traffic movements through the area, most of which are not generated within the area, reduce the attraction of walking and cycling and the reliability and frequency of local bus services.

The area is well-served by bus, train and, in the north, tube, though travel is biased towards an east-west axis. The town centre is a terminus for buses from Ealing and Southall to the north.

Pedestrian movement and way-finding through the overall area is on the whole easy, the only major barrier being the Great West Road with its infrequent crossing opportunities. Lesser barriers are in the form of sections of the railway corridor. The Green Dragon Estate with its six tall towers feels cut off from the High Street to the south. The Thames Path diverts interestingly through the industrial and semi-derelict areas south of the High Street and along the canal/River Brent from where the towpath leads north to Birmingham.

Landmark buildings of varying age, use and quality are concentrated in the town centre, to the east of the area and along the Great West Road, and may often be glimpsed at the ends of streets and across open spaces. Quality views are to be had from the banks of the River Thames and Kew Bridge, to and from Kew Gardens.



The Golden Mile, A4 Great West Road



Cycle and footway on Great West Road with elevated M4



Busy junction, Kew Bridge Road and North Circular Road, with landmark tower



The popular Grand Union Canal/River Brent towpath



St Paul's Church, central Brentford

Brentford

green and blue landscape



Public gardens
Parks & playing fields
Natural & semi-natural urban green spaces
Green corridors
School playing fields
Outdoor sports facilities
Amenity spaces
Cemeteries & churchyards
Accessible countryside (green-belt)
Allotments, community gardens & urban/city farms
Children's & teenagers' play areas
Rivers, natural water bodies
Canals, man-made water bodies
Wooded areas
Street trees

There are a limited number of open spaces within the study area (St Paul's Recreation Ground, Watermans Park and Carville Hall Park, cut in half by the Great West Road), although there are larger areas of parkland immediately surrounding Brentford at Syon, Osterley, Boston Manor and Gunnersbury Parks, each possessing its own historic mansion, all of which are now listed. Just across the river lies Kew UNESCO World Heritage Site which not only provides a unique place to visit but also pleasant views and broad vistas from the Brentford banks of the river. The protected buffer zone includes the Brentford river frontages facing Kew.

The River Thames and the Grand Union Canal form an integral part of London's Blue Ribbon Network. The canal, combined with the River Brent, joins the Thames south of the Thames Lock, and provides the gateway to the inland waterways that pass through the rest of the country. Whilst some major waterside sites have been redeveloped for housing, other areas still provide for traditional uses. These include boatyards, moorings and a plethora of small industrial and commercial uses, all of which contribute in their own way to Brentford's unique waterside environment, its intimate scale and unique sense of place. Much of the riverbank and canal towpath is accessible to the public but other parts need to be opened up where appropriate and where opportunities arise. In some cases new development has been allowed to cut off views of the river

The contribution of the waterways to the quality of the local environment, biodiversity and recreational amenity are also of fundamental significance, and this has been recognised by their designation within London's Blue Ribbon Network and as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The section of the river flowing through Brentford is part of the tidal Thames and supports a diverse mix of habitats. The Thames islands, which include Brentford Ait and Lots Ait, were originally deliberately planted with trees to hide the industrial scene from the Kew side. They now form an extended landscape with Kew.

With the exception of those in the historic Butts area and in the modernist Brentford Dock estate, few of the streets are significantly tree-lined. Grass verges are only found in the interwar developments on the fringes and are generally well-maintained though some are scruffy from parking use. Later postwar large infill and peripheral developments, typified by residential buildings standing alone in open space and undefined by street patterns, sometimes result in lifeless, un/underused green areas.

The High Street offers a sequence of more formal small urban square-like spaces with seating and planting, though quality could be improved.


Viewing point in pocket park, tip of Brentford Dock and Marina


River Brent crossing from towpath to playing fields of Boston Manor Park


Watermans Park between High Street and River Thames with houseboats


Square in Brentford Lock residential development off High Street


Badly designed and meaningless open space

Brentford

heritage assets



Brentford study area has 112 Listed buildings including objects. Highest national gradings are given to Boston Manor House, and the tower and steam pumping buildings at Kew Bridge. So far there are 32 locally listed buildings with many more under consideration. Most but not all the buildings are in the 7 1/2 conservation areas (sharing Gunnersbury with Chiswick).

The Jacobean architectural gem Boston Manor [1] (1623 and later) sits with its historic landscape above the Brent and water meadows. Gunnersbury Park [2] houses the Local History Museum in listed late Georgian buildings, follies and features amid an earlier C18th elegant landscape.

St Lawrence's Church [3] represents the relationship of the town, the road and the bridge at one end. The London Water and Steam Museum (formerly the Kew Bridge Steam Museum) [4] enclave at the other end relates in an architectural way to what was open space used for industry. Both are major formative features. The highlight of the pumping station enclave is the landmark standpipe tower designed in 1867 to look like a campanile. Other fine buildings house the pumping engines themselves.

Little is left of the old High Street buildings and uses. A c1700 pair of houses with C19th alterations make an attractive shop front at 129-30. C18th houses have been adapted at 60 and 80. The fine c1720 Peerless Pumps [5] building at Ferry Lane has reverted to residential. Traces of the Yards can still be found and the former Magistrates Court [6] spatially reflects the medieval market.

The prime pre-industrial urban set piece is The Butts [7] on the edge of the River Brent, linking the High Street with Half Acre. These local-brick cottages and elegant houses from the 1680s onward formed around an extension of the market place. Upper Butts and the Convent add to the townscape and historic ambience.

The courses of the 1795 canal and river Brent are still distinctive. The Gallows Bridge [8] of 1810 is part of a legacy of early industrial artefacts, many of which are found in small places like Johnsons Island. The Victorian period is well represented by the 1850 stations at Kew Bridge and Brentford. North in Half Acre [9] and along the High Street [10] are late Victorian municipal buildings. Elaborate red brick buildings with terracotta detail and designed by Nowell Parr include the former public baths and fire station, the Carnegie Library and the Beehive pub. In The Butts, the Boatmens' Institute in Arts and Crafts style is noteworthy.

The modern/art deco phase has produced many buildings that are now listed, including Boston Manor station, Alexandra House health centre on the High Street and in particular the Golden Mile factories and relic boundaries [11] which are dealt with separately in the Great West Road section.


Approaching The Butts from the High Street


Peerless Pumps building and new housing


Water and Steam Museum at Kew Bridge


The Library and Memorial on Half Acre


Art Deco factory building on the Golden Mile

Brentford

urban types



Urban type 1 - compact grid
Urban type 2 - loose grid
Urban type 3 - slabs and towers
Urban type 4 - courts and cul-de-sacs
Urban type 5 - urban renaissance
Urban type 6 - big box
Urban type 7 - urban centre
Atypical (not representative of an above type)

Brentford is typologically the most heterogeneous of all the study areas, reflecting its relatively turbulent past and present. Broadly, a north-south swathe of late C19th to prewar compact grid (type 1) development stretches from Ealing to the High Street. It is partly flanked by early interwar loose grid (type 2) housing estates of mostly the Garden Suburb variety. 1960 and 1970s slabs and towers (type 3) mostly occupy former industrial/utility land on the area's fringes with contemporary and slightly later courts and cul-de-sacs (type 4) occupying infill and comprehensive redevelopment sites. Urban renaissance (type 5) along the main thoroughfares has become emblematic of Brentford today.

The exclusively commercial/retail big box (type 6) appears most notably to the west of the area along the Great West Road. The urban centre (type 7) is flanked by atypical industrial buildings and uses to the south and by the atypical C18th - early C19th residential set piece to the north.

For more information on general urban types found in the borough, including historical development, aspects of form and SWOT analyses, see Section 4: Urban Types.


Type 1


Type 2

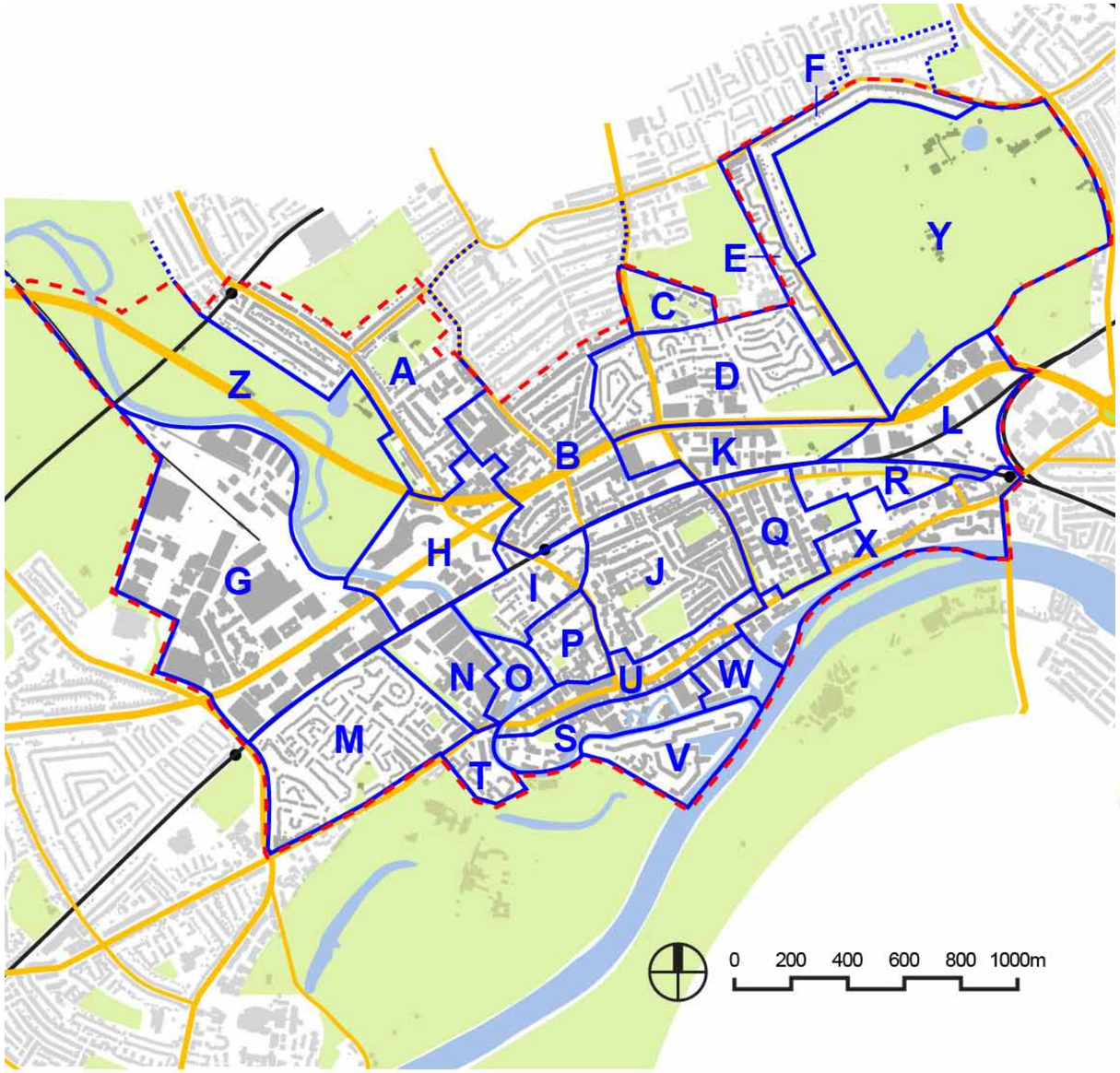

Type 3

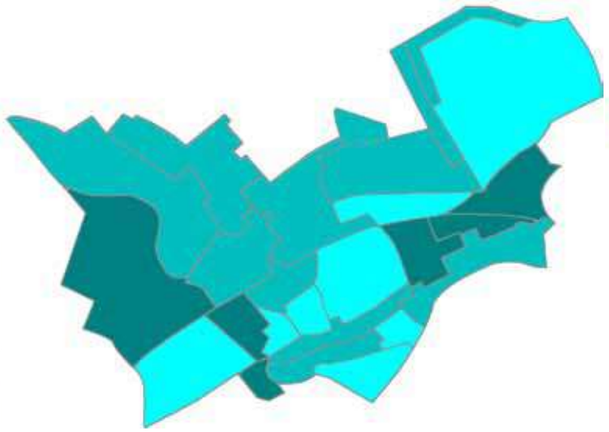

Type 4


Type 5

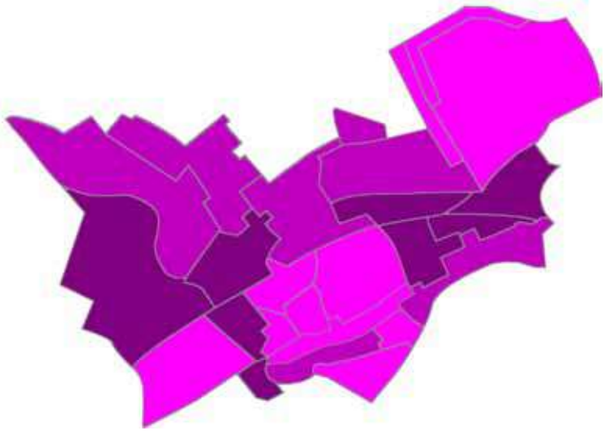
Brentford

character areas and assessments

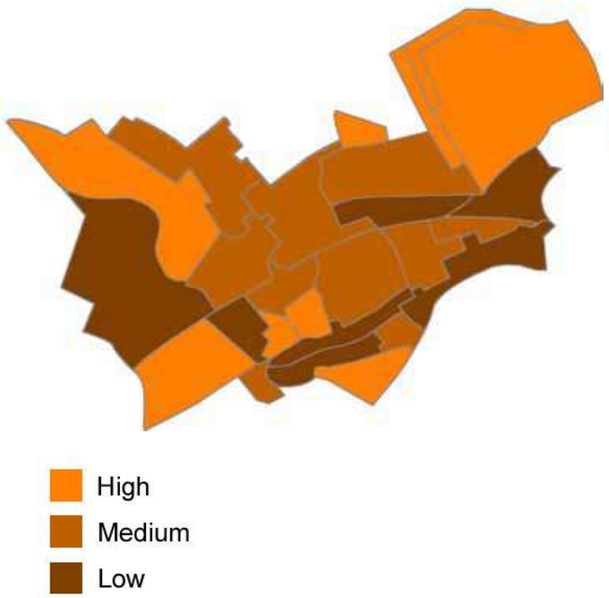




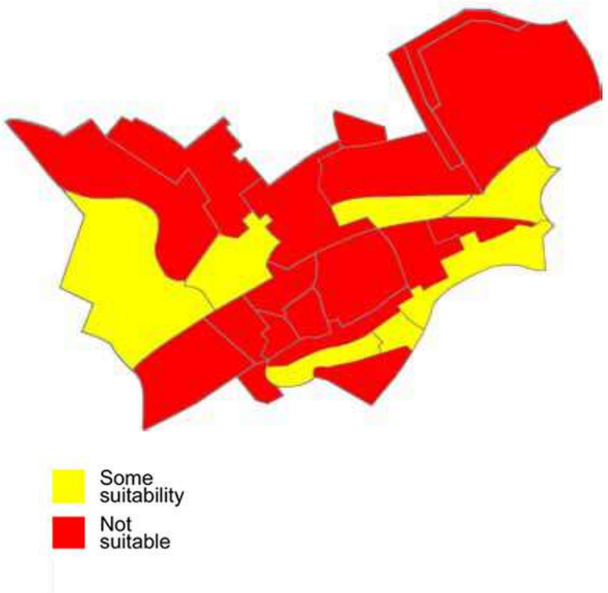
Design Quality



Sensitivity to change



Permanence



Suitability for tall buildings

A Character Area

For more information on characterisation and assessment see Section 1: Introduction - Methodology

Brentford

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
A		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2 with some 4	Primarily residential with school, sports facilities and access to Boston Manor House and Park. Mostly early interwar ribbon development estate of two-storey semis and short-medium terraces with rear access lanes. Architecturally interesting interwar three-storey linear apartment blocks with parking and green space on cul-de-sac to south, where there is generally a greater mix, with some C18th century houses on south end of Boston Manor Road. Served by listed underground station and shopping parade to north with buses along main north-south road. Merges imperceptibly with Hanwell, part of Ealing, to north.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
B		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Contrast with nearby commercial developments. Urban type: Type 1 with some 4 and 6	Primarily residential with school and trading estate to northwest. Cut in two by Great West Road. Mostly Victorian and Edwardian 2 storey long terraces with larger Victorian villas on Windmill Road and some extensive C20th infill development including the trading estate and 1970s housing estate to south, neither of which greatly exceed the height of the earlier housing. Only area with housing fronting directly onto Great West Road. Served by railway station and small shopping parade to southwest and rundown parade to east. Poor access to schools and open space. Merges imperceptibly with Little Ealing to north, with its better retail offer.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
C		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 3	Postwar estate of local authority social housing on site of former sewage works. Mostly 1960s, consisting of six 6 storey L-plan apartment blocks and four 4 storey maisonette slabs set in green open space with surface parking, play space and community centre. Spaces are on the whole in good condition and blocks are coherently laid out providing good legibility and east-west permeability. Two older 3 storey slabs in less coherent open space to south. More recent 2-3 storey development on cul-de-sac to southwest, which reflects the building heights of the housing in neighbouring character area D. Strongly bounded to north by cemetery.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
D		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2 with some 6	Primarily residential with trading estate and park to south. Mostly 2 storey early interwar local authority semis and short terraces with some bungalows, on classic loops and lollipops Garden Suburb layout. Eastern part has limited accessibility. Some modest grass verges and corner spaces. Buffered and cut off from Great West Road to south by commercial uses (late C20th trade retail boxes and car show rooms) and park with childrens' play area. Served by rundown shopping parade, to west, which fronts directly onto Great West Road. Little Ealing, just outside the borough to north, has a more attractive and comprehensive retail offer.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Brentford

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
E		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Linearity Urban type: Type 2	Exclusively family housing with school to south. North-south ribbon development of 2 storey early interwar short terraces with some semis. Characterised by Garden Suburb-style sequence of green crescents, in varying conditions, and short cul-de-sacs. Served by shopping parade to north. Slopes downward to south with views of Brentford Towers development along Great West Road. Access to Gunnersbury Park from south end.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
F		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Linearity Urban type: Type 2	Exclusively family housing ribbon development along northwest inner perimeter of Gunnersbury Park. Interwar 2 storey houses progressing east-west from linked detached through semi-detached on northern stretch to short terraces opposite Area E on western stretch. Served by shopping parades to east and west. Intermittent access to Gunnersbury Park, onto which houses back. Shares character with part of neighbouring Ealing to northeast.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
G		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 6	Almost exclusively industrial and commercial use, straddling and stretching northwards from Great West Road. Mostly low-rise warehousing-style units with large floor plates. Some big box retail to southwest. The northeast is more industrial with ageing metal warehousing, open yard operations, and large volumes of heavy goods traffic. Some significant remaining examples of Art Deco architecture front Great West Road ‘Golden Mile’, including landmark Gillette clock tower. Strongly bounded to east by River Brent with views across to and visible from Boston Manor grounds.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Some
H		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Contrast with nearby low rise residential and community uses. Urban type: Type 6 with some 5	Mostly consisting of a cluster of high-rise office and residential buildings and advertising columns which create a focal point at the A4 junction with Boston Manor Road, this is the first group of tall buildings seen from the M4 coming into London and is therefore considered to function as a strategic gateway. The elevation of the M4 roadway and the taller office buildings have created uniformity within the character area and a number of landmark structures. However, overall scale of this area is out of context with surrounding residential areas and parkland. Combined mass and height of GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) building make it particularly prominent.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Some

Brentford

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
I		General uniformity of use. Moderate uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type and period. Transitional location between historic and modern commercial areas. Urban type: Type 2 with some 4 and 1	Unified by south-north axes of Boston Manor Road and lesser Church Walk from The Butts to the Great West Road via a railway footbridge. Off these hang mostly postwar residential developments of 1-2 storey terraces and 3-4 storey blocks of flats. Area is partly delimited by the railway line to the north and more strongly bounded by the River Brent to the west, and serves as a transition zone between the historic Butts and the modern high rises to the north. Riverside recreation ground and allotments to west and small shopping parade to northeast.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
J		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 1 with some 3	A complete Victorian New Town of mostly Late Victorian and Edwardian 2 storey terraced housing arranged around areas of local open space, including Griffin Park stadium and St Paul's recreation ground. Though very close to High Street/town centre the area is served by numerous local shops and pubs, though some are under threat from redevelopment. Large areas devoted to well-integrated community uses. St. Paul's Church is a prominent landmark in the area terminating a vista from London Road across the Brentford Lock.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
K		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Contrast with neighbouring areas Urban type: Type 5	2010s mixed use development and emerging local centre on previously commercial site between Great West Road and sunken railway line. Residential, hotel, retail, community and leisure uses in 4-10 storey buildings with 25 storey tower to west, with courtyards, playground and central square. Includes converted Art Deco listed factory and tower. Overlooks elevated M4 to north and Carville Hall Park South to east. Latter receiving new lease of life as a related open space at the eastern end of the axis through the development. Relatively well-connected to surrounding areas given island location. Western end with derelict tower undergoing redevelopment.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Some
L		General uniformity of use. Moderate uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type. Location on major route Urban type: Type 6	Predominantly features small group of mid-to -high rise office buildings of contemporary design with glass and metal exteriors, straddling Great West Road and elevated M4. Vantage West, at 15 storeys, is most prominent, particularly from Kew Bridge. North side acts as buffer between A4/M4 and Gunnersbury Park. All of the buildings are set back from the roadside and have frontages dominated by car parking. To west are low-rise warehousing units with large car parking areas. To south is open yard works within railway triangle, accessed by one-way through road from Kew Bridge Road to GWR, to be redeveloped as new Brentford football stadium with associated enabling residential development.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Some

Brentford

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
M		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2 with some 4 and 6	Well-planned residential estate of 2 storey interwar semi-detached and terraced housing. The uniform architectural style of the properties, the regular spaces between buildings and the road layout incorporating cul-de-sacs are very distinctive of the period in which the housing was completed. The landscaping of the estate is also important in extending the parkland seen through the Lion Gate from Syon Park. Served by shopping parade to southwest. Some postwar infill to east on similar layout but with less coherent amenity spaces.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
N		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Urban type: Type 6	Canal-side area of warehousing and works reaching a maximum of three-storeys in height. Includes iconic overhanging wharf built to enable covered goods transhipment. Much of the industrial activity in this area has been terminated and mixed-use redevelopment is underway. High quality Art Deco industrial estate buildings on east side of Commerce Road to be retained and refurbished. The towpath along the canal links the Great West Road with the High Street and is used for houseboat mooring.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
O		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Contrast with neighbouring areas Urban type: Type 5	2000s residential development with some small retail units and hotel, hard landscaped areas of public open space and narrow-boat moorings, all focused on the canal at Brentford Lock. The scale of the buildings at 3-7 storeys is significantly greater than surrounding areas. The Island site has more variety of form to link with its river fronts and the tallest buildings relate to the High Street with an 8th storey feature and public square. However, the Lock and the vista along the canal to GSK provide the only connections to the wider Brentford townscape.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
P		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Atypical with some 1	The Butts is an exceptionally attractive and unspoilt area of largely 3 storey houses first developed around 1670, focused on a large irregular square, part of which is now a registered village green. The central space is part surrounded by Georgian properties of similar scale and materials. Many of these are listed, some wide-fronted of simple but gracious and symmetrical style with railed front gardens, others straight onto the footpath. It is approached from an avenue of similarly scaled but later properties to the east, and other similar properties are to be found in streets to the north. Glimpses of the river through spaces between buildings.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Brentford

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
Q		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Contrast with neighbouring areas Urban type: Type 4 with some 3	Postwar housing estate of 4 storey flats and 2 storey terraces typical of their time and lacking distinctive architectural features. Layout has led to predominance of dead ends, on-street parking, visible backs and undefined frontages. 4 storey flat blocks are particularly confusing with regard to fronts, backs and access. Earlier and later development along better-defined street across north. Earlier postwar 4 storey blocks in green space fringe High Street to south. Large school and shopping parade to east.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
R		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Contrast with neighbouring areas Isolation Urban type: Type 3 with some 4	The area contains six identical 23 storey 1970s residential towers. Known as the Brentford Towers, they create a strong sense of architectural unity and a distinct sense of place. They also function as strategic landmarks for Brentford. However they are completely out of character with the predominant urban pattern. Set back from the east-west through-road in large areas of green open space and parking. More recent strip of 2-3 storey terraces to north. Relatively isolated area between railway line and post-industrial spaces to south, with no direct access to High Street. Access to school and shopping parade to west.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
S		Moderate uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, and period. Industrial use Waterside location Urban type: Atypical with some 6	The area has an industrial character with a mixture of buildings, some built at a time where the proximity to the Grand Union Canal had little relevance to their operation, interspersed with older buildings that were wholly dependant on their waterside location. The established urban form of the area is of a finely grained low rise pattern of buildings around the yards, with a varied roof line of 2-3 storeys, with occasional 4 storey, mostly pitched roofs. The area retains some features of its past as a working dock such as wharf buildings, boatyards, cranes and Victorian warehouses. The general former-industrial, almost unkempt appearance of the area and the remaining boat building activities give character to the area. The historic street pattern in this area, which was characterised by narrow alleyways running north to south to the waterfront, has been interrupted although some important links remain. The current meandering layout of buildings and roads impedes visual and physical access to the Grand Union Canal. To the west is a mixed-use enclave of late C20th 4 storey residential apartments and 2 storey industrial units, inter-leaved with remnants of the area's early history. There are also a significant number of houseboats moored along the canal that add colour and interest to the waterside.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Some
				

Brentford

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
T 	General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 4	Small branching cul-de-sac 1970s estate of 2 storey terraces and 3-5 storey flat blocks somewhat randomly set in green and parking space, on the west bank of the Grand Union Canal and adjacent to Syon Park. The area also contains a small, recreation ground. The residential blocks are of a uniform architectural style and their urban character contrasts with their waterside, parkland setting.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
U   	Town Centre/High Street function Linearity Diversity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period Urban type: Type 7 with some 3 and 5	The current town centre/High Street is a bewildering mix of old and new from converted Georgian houses and Victorian shops to 1960s retail and residential units. Key historic landmarks include the former church of St Lawrence, the Magistrates Court and the Beehive public house. Within the primary retail parades, the condition of shop fronts, footways and public realm is mixed. The urban form of the area is of a continuous frontage of 2-3 storeys, occasionally broken with lower or slightly higher buildings but maintaining a modest human scale. To the east is a varied mix of residential, retail and civic developments. The range of ages and styles reflects the piecemeal basis on which development took place. The mix of street-level uses in the area increases westward towards the town centre although no building on the High Street is taller than 4 stories. The police station is by far the tallest structure in the area at over 10 storeys. The buildings to the east are largely set back from the High Street or with inactive High Street frontages. The supermarket has a long inactive frontage. The area includes a small cluster of historic brick buildings off the south side of the High Street, dating from C18th and C19th. Most of the C20th buildings are of indifferent quality, but they maintain a scale and language of materials that gives the High Street an overall integrity. The streetscape of the High Street suffers from its use as a major traffic thoroughfare. There is insufficient space on the south side for pedestrian movement. A significant proportion of the High Street is within conservation areas. It also includes a number of listed buildings, and buildings of townscape merit.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Brentford

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
V		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Waterside location Urban type: Type 3	Primarily residential with leisure uses. Located on a peninsula between the Grand Union Canal and the River Thames, Brentford Dock is an estate of modernist 4-6 storey snake-blocks and 3 storey terraces completed in the late 1970s by the Greater London Council. The uniform style of the architecture and landscaping create a sense of seclusion from surrounding areas and a distinctive identity. Built on original site of docks with former railway route providing only vehicular access. Private yacht marina provides focus. Coherent and well-maintained amenity spaces. Isolated from main activity centres and public transport.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
W		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Waterside location Urban type: Type 5	The recent development of this area has created a distinctive residential townscape of 4-6 storey blocks mixed with some leisure uses and waterside areas of public spaces. There are also some strong north-south axes that allow views of the river from the High Street and reflect the historical pattern of development. Despite the public spaces and ground floor retail and commercial uses the development suffers from a lack of activity due to its physical, visual and perceptual disconnection from the town centre.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Some
X	 	Extensive pre-Town Centre/High Street Gateway function Linearity Diversity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period Urban type: Type 5 with some 4	On the whole, a bewildering and incoherent mix of old and new from Victorian houses and large scale industrial buildings to mid rise 1980s office and high-rise 2010s urban renaissance mixed use developments, with more in the pipeline. To the east is an enclave of 2 storey houses ranging from late C19th to late C20th which relates to an extent to the London Water and Steam Museum with its landmark tower opposite, and contrasts starkly with the mid-to-high rise mainly residential development and emergent local centre to the south, by the bridge and the river. The main road is flanked by a riverside park and a mix of recently redeveloped former office and post-industrial sites which include the Musical Museum and yet more recent mid-to-high rise residential. At the western end of the linear park is the unimposing building housing the Watermans Arts Centre which, together with a drive-through McDonalds, heralds Brentford town centre.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Some

Brentford

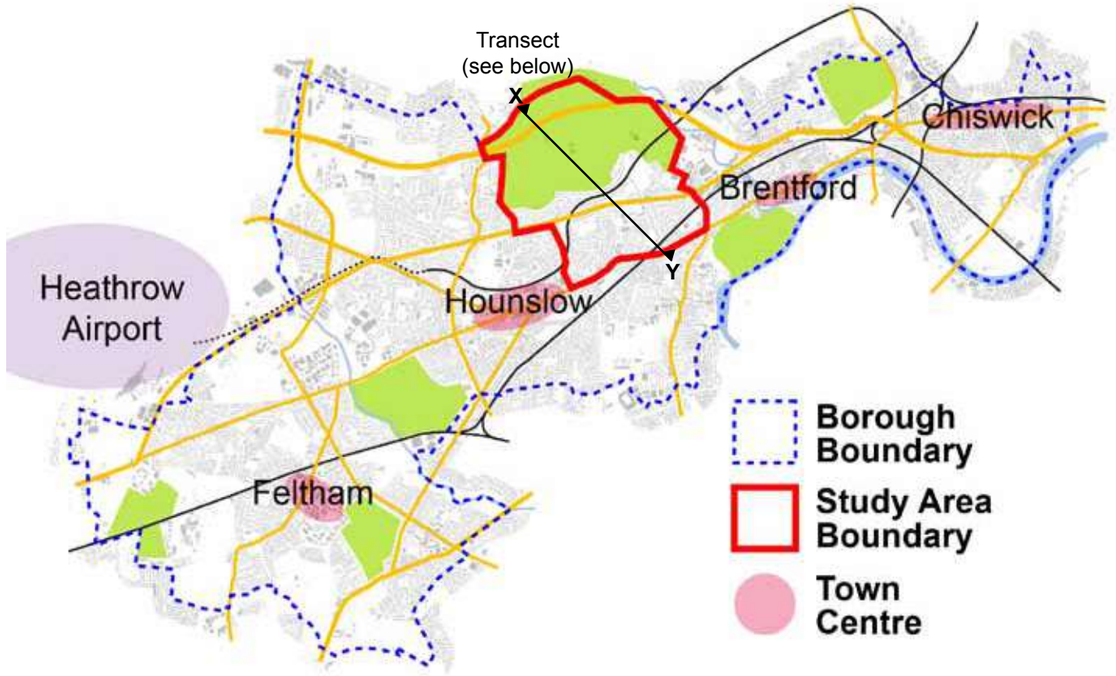
character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
Y 	General uniformity of use Large publicly accessible green open space Nature conservation area Metropolitan Open Land Urban type: Atypical	Gunnersbury Park. One of the borough's Historic Parks and Gardens. Large area of parkland with listed historic mansions. Wide range of facilities including small golf course, children's play area and nursery. The Park's higher ground to the north makes development along the Great West Road particularly visible from Gunnersbury Park and its mansions. Vantage West and adjacent properties that back on to the park, particularly those with light or reflective cladding, have a negative effect on its setting and skyline. The west side of the park is bounded by an unwelcoming-looking chain link fence topped with barbed wire.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Z 	General uniformity of use Large publicly accessible green open space Green corridor, waterway Nature conservation area Metropolitan Open Land Urban type: Atypical	Boston Manor Park. One of the borough's Historic Parks and Gardens. The grounds of the Manor at the bottom of the slope have been over-ridden by the supports of the M4 motorway, and are visually intruded upon by its elevated section, which has no noise attenuation measures. Consequently, although the canal and River Brent feature in a scenic parkland landscape, the whole area is overwhelmed by the noise and visual intrusion of the motorway and the 15 storey plus GlaxoSmithKline headquarters on its southern border, which shields it from wider view and closes off the river valley.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Osterley and Spring Grove

3

Osterley and Spring Grove

present-day context



The Osterley and Spring Grove study area is located in the north-centre of the borough. It is crossed east-west by the Piccadilly and Hounslow Loop railway lines from Central London, the A4 Great West Road and the M4 Motorway (though the latter is not locally accessible).

Hounslow town centre (designated a Metropolitan Centre in the London Plan) lies to the immediate south-west and the major trading, industrial, retail and office developments of the Great West Road's Golden Mile lie to the immediate north-east. The ancient London Road forms the southern boundary and Syon Lane the eastern one. The area is dominated by the large open space of Osterley Park.

The study area slopes gently northwards and westwards from the Rivers Thames and Brent. The River Thames lies approximately two kilometres to the south-east. Both Osterley Park and the two railway corridors are Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

Aside from Osterley Park, the study area is predominantly residential in land use and may be classified as mostly interwar outer suburban. The area can be subdivided into the largely homogeneous Osterley to the north of and along the southern edge of the Great West Road, and the more diverse Spring Grove, with its 19th century core, which shares its fringe character with neighbouring Hounslow and Isleworth. To the east the area feels poorly connected to Brentford and the east of the borough due mainly to the impermeability of the large trading estates and the hostile pedestrian environment of the Great West Road.

The urban environment is generally of good quality with often wide, tree-lined streets and an even distribution of local centres and open spaces. Hounslow town centre to the immediate south-west offers a comparatively greater choice of entertainment and retail. London Road functions sporadically as a high street (shared with Isleworth). The area is well-served by bus, tube and train. The greatest barrier to movement is the Great West Road with its infrequent crossing opportunities.

The acoustic environment is dominated by aircraft noise and traffic noise when within 50 metres of the A4, beyond which bird song and general urban ambient sounds take over.

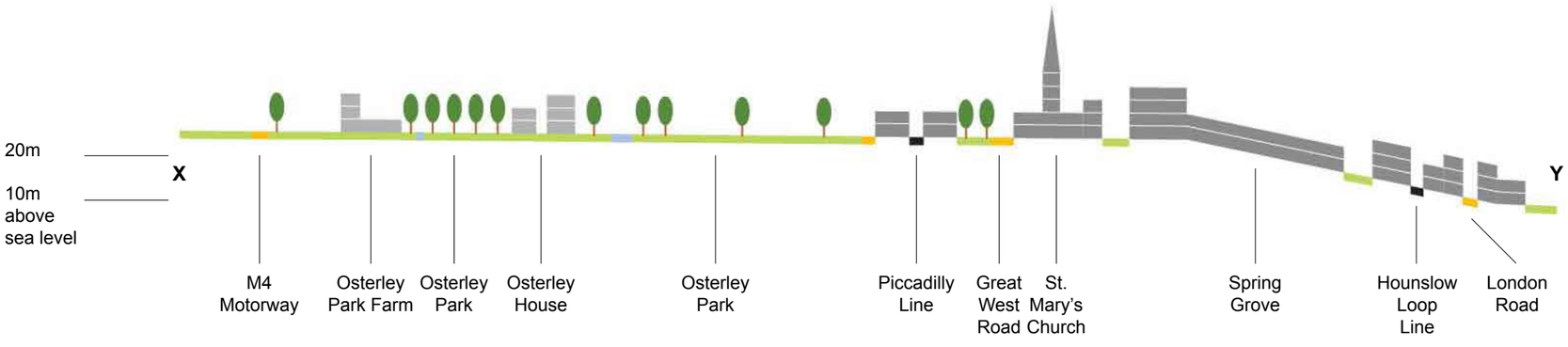


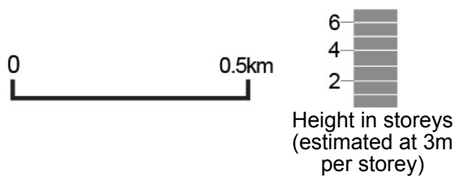
Bookshop in former station building, Thornbury Road, Osterley



Postmodernist office building, London Road, Spring Grove

Title page photo: St. Mary's Church at the boundary of Osterley and Spring Grove





Osterley and Spring Grove

brief historic context

There is likely to have been human settlement in the higher ground since prehistoric times. Known archaeology identifies the Roman/London Road an Architectural Priority Area. However with much of this area marshy land, and with many incoming and alternative routes across Smallbury Green (near the present junction of London and Twickenham Roads) the highway was not hardened until the later years of the coaching era. A turnpike (toll house) is shown on the eastern entrance on 1745 mapping. This period coincides with a number of buildings of local brown brick and features which have survived on both sides of the London Road.

Winding Saxon lanes crossing the London Road ran parallel with the river Brent and linked small settlements amongst open land and agricultural fields. Osterley as an emparked House in Elthorne Hundred, just to the north of Isleworth Hundred, has been a major formative influence on a wide scale.

For most of the last millennium much of the study area including Wyke House, an old estate to the south east of Osterley House and now mostly disappeared in built form, and Scratedge the brickfield to Osterley's south, lay within the administrative Hundred of Isleworth, which included Heston and Twickenham, within the county of Middlesex.

Osterley House became more eminent by the mid C18th. A grand avenue stretched northeast to abut Windmill Road, on the old route to the north, opposite what appears to be a ford across the River Brent. To the southeast, Wyke Green formed a crossing place from where the old route is continued as Wood Lane to the south, and Sion (Hill) Lane to the southeast. To the south market gardens and orchards supplied London with fresh produce. The mid C19th railway severed Wyke House from much of its land but was placed into a deep cutting as it passed Osterley's estate. A station to the south led to a new access and avenue being created into Osterley Park.

The stations south of London Road and to the north, in conjunction with the status of Osterley, were a development opportunity. The main layout and outer ring of the Davis housing estate, focused on the late C18th Spring Grove House, a new large house and a church were complete by 1865. Remaining large plots of land were attractive as a place to build educational establishments with playing fields.

By the late C19th, encouraged by the coming of the railway, the more concentrated settlement of Spring Grove was evolving to the south of the study area northwards from London Road. During the C20th the area's character shifted from rural to urban as the county of Middlesex was absorbed into the expansion of London.

The open land to the south of Osterley was severed by the Great West Road/A4 in 1925. This brought a repositioned station and considerable development potential. East-west ribbon development extended by way of new housing roads, northwards to include the curve around the edge of Osterley Park and southwards to meet the expansion from London Road. Additional roads were added around the Davis estate, and within it along Harvard Road.

To the north Osterley's own estate land itself was slashed through by the motorway in 1965. Although in a cutting and with a tree edge, the dissociating effect and noise impact from the M4 on Osterley Park are very considerable.

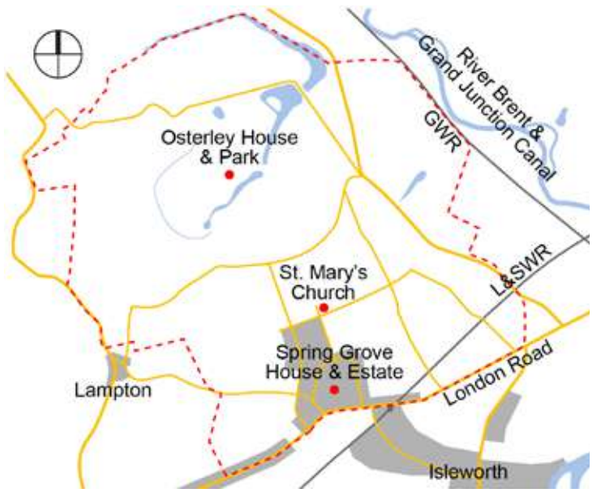


The Grove, Spring Grove, 1900s



Great West Road, looking east towards St Mary's Church, 1950s

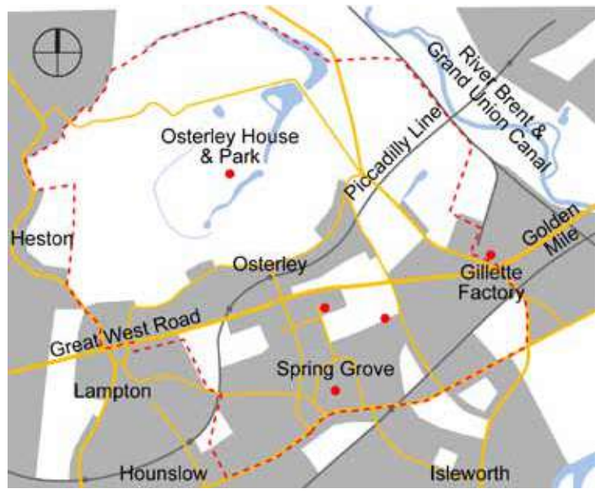
c1870



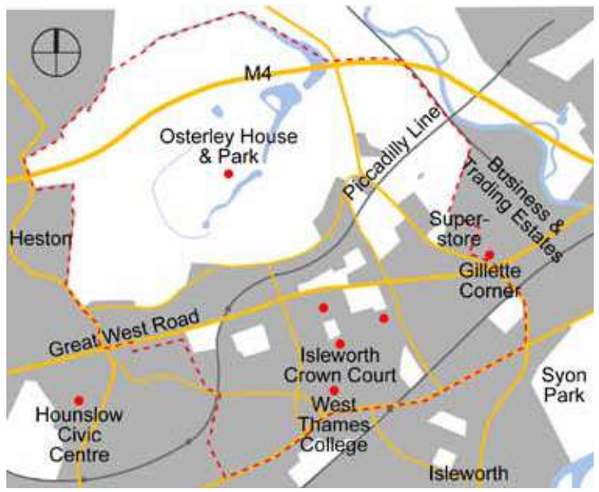
c1920



c1935

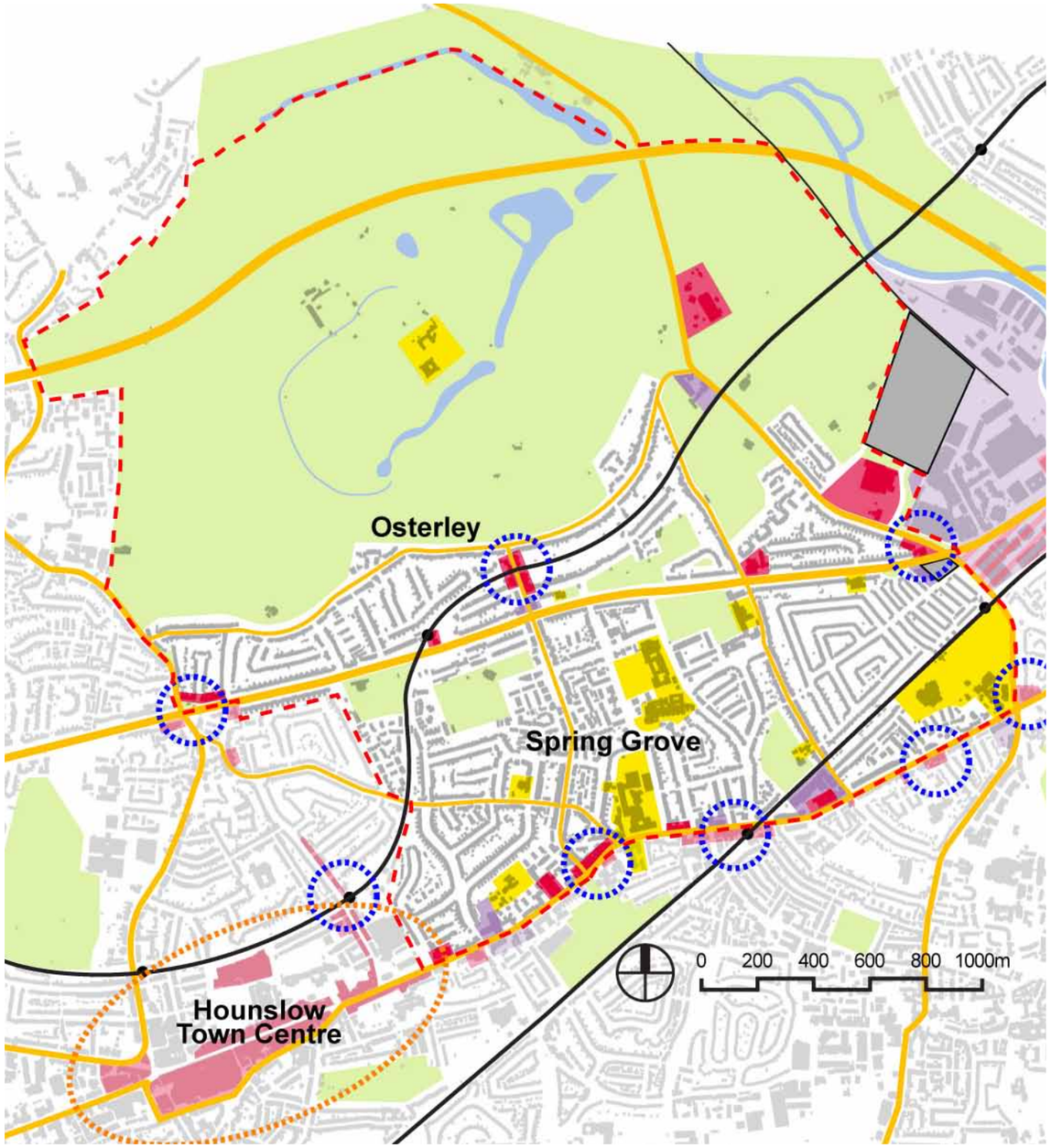


c2010



Osterley and Spring Grove

land and building use



Osterley is almost exclusively residential in use. There are three evenly distributed shopping parades which function as local centres, a superstore to the east, a centrally located library and a pleasant public garden which offers surprising respite from the nearby Great West Road. There is virtually nothing in the way of local business use. However there are large trading estates to the east.

Osterley is dominated by uniform two storey semi-detached interwar residential development with some short terraces on generally wide streets, often with grass verges. Larger, more individualistic detached houses are located on the fringe of Osterley Park, along with some much older properties. Most have extensive private gardens. There are pockets of postwar in-fill and extension developments.

Spring Grove is altogether more diverse than Osterley, having developed over a longer period and being essentially the meeting point of Osterley's interwar southern expansion and Isleworth's steadier northern expansion from London Road. Though the primary use is residential there is a central concentration of community/institutional uses which include Isleworth Crown Court and two large educational facilities, along with a landmark church.

Though the dominant form is two storey pre-WWI and interwar houses the central and western parts are peppered with interwar and postwar flat and house developments. The eastern part is more uniform, sharing some characteristics with Osterley: two storey semi-detached interwar residential with some short terraces though with less generous street widths and an absence of grass verges. Further east is a late 1930s homogeneous development of flats in two storey semi-detached house-style buildings.

The high street to the south (shared with Isleworth) offers a regularly spaced series of shopping parades and some business uses, with some buildings at the Hounslow town centre end reaching up to eight storeys in height. The earliest of these taller buildings were commercial in use, but are being used as a precedent for increasing the height of residential buildings.



Early C20th pre-WWI semi-detached houses



1960s infill town house and flat development



c2010, gradual increase in building height from 2 to 8 storeys, street off London Road



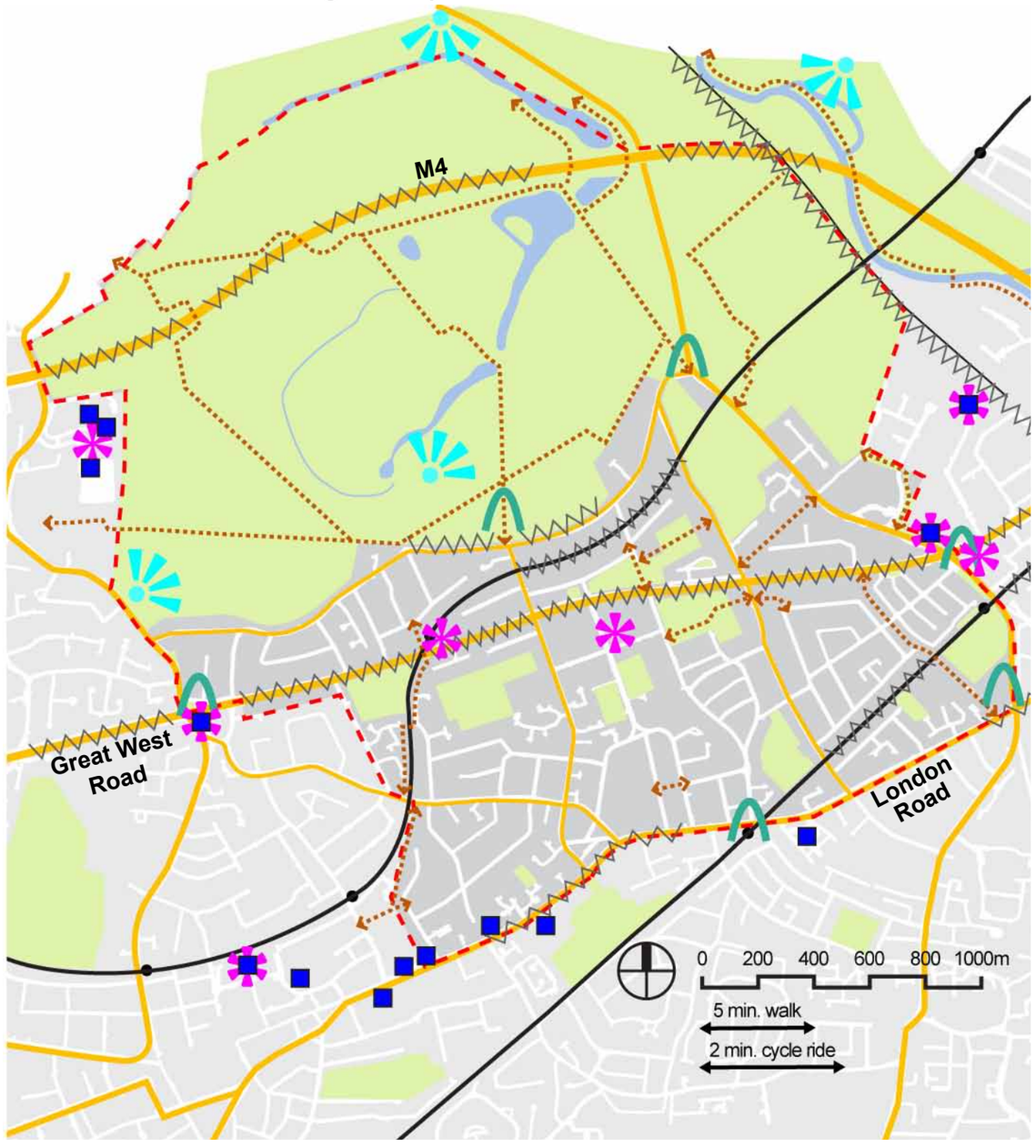
Late interwar semi-detached houses



Well-used shopping parade at local centre

Osterley and Spring Grove

movement & legibility



Road
Railway
Footpath
Movement Barrier
Gateway
Landmark
View
Building of 7-plus Storeys

The overall movement structure is dominated by the east-west road and rail routes. The most defining of these is the A4 Great West Road which, despite the availability of the M4 motorway, still performs a major trunk road function for London and the immediate west including Heathrow Airport. London Road to the south functions, if sporadically, more as a high street. Lesser, though often busy, roads provide north-south links. Apart from a few small pockets, on a local level the route network offers a relatively high degree of connectivity.

The area is well-served by bus, tube and train, though travel is biased towards an east-west axis. A more local bus service weaves through the study area.

Pedestrian movement and way-finding through the overall area is on the whole easy, the only major barriers being the Great West Road with its infrequent crossing opportunities and the large trading estate development to the east. Lesser barriers are in the form of sections of the railway corridors and long, unbroken residential blocks. Vehicular access to Osterley Park is restricted by a continuous red brick wall which stretches each side of and emphasises the main entrance, though the wall itself is considered to be of historic importance. Access from the park to the more natural environment of the River Brent to the north east is prevented by an industrial railway line. Access routes to the north end of the park are limited by the M4 motorway.

Typically of the area's development period, back and side alley pedestrian ways proliferate, many of which are in poor condition and uncomfortable to use. However, many of these are necessary for ease of movement to and from residential areas and important nodes such as bus stops, shops and stations, and therefore offer an opportunity for improvement.

The Gillette Building's clock tower at the eastern edge of the area, Osterley station's Art Deco tower (both illuminated at night) and St Mary's church spire provide landmarks.


The Gillette Building clock tower, a major landmark at the eastern gateway


Typical unattractive and intimidating back footpath

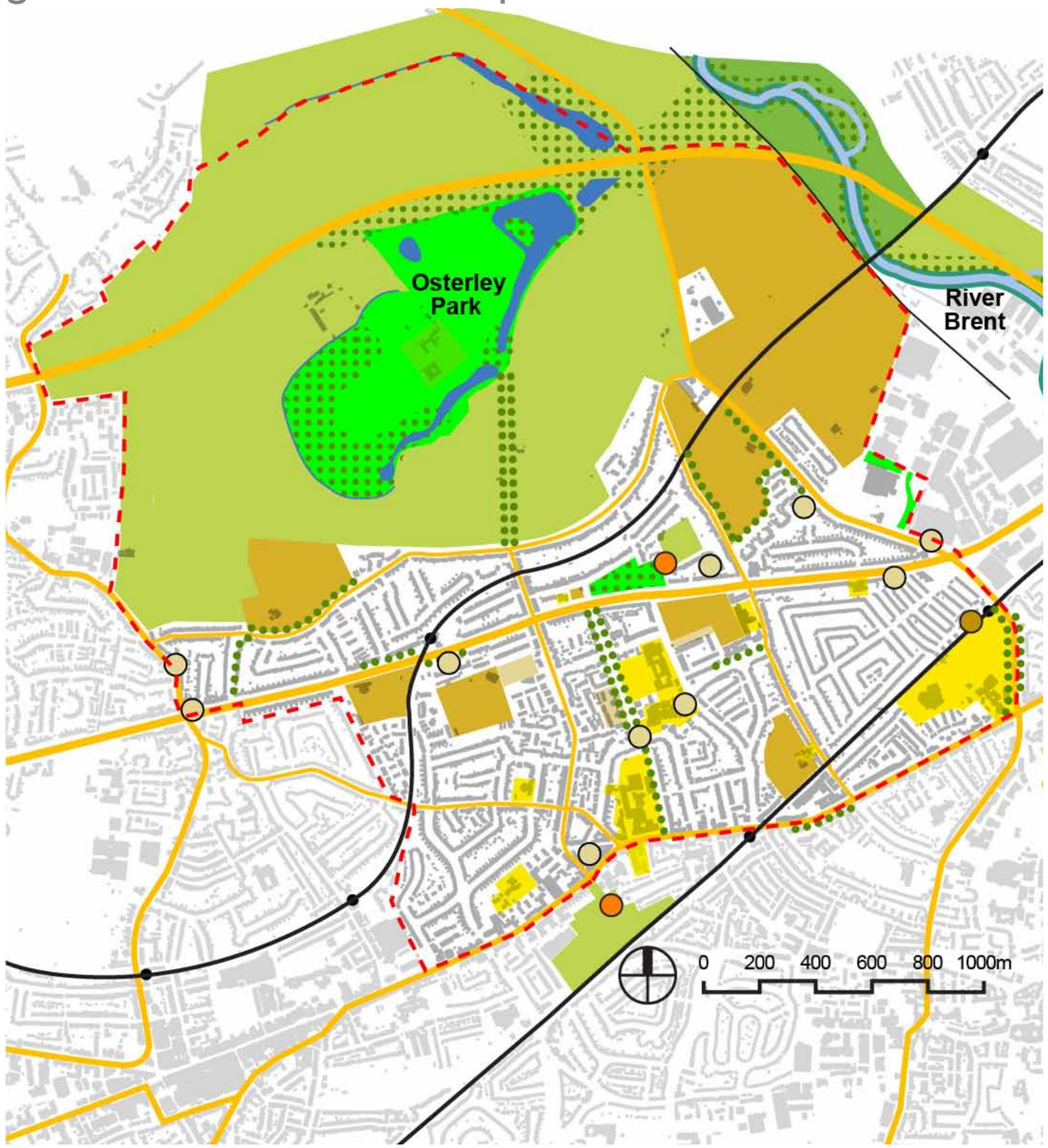

Interwar-era Great West Road subway pedestrian crossing in fair condition


Osterley tube station functions as a minor intermodal transport hub with retail


Movement modes separated by grass verges

Osterley and Spring Grove

green and blue landscape



The study area is generously provided with and surrounded by public open spaces of a variety of sizes and uses. By far the largest and one of the most important in the borough, Osterley Park provides both formal and informal recreational opportunities. In Osterley itself, a public garden (Jersey Gardens, created as part of the Great West Road development) offers surprising respite from the nearby traffic noise and has an adjacent children's play area and formal recreation area. Unfortunately it is not directly accessible from the south of the study area.

Sports-oriented spaces abound and some attract many users from outside the borough, both amateur and professional. More natural experiences are available just outside the area to the north-east along the River Brent/Grand Union Canal, though direct accessibility is an issue. Many streets are generously though not always uniformly or regularly tree-lined. Some streets, most notably the Great West Road, have wide grass verges, though elsewhere many of these are poorly maintained and featureless.

The interwar garden suburb nature of much of the development has left a legacy of small to medium green spaces within residential areas. Many are well-defined, well-managed and attractively planted and furnished, though some are neglected and reflect a lack of any clear sense of identity, responsibility and ownership. Later postwar large infill and extension developments, typified by residential buildings standing alone in open space and undefined by street patterns, sometimes result in lifeless, un/underused green areas with seemingly pointless fences and gates added on at a later stage. Such 'space left over after planning' or 'SLOAP' along with its more well-intentioned though failed interwar cousin provide opportunities for creative intervention. Such interventions could take the form of promotion of local responsibility and ownership, cosmetic planting and landscaping and/or urban agriculture.

Children's play areas are sparsely but evenly distributed. There is an opportunity for improved provision, quality and co-location, particularly in the south of the study area. The relatively flat topography precludes much in the way of views unless from the top deck of a bus or a second storey in the the north-east corner of the area, from where a church spire, the higher ground bordering Richmond Park and, on a good day, the North Downs may be glimpsed to the south-east.



Jersey Gardens, Osterley, just off the Great West Road



Potential village green, Spring Grove



Rare example of hard and soft landscaped public space, Isleworth Crown Court



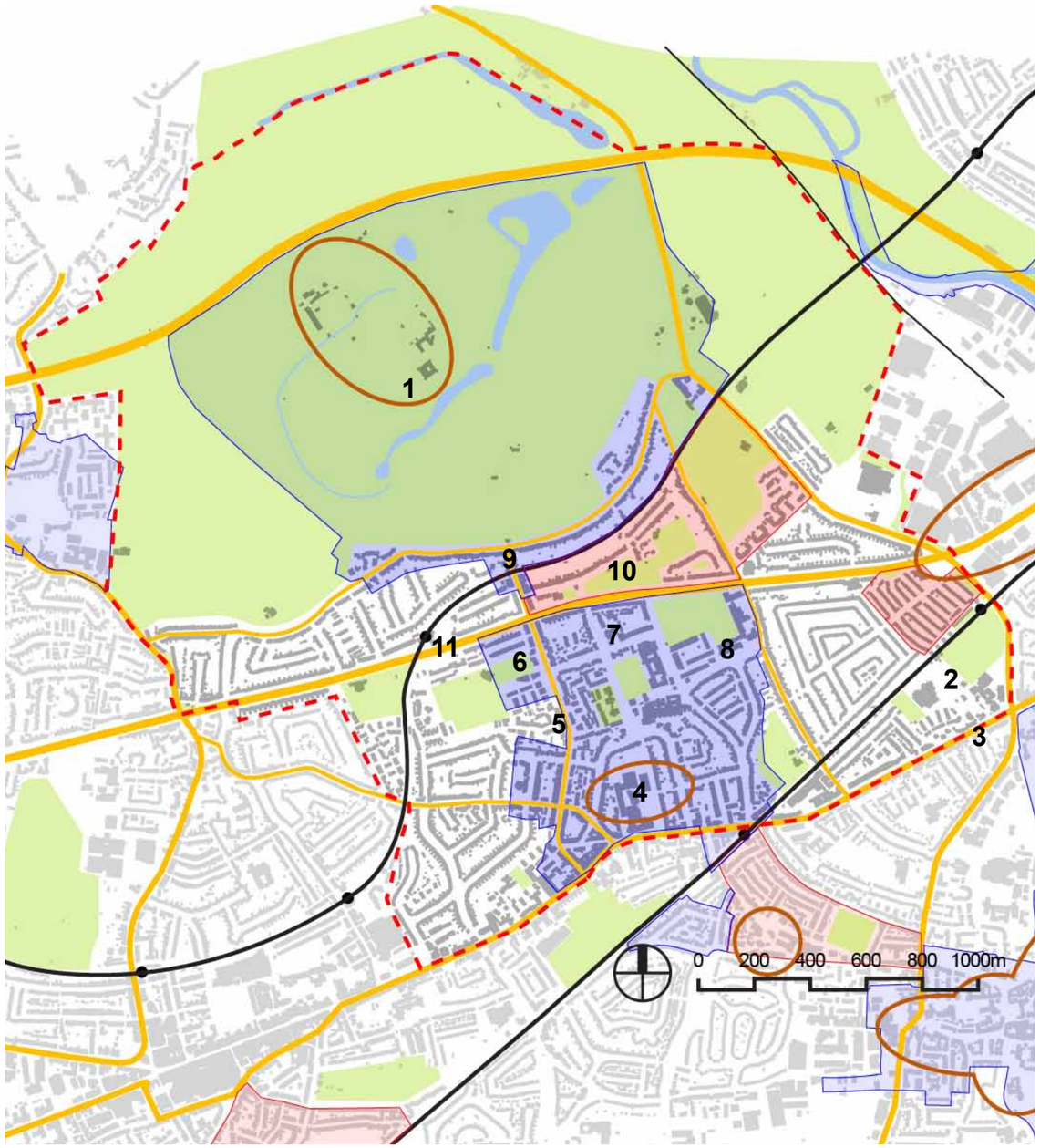
Modern linear public garden, Osterley, with potential for further links



SLOAP, south-west Spring Grove

Osterley and Spring Grove

heritage assets



Conservation Area

Area of Special Character

Listed Building Cluster

Osterley House [1] and other buildings dominate the heritage value of the area with four listings at the highest level, the park (including the area to the north of the motorway) being a Registered Park and Garden.

Sir Thomas Gresham took possession of what in the C13th was a wooded and wild area around a farmstead, and built Osterley Park in the 1570s. Even though altered the stable block is visibly a strongly Tudor enclosure. The grounds were emparked (enclosed) for the purpose of deer hunting.

Robert Child commissioned considerable and architecturally important changes to the Elizabethan main house in the mid C18th, for example, to the west front by William Chambers, and a few years later the east front by Robert Adam, creating a richly dramatic Georgian building in classical styles. There were sweeping changes to the landscape and gatehouses created at access points. A 'Roman' bridge and aviary were built. Later the landscape became much less formal, and the open vista is extended by the farm and grazing fields around. Crossing pathways continue ancient links with Heston and fine farm buildings remain to the north. The estate comprises the majority of a Conservation Area.

To the south, the London Road is of a more urban but small scale nature. The Quaker meeting house (II*) [2] is hidden in an old former lane which crossed the London Road. Another brown brick classical Georgian building, Pine House [3] is more visible on London Road, with one of the listed milestones opposite. Pubs and other former commercial or municipal buildings are locally listed, including the 1930s moderne fire station flats.

The second Conservation Area includes the London Road but originates from 1850. Henry Davis in his planned speculative estate of Italianate 'stone' villas surrounding the listed Spring Grove House [4], also extended a lane now Thornbury Road [5], northward. The former almshouses are also on Thornbury Road. Some of Davis' most prestigious buildings, now locally listed include Campion House [6] and St Mary's Church [7] were laid out beside formal gardens at the north of the estate. Some of the larger spaces were taken for large educational establishments, such as Lancaster House [8] built in 1867. The building and its locally listed Henry Little gymnasium alongside have been converted to residential, with housing development in much of the grounds. Smaller buildings and the gates onto London Road are all listed. Many of the houses are of high quality and some already locally listed.

The railway station opened near Osterley Park in the 1880s and an attractive cluster of older buildings formed there [9]. Later, the road's severance by the Great West Road brought considerable development and some community buildings. Alongside Jersey Gardens [10], formed during the road construction, this area also gained some good interwar development. After relocating the station further west, the area gained the listed Art Deco station [11] by Charles Holden, accompanied by a group of apartment buildings. Other potential conservation areas are a 1980s linear town house development and a 1930s moderne estate.



Osterley House viewed from across the pond



Spring Grove House behind unattractive gates



Villas of the late C18th Davies Estate, Spring Grove



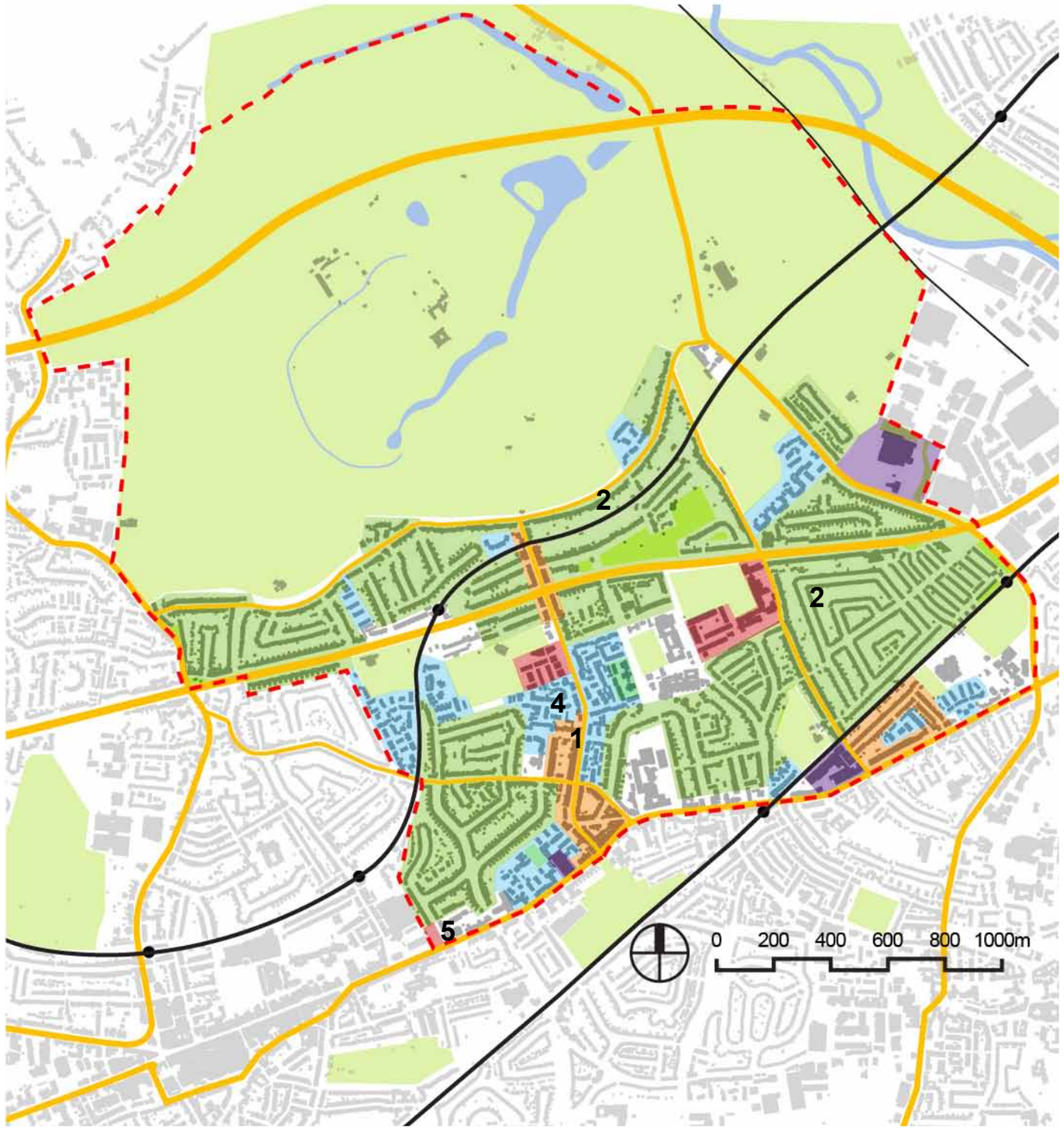
The Quaker meeting house to the east of Spring Grove



The Lodge, Spring Grove

Osterley and Spring Grove

urban types



Urban type 1 - compact grid
Urban type 2 - loose grid
Urban type 3 - slabs and towers
Urban type 4 - courts and cul-de-sacs
Urban type 5 - urban renaissance
Urban type 6 - big box
Urban type 7 - urban centre
Atypical (not representative of an above type)

The most dominant urban types by area within the Osterley and Spring Grove study area is the interwar loose grid (type 2). The courts and cul-de-sacs (type 4) of the later postwar years and the 1980s are also strongly represented. There is some earlier compact grid (type 1) along the formative London Road and at the historic urban cores of Osterley and of Spring Grove along the axis of Thornbury Road, and the centre of the study area and its Hounslow town centre fringe has seen some recent urban renaissance-style development (type 5). The exclusively commercial/retail big box (type 6) appears along the London Road and on the eastern edge next, to the large area of commercial use along and north of the Great West Road/Golden Mile. Appropriately, there are no slabs and towers (type 3)

In spite of their 19th century axial core, Osterley and Spring Grove manifest typologically and morphologically as largely type 2 extensions of neighbouring Hounslow and Isleworth to the southeast.

For more information on general urban types found in the borough, including historical development, aspects of form and SWOT analyses, see Section 4: Urban Types.



Type 1



Type 2



Type 2



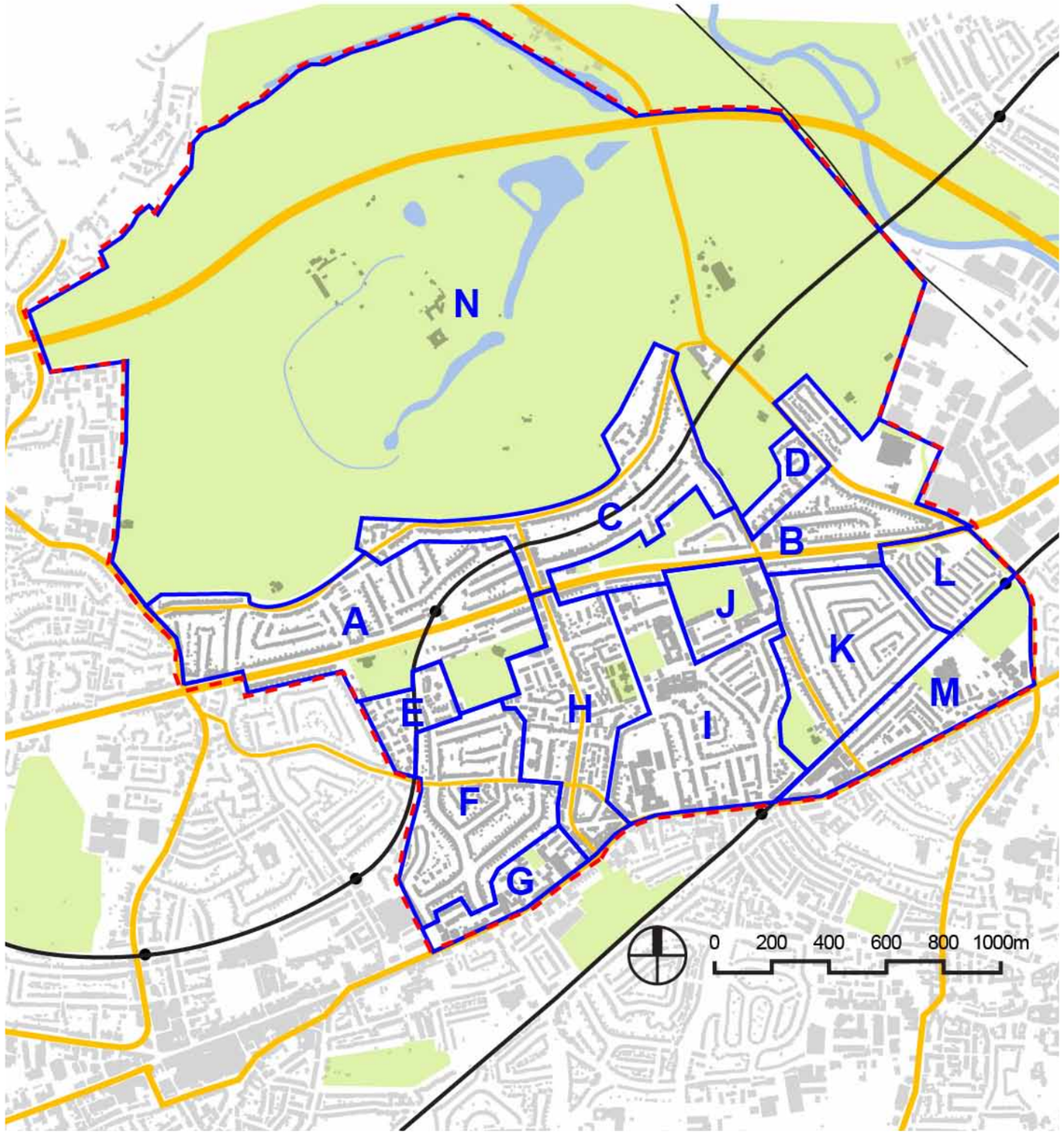
Type 4

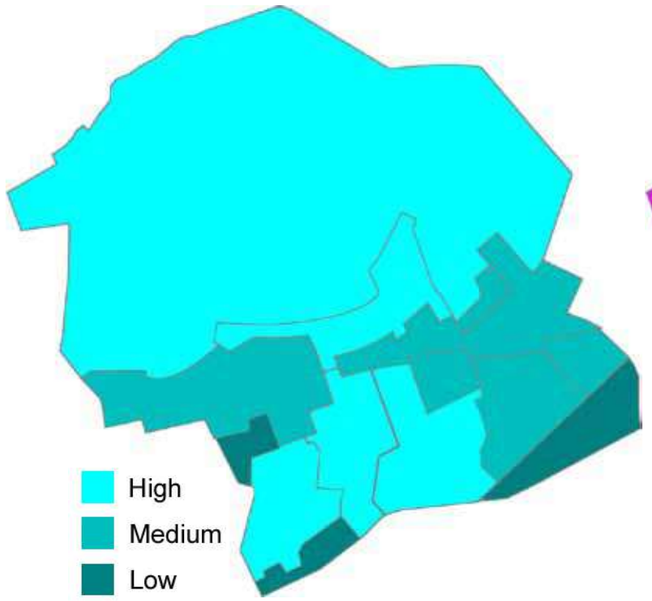


Type 5

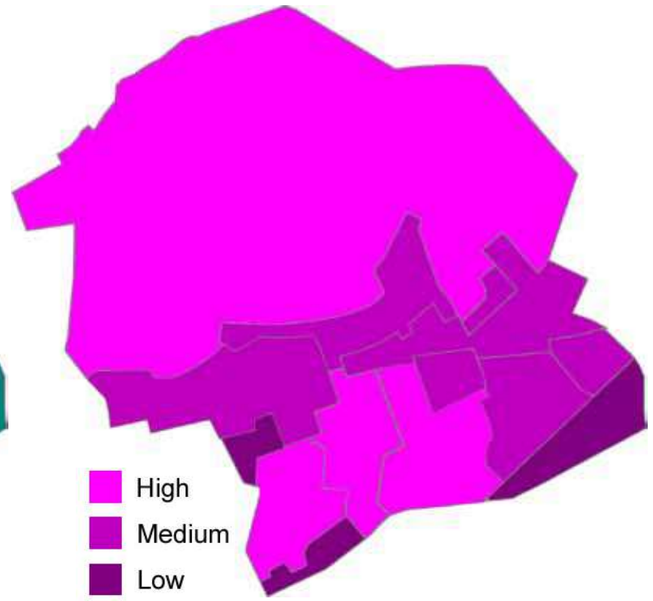
Osterley and Spring Grove

character areas and assessments

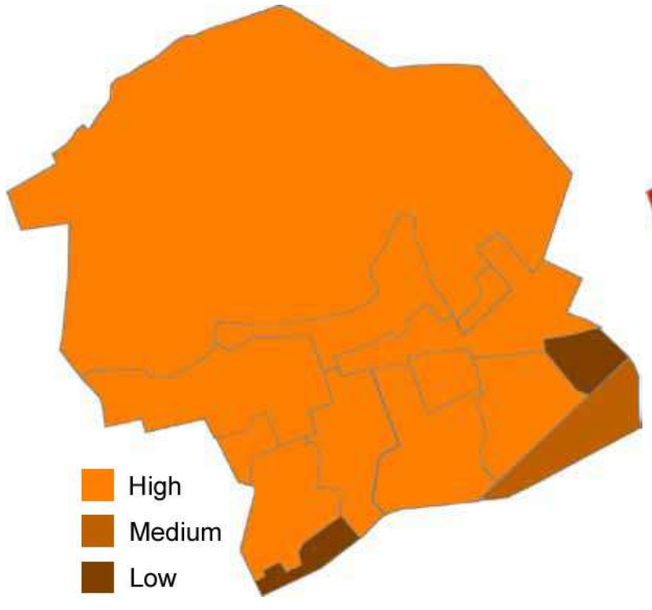




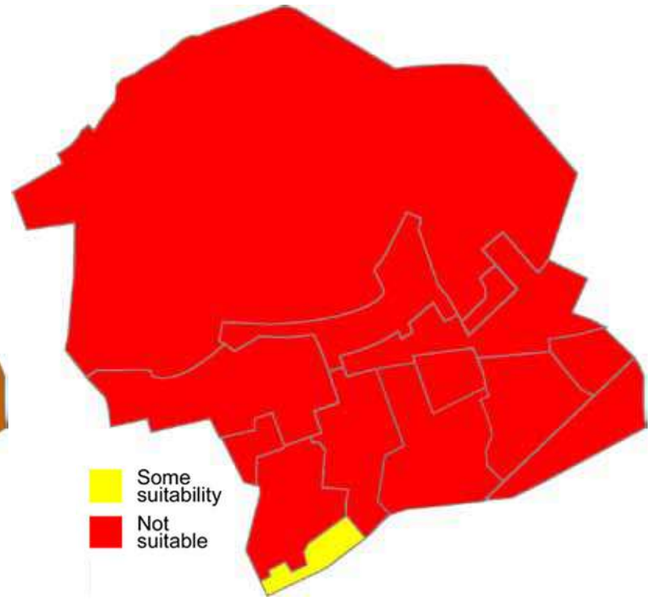
Design Quality



Sensitivity to change



Permanence



Suitability for tall buildings

A Character Area

For more information on characterisation and assessment see Section 1: Introduction - Methodology

Osterley and Spring Grove

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
A		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Location along and formative influence of Great West Road. Urban type: Type 2	Extensive interwar ribbon development of 2 storey semi-detached and terraced houses running east-west alongside and north of the A4 Great West Road and bounded to the north by Osterley Park. Larger, more individualistic detached houses are located on the fringe of the park. Three blocks of interwar 3 storey flats near landmark Osterley station and pockets of postwar in-fill developments. Served by local parades at each end. Two large open spaces to the south. Dominated by A4 which creates a major barrier to north-south movement.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
B		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Location along and formative influence of Great West Road. Urban type: Type 2 with some 6	Extensive interwar ribbon development of 2 storey semi-detached and terraced houses running east-west alongside and north of the A4 Great West Road. Served by local parades at each end. Small, well-used public garden, formal recreation space, library and hotel/pub/restaurant at centre. Large superstore occupies northeast end. Landmark church to south east. Dominated by A4 which creates a major barrier to north-south movement.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
C		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Linearity. Urban type: Type 2 with some 1	Larger, more individualistic 2 storey inter- and postwar detached houses located on the southern edge of Osterley Park. Area branches out from northward stem of Thornbury Road (from Spring Grove) with its vista towards Osterley Park, earlier prewar houses, shopping parade, small businesses and nearby library. Main entrance to park. Area is served to the south by public garden and small recreation space though cut in half by railway line.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
D		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Segregation. Urban type: Type 4	Medium sized 1980s infill private housing development. L-shaped scheme of mostly 3 storey town houses in horseshoe perimeter blocks around parking courtyards with an extension of 2 storey semis and detached houses on a branched cul-de-sac. Well planted with trees and shrubs. Inward-looking with strong sense of privacy though permeable from end to end by foot and cycle through the development or by parallel path on southern edge.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Osterley and Spring Grove

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
E		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Contrast with surrounding areas. Urban type: Type 4	Mostly 1970s and 1980s exclusively residential development in previously undeveloped land at boundaries of Lampton, Spring Grove and Osterley. In two parts bisected by railway but linked by footbridge. West: mix of 1970s 2 storey semis and terraces with free standing 3 storey flat blocks, on branching cul-de-sac extension from earlier period to south. East: 1980s 2 storey terraced houses and 3 storey flat blocks on branching cul-de-sacs. Both parts have minimal planting. Footpath access north to Osterley Station.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
F		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Mostly interwar exclusively residential development straddling Spring Grove Road and extending south to back of London Road. Largely uniform 2 storey semi-detached early interwar houses with some short terraces, closely related in overall urban form to Areas A and B. Very small amount of late C20th infill in the form of a cul-de-sac of bungalows and one of 2-3 storey town houses. Modest planting; only one street has grass verges. Largely buffered from main road by Area G.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
G		Mix of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Location along and behind London Road Urban type: Type 4 with some 5 and 6	Piecemeal high street to residential hinterland transitional zone. Mix of residential, retail, community and office uses in buildings ranging from individual converted c1900 houses to purpose built mid- to high rise blocks. Postwar residential developments turn their backs to the main road with long blank walls, though they are softened by tree planting and verges. Setbacks and footway width are irregular, creating a poor sense of continuity. School located at rear. Most residential is 2-3 storey with exception 3-8 storey block to west.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Some
H		Moderate uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 1 and 4 with some 2 and 5	Part of Spring Grove historic core flanking Thornbury Road link from Isleworth to Osterley Park. Mid C19th houses of a wide variety of types and sizes give way to early interwar semis, from south to north. Area is peppered with postwar and late C20th/early C21st in-fill development. Only very few blocks and streets have strong coherence and continuity. Location of college with historic house, though partly hidden from view. Smooth transition to main road and local centre retail and non residential uses. Main Road heights 3-4 storeys.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Osterley and Spring Grove

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
I		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2 with some 4	Part of Spring Grove historic core east of Osterley Road north-south link. A similar mix to Area H to the south but more uniformly interwar to the north and east with 2 storey semis and terraces. Location of Isleworth Crown Court, large school and landmark St. Mary's Church. Less infill than Area H and far greater coherence and continuity particularly in the interwar areas. Smooth transition to main road and local centre retail and non residential uses. Main Road heights 3-4 storeys.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
J		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Higher density contrasts with surrounding areas. Urban type: Type 5	Redevelopment of Brunel University campus into apartment blocks and town houses. Includes refurbishment of listed building (originally Borough Road College). 3 storey town houses and 4 storey apartment blocks with generous surface parking in restricted access estate. Mostly turns its back on surrounding area. Main east-west axis leads to former Gothic college building in its own formal tree-planted grounds. Area includes sports centre and ground to north.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
K		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Mostly interwar exclusively residential development extending southwards from Great West Road to railway line. Largely uniform 2 storey semi-detached houses with some short terraces. Very similar to Areas A and B in overall urban form, though with narrower streets and an absence of grass verges and very modest tree planting. Internally good permeability but limited external links, which compromises access to local centres and public transport: the only direct access to Great West Road is by narrow back footpath.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
L		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Uniform late 1930s moderne-style development of flats in two storey semi-detached house-style buildings, with two sets of front and side entrances. Basic built form is very uniform but coherence is compromised by retro-fitting of windows and randomly differing boundary treatments. Very regular street grid with moderate quality small green amenity spaces. Close to local centre, railway station and small modern allotment. Art Deco commercial building to northeast. 1980s 2-storey semi infill to south.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Osterley and Spring Grove

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
M 	Mix of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Location along and behind main road Urban type: Type 1 with some 4 and 6	Piecemeal and disconnected residential, business and community uses extending backwards from London Road. Only two areas of coherence: street of early interwar 2 storey semis and terraces with mostly very shallow front gardens; and 1990s branching cul-de-sac estate of 2 storey terraces. Short row of late Victorian 2 storey houses along London Road. Much small postwar infill throughout area. Large schools with grounds to east. Area has advantage of two local shopping parades and public transport along London Road.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
N 	General uniformity of use Large publicly accessible green open space Green corridor, water bodies Nature conservation area Metropolitan Open Land Urban type: Atypical	Osterley Park and surrounding open space including Wyke Green to the east. Listed historic mansion surrounded by gardens, park and farmland. One of the last surviving country estates in London. The overall area is one of the largest open spaces in west London, though it is marred by the presence of the M4 motorway, which cuts across the northern half of it, bringing high levels of traffic noise and creating a barrier to north-south movement. Formal recreation uses to east and west.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

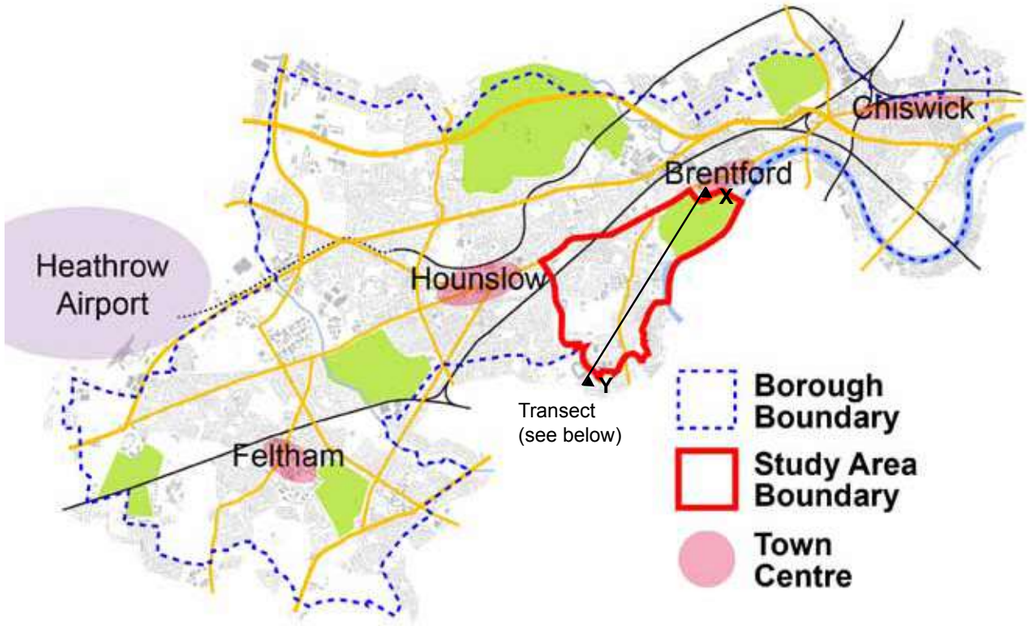


Isleworth

3

Isleworth

present day context



The Isleworth study area is located to the centre of the borough, immediately east of Hounslow and west of the River Thames where it flows northeastwards towards Brentford and Chiswick. The area lies between the London Road and the Thames and benefits from over 2km of river frontage, mostly in Syon Park. The River Crane flows through the southern part of Isleworth and forms the borough boundary where it eventually flows into the Thames at the southern tip of Isleworth Ait.

Isleworth is bounded by Brentford to the northeast, beyond Syon Park, Osterley & Spring Grove to the north, Hounslow to the west and Twickenham and St Margaret's to the south. To the east, across the River Thames lie Richmond and Kew, behind the historic landscape of Kew Gardens.

The area is relatively flat with a gradual 5m slope downwards (from a height of 10m) towards the Thames foreshore and open parkland of Syon Estate. Two minor rivers (The Duke of Northumberland's and Crane) meet the Thames at two separate points either end of the densely vegetated Isleworth Ait. The geology is a mixture of alluvium along the Thames foreshore, Kempton Park gravel behind and Langley silt along its western edge. Its soil is sand, gravel and a rich loam, which gave rise to the plentiful orchards and market gardens in the settlement's history.

From the River Thames/Kew Gardens, there is a picturesque view of Isleworth village, the parish church of All Saints, the rare, mature trees of Syon Park, the river foreshore and compact ribbon of largely C18th dwellings. The area has a distinct, riverside village character resulting from its years of settlement along the River Thames. It has a well preserved, compact, historic core with a fine and varied collection of buildings dating from C14th to C20th, laid out on a street pattern dating back to the medieval era, including South Street, North Street, Mill Plat and Church Street. As such, a large part of Isleworth is designated as a conservation area, the largest in the borough. It is less-known and less accessible than other nearby riverside villages such as Chiswick, Richmond and Kew which only adds to its quaint, quiet and secluded village feel.

Much of the special character of Isleworth derives from its foreshore relationship with the Thames, with the tower and churchyard of All Saints Church, Isleworth Ait and Rivers Crane and Duke of Northumberland, and the contrast between the remaining narrow streets with C18th and C19th townscape and the larger established houses and their settings. The open parkland of Syon House, together with its water meadows and Capability Brown landscape uniquely related to that of Kew Gardens, combine to form one of the finest remaining naturalistic landscapes along the River Thames, with Syon House itself a fine feature. The scale and value of Syon Park's estate and its siting between the Thames and the (Roman) London Road remain influential.

The Grade I listed Syon House with its open parkland, formal gardens and tidal meadow is a dominant feature, situated between the historic London Road and the River Thames. Mogden Sewage Works, though mostly invisible from the street, covers around 50ha and influences the layout of and movement through the area. The four 20 storey residential towers of the Ivybridge Estate are another dominant feature, being visible from a number of places, particularly from Twickenham Road.

Away from its historic core and riverside, development spanning numerous periods can be seen as Isleworth expanded after the railways arrived in the mid C19th, including Victorian, Edwardian, Interwar, Postwar and more recent developments. An eclectic mix of residential, industry, commerce and open spaces exist, in what is a predominantly 2-3 storey townscape.



A long run of front doors and windows creates a pleasant and safe-feeling streetscape

Title page photo: Old Isleworth riverside's mix of old and new



Isleworth

historic context

Isleworth has been a riverside settlement for at least 4000 years. The River Brent's delta influenced activity (fishing) and opportunities to ford the Thames, whilst there are still open flood meadows upstream. The Ait provided protected areas for Thames-side wharfage for agricultural produce and, later, for goods manufactured in the area using water power.

The London Road follows the Roman Road across the Brent and through Isleworth. Bridged from 1224, an early suburb clustered there at Brayneford End, on the north edge of what became Syon Park. Southwest of the park and London Road, Isleworth formed as a Saxon and medieval village where lanes joined the riverside alongside the Ait. Isleworth was well established by the time of the Conquest in the C11th, its manor reigned over by successive Norman Barons.

In 1431 the Bridgettine nuns relocated to Sion and from 1547 Syon House was constructed above or immediately adjacent to the former abbey buildings. Syon Park is the main formative estate of the area, its monastic and later Ducal incarnations spanning strategically between the routes of London Road and River Thames.

The church was a settlement focus at the north end of the Thames-side street, near the turn of the lane inland around Syon Park. The current tower is C14th. Isleworth ferry started during the reign of Henry VIII and took travellers from the steps outside All Saints Church, across the Thames to the Old Deer Park.

Artificial watercourses and bridges were also formative in defining routes, which still exist, and activity. The Duke of Northumberland's or Isleworth River, a deliberately cut 'leat' from the mid C16th was formative in edging the settlement and siting activity such as mills, including a flour mill next to the basin into the Thames, and timber yards alongside. Bridges over that and the River Crane also focussed routes and have kept them similar thereafter. Between South and North streets lay squares with groups of buildings and courtyards, alongside the town wharf and Thames.

To the west a bridge supported a road through Worton to Hounslow Heath. To the south a further ferry was established at Railhead near to the road crossing the River Crane near its outfall into the Thames, extending connections southward. As well as agricultural produce the landscape also manufactured beer, lime and gunpowder for export. The importance to the wider area was recognised in administrative terms as the Hundred of Isleworth.

By 1746 the streets and port of the thriving village were more defined with built up edges along the Thames frontage, South Street and the squares between. Charitable institutes provided almshouses behind North Street and along Mill Plat.

Large estates built near roads and the village were used as religious houses. A tradition of hospitals, charity and educational institutions has continued in the area, only recently losing buildings and land to residential redevelopment. Much of the original encircling street edge has been widened and straightened with 1950-60s redevelopment, although most is domestic in scale.

Early Victorian houses were built along earlier lanes linking estates further north with Twickenham Road and the river. This intensified at junctions and nearer the London Road. The railway of 1850 angled across the London Road near Linkfield Road, the station nearby leading to a mid-Victorian housing boom. Land parcels already 'enclosed' and bought up were developed for suburban houses by different owners. Gradually most of the area close to older roads was infilled.

Considerable land remained agricultural or open. Between Oak Lane and Mogden Lane, Heston and Isleworth Sewage Works was constructed by 1894. Most of the land was built up in the later C19th and 20th, particularly in the 1930s, mostly for housing. The Sewage Treatment Works greatly expanded at Mogden between 1931 and 1936, Middlesex County Council having purchased Mogden Farm for the purpose after public objection to the proposed site in Syon Park. 110km of sewers were built to connect to it and the Duke of Northumberland's River was used as a source of coolant for the machinery.

The towers and slabs of the isolated Ivybridge estate were built in the early 1970s. In the later 1980s unused industrial, cleared and war-damaged land along the river was edged by commercial buildings to help re-create Lower Square and retain a tight townscape leading from the older buildings of Upper Square.



Horse drawn flour carts in Lower Square, early 20th century

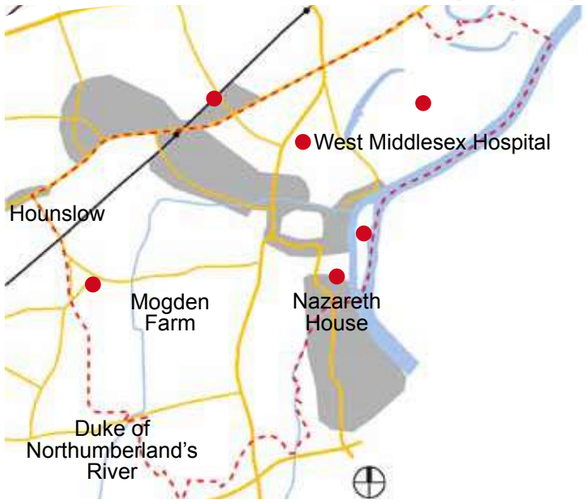


The London Apprentice public house at the riverfront, c1905

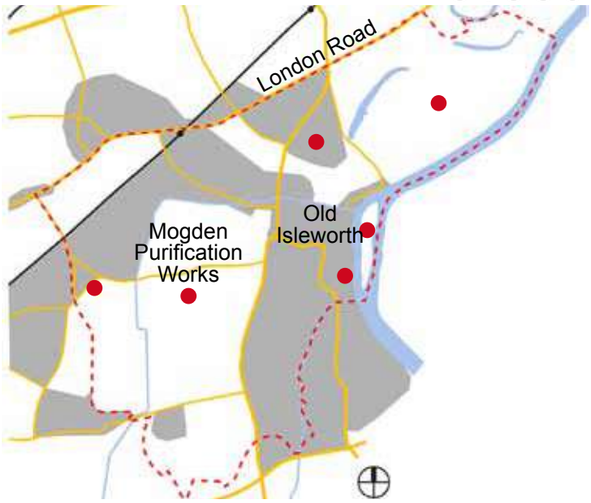
c1870



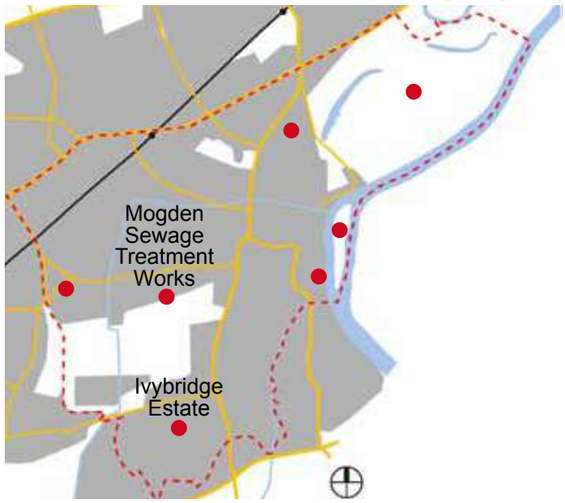
c1920



c1950

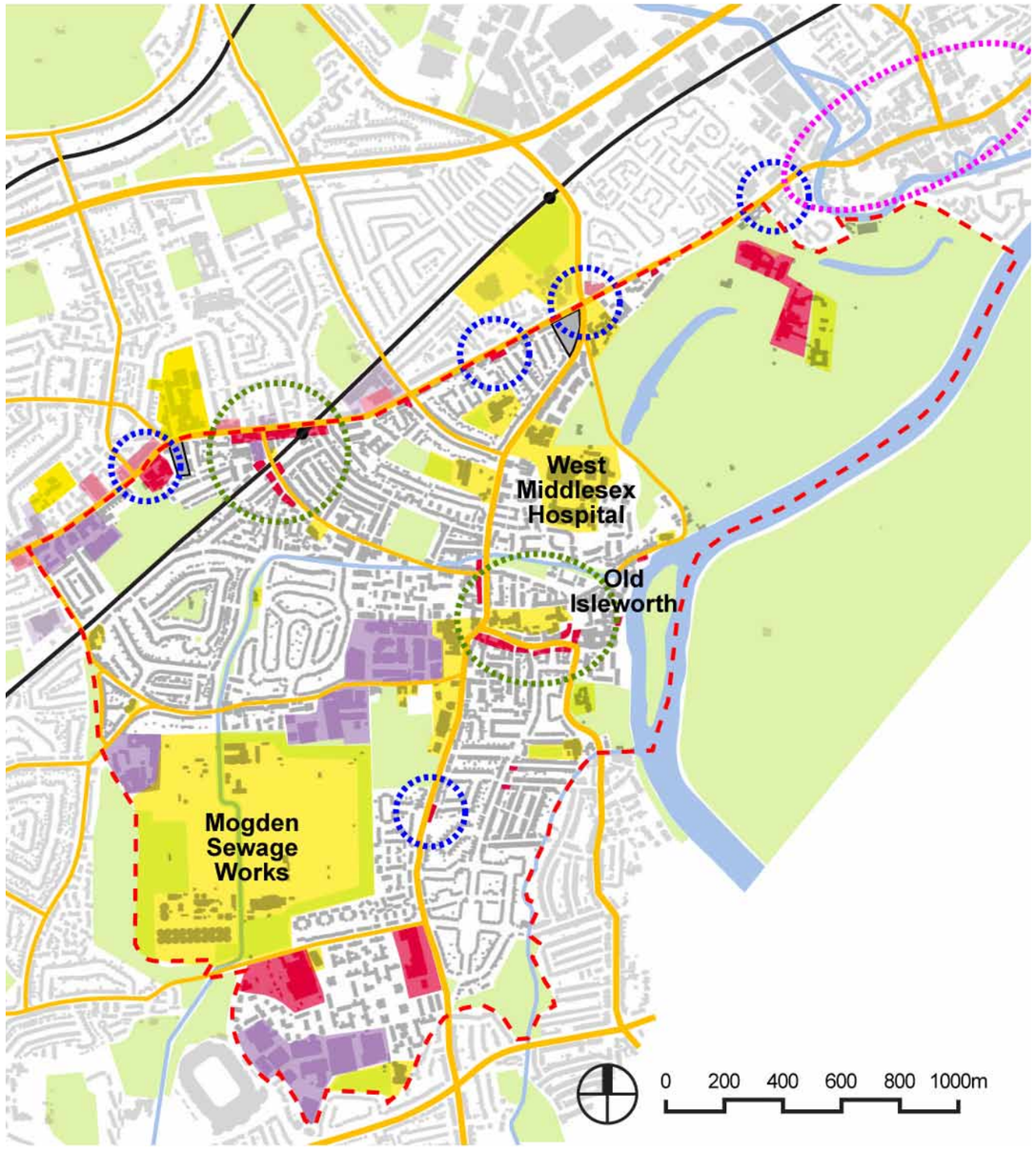


c2010



Isleworth

land and building use



The Isleworth study area is predominantly residential with an eclectic mix of uses around Isleworth Station and along London Road, St John's Road, Twickenham Road, South Street, Church Street and the Riverside. Such uses include shops, public houses, hotels, churches, schools, community centres, parks and gardens, businesses, light industry, river-related activities, leisure and tourism. There are three major building uses in Isleworth that are of borough scale and note: Syon House and Park, West Middlesex Hospital and Mogden Sewage Works, which together cover approximately 140ha.

Isleworth Station is set back at an angle from London Road and to the west is a collection of shops, restaurants, newsagents, take-aways, convenience store and a bank. To the east, along London Road, are The Bridge Inn and Rising Sun public houses, a convenience store and a parade of shops at Teesdale Court. These all take advantage of the high footfall from Isleworth station and London Road and good accessibility. Off the London Road residential becomes the dominant land use with terraces and semi-detached houses, of various ages, intermixed with the occasional public house, business, hairdressers, cafe and corner shop providing local convenience. Along the northern end of St John's Road there is a varied collection of small shops, cafes, take-aways and businesses. Many occupy the ground floors of 2 storey Victorian and interwar buildings with flats above, a robust building type that can be seen across the borough, ensuring a mix of activities, day and night. Includes the C19th Woodlands Tavern and St John's Church, part of a significant group with the almshouses, vicarage, cottage, lodge and school building, the pub and church are both local landmarks in the area. To the south lies Isleworth Working Mens Club.

South Street, along with Upper Square, forms the main village centre for Isleworth, with its eclectic mixture of C18th-20th buildings, with dwellings, shops, cafes, restaurants, businesses (often with residential above) and three pubs. The street has been widened and redeveloped in places, and is no longer traditionally narrow or tightly enclosed. Each side still retains evocative and important features, including, Isleworth Public Hall, Clock Tower War Memorial, Glossop Memorial, horse trough and a number of significant C18th buildings.

The distinctive riverside of Isleworth, from Swan Street, through to the end of Church Street where the C18th London Apprentice pub and All Saints Church stand overlooking the Thames, is home to a mix of uses, including dwellings old and new, businesses, cafes, small shops, a gym, barges and the Town Wharf pub with river views. Includes some notable open spaces, many listed buildings, churchyard, a cemetery, schools, allotments and Isleworth Ait.

Modern large-scale business and retail parks also exist in Isleworth, notably along and off Worton Road where there are five business parks/industrial estates. Also, to the south along Twickenham Road is a large retail park with an Asda superstore and a Halfords. A large stand-alone Tesco superstore and an industrial estate are both accessed off Rugby Road. These are largely characterised by being self-contained estates, often with one access point, large footprint buildings, often 1-2 storeys, surrounded by car parking.



Housing dominates the area in a variety of shapes, sizes, ages and types



The local pub nestled within the street scene



Commercial uses in the centre of the area



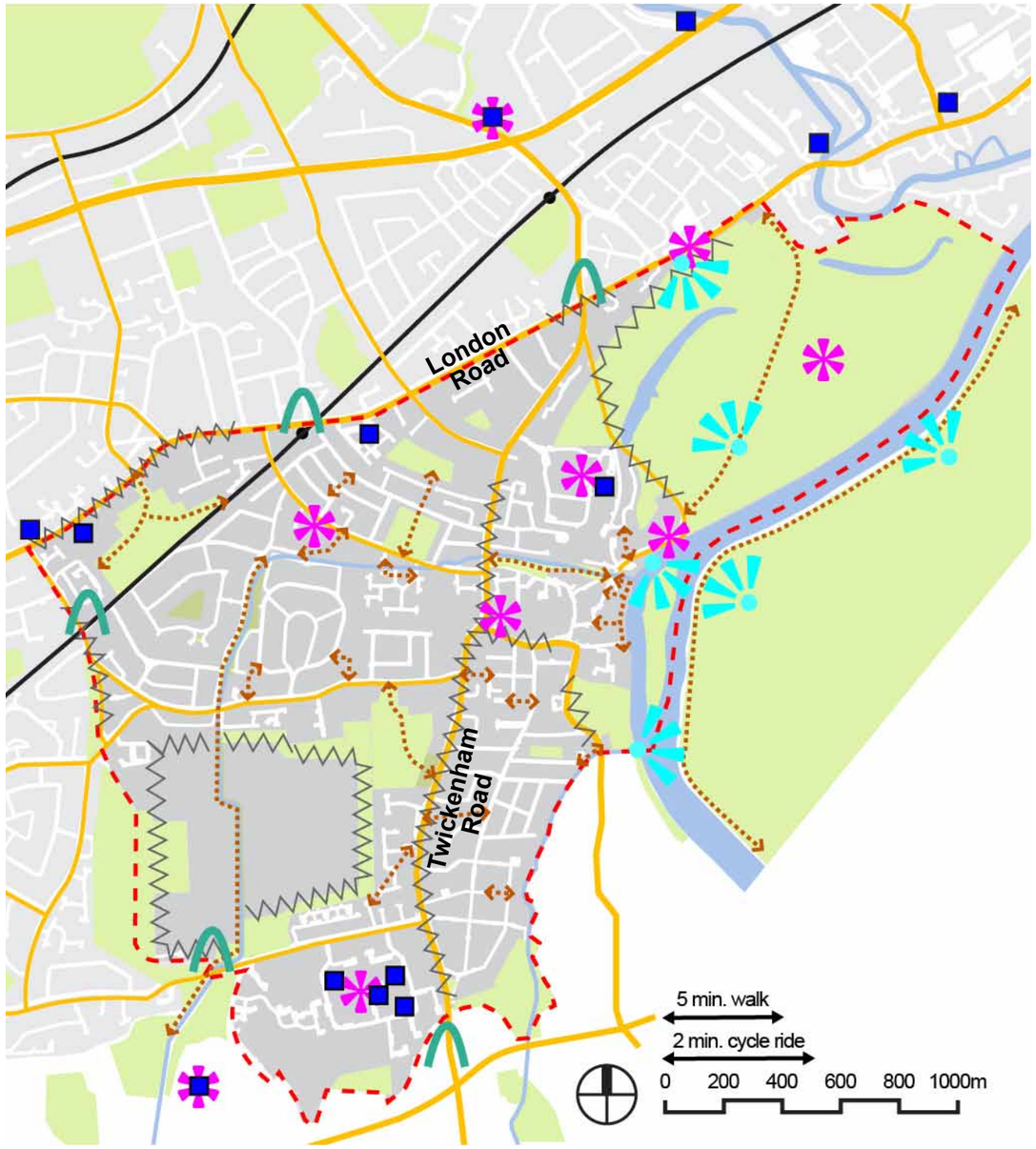
The village centre along South Street



Important community facilities - Isleworth Leisure Centre and Library

Isleworth

movement & legibility



The principal, historic street pattern of Isleworth, still intact today, consists of London Road, Twickenham Road and the loop of North Street, Mill Plat, Swan Street, South Street and onwards via Richmond Road. These connect Isleworth to Brentford, Hounslow, Twickenham, St Margaret's and Richmond. There is a network of secondary streets which provide local connectivity. These include St John's Road, Linkfield Road, Church Street, Park Road, Worton Road, Bridge Road, Mogden Lane and Worple Road.

Isleworth is relatively isolated from London's principal east-west public transport corridors. Trains from London Waterloo stop at Isleworth Station every 20 minutes or so, en route to Hounslow, offering reasonable accessibility. Osterley and Hounslow East underground stations, are both quite a walking distance away (25-35 minutes), especially from the south-west parts of Isleworth. However, bus services cover much of Isleworth, with many routes along the two principal streets of London Road (237, 235, 117) and Twickenham Road (267, 110, 481, H28). This includes a network of local bus routes that circumnavigate the study area, linking up Mogden Sewage Works, Ivybridge Estate, Bulls Bridge, West Middlesex Hospital and Amhurst Gardens. The H37 travels along St John's Road and South Street and connects Isleworth to St Margaret's and Richmond. These are well used, giving access to the rail connections at Richmond.

A network of minor paths allows limited pedestrian permeability through the study area's large open spaces (Syon Park and Mogden Sewage Works), some remaining from agricultural times. Much of the river edge remains private visually and/or physically, relating back to its industrial past. The perimeter block structure of the Victorian/Edwardian housing e.g. St John's Road, Linkfield Road and immediate streets, provides good permeability with fronts and backs, public and private space well defined, ensuring the streets are overlooked with a good level of pedestrian activity. Post war estates, such as the Worton Estate and Ivybridge Estate provide poorer permeability, with the former limiting movement with its large block structure and the later providing too much permeability, with buildings surrounded by undefined, underused space.

Pedestrian movement and way-finding through the study area is assisted by a number of local landmarks, which vary in scale. The church towers of St John's Church, Saint Bridget Church, All Saints Church and 20 storey residential towers of the Ivybridge Estate can be seen above the predominantly 2-3 storey skyline. Smaller, local landmarks, that mark out important street junctions or land use include; Isleworth Station, Syon Gates, Woodlands Tavern public house, Congregational Church, Isleworth Leisure Centre, Isleworth Clock Tower Memorial, Old Blue School and the London Apprentice public house.

Notable views include the splendid panorama, where Church Street narrows and then opens at the Thames foreshore, of the Isleworth Ait, curving River Thames and tree-covered banks of Kew Gardens.


London Road - the old Roman Road with C18th Coach & Horses public house


Soft, green banks of Duke of Northumber-land's river with footpath running alongside


Isolated footpath through the Sewage Works


Cycling along Twickenham Road


Successful tree-planted shared space street in character area D

Isleworth

green and blue landscape



Isleworth has a rich variety of open spaces, from the grand estate (Syon) to the small enclosed public park (St John's Gardens) and the linear riverside park and walkway (Silverhall Park).

Syon Park offers local residents 80ha of exceptional open parkland to explore and enjoy. The illusion of being in the countryside is created by the high boundary walls, mature trees, estate fencing, the ha-ha walls to the north of the house, a woodland garden with lakes beyond and the Great Conservatory to the east. The river edge of Syon Park offers open views across the Thames to Kew Gardens and is part of West London's Thames-side Arcadia.

There are many much-loved smaller parks in Isleworth that serve their surrounding residential neighbourhoods. St John's Gardens is a C19th garden square lined by mature trees and edged by the fronts and backs of housing. Isleworth Green, edged by mature trees, benches and low railings provides a pleasant green space and cut-though from Upper Square to Lower Square, a hard landscaped, formal yet intimate public space with seating and trees. Redlees Park and Thornbury Park are two larger civic green spaces providing large grass playing fields and a variety of play spaces for children and teenagers. Silverhall Park is a densely planted, linear green space between Mill Plat and North Street, and includes the Duke of Northumberland's River which passes en route to its emergence into the former Mill Basin. The open space next to Isleworth Town Primary School is underused and largely hidden/ inaccessible to the passing public and could be significantly improved. The grouping of All Saints Churchyard, Park Road Allotments and Park Road Cemetery provides a historic open space with a woodland of mature trees, shrubs, hedges, allotment spaces and due to the limited footfall, a much valued wildlife haven.

Trees add a great deal to the urban scene and are particularly consistent along stretches of London Road, Park Road, Woodland Gardens, Woodlands Road, Riverside Walk and Richmond Road. However, in many areas, more could be done to plant street trees and care for the ones that exist, as they contribute to reducing noise, pollution, the urban heat island effect and provide shelter and habitats for wildlife.

The Thames foreshore has a particularly rural quality, with picturesque views of dense foliage and trees along the opposite bank at Kew and the heavily wooded Ait. In addition to the River Thames, Isleworth has two rivers that pass through the urban fabric and enliven its character, the River Crane and the Duke of Northumberland's River. The River Crane flows into Isleworth from the southwest and passes to the east of Cole Park Allotments, through back gardens to meet the River Thames at Railshead. The Duke of Northumberland's River is an artificial waterway built during the reign of King Henry VIII to supply mills. It is partly lined by oaks, weeping willows, shrubs, soft banks and water plants, and flows through and is accessible at Mogden Sewage Works, Riverside Walk, Maltings Estate, Shirehorse Way and Silverhall Park. It is not accessible along the rest of its stretch, which should be rectified to allow more to enjoy this valuable river landscape.



Children playing in Thornbury Park



An urban oasis at St John's Gardens



The picturesque River Thames landscape



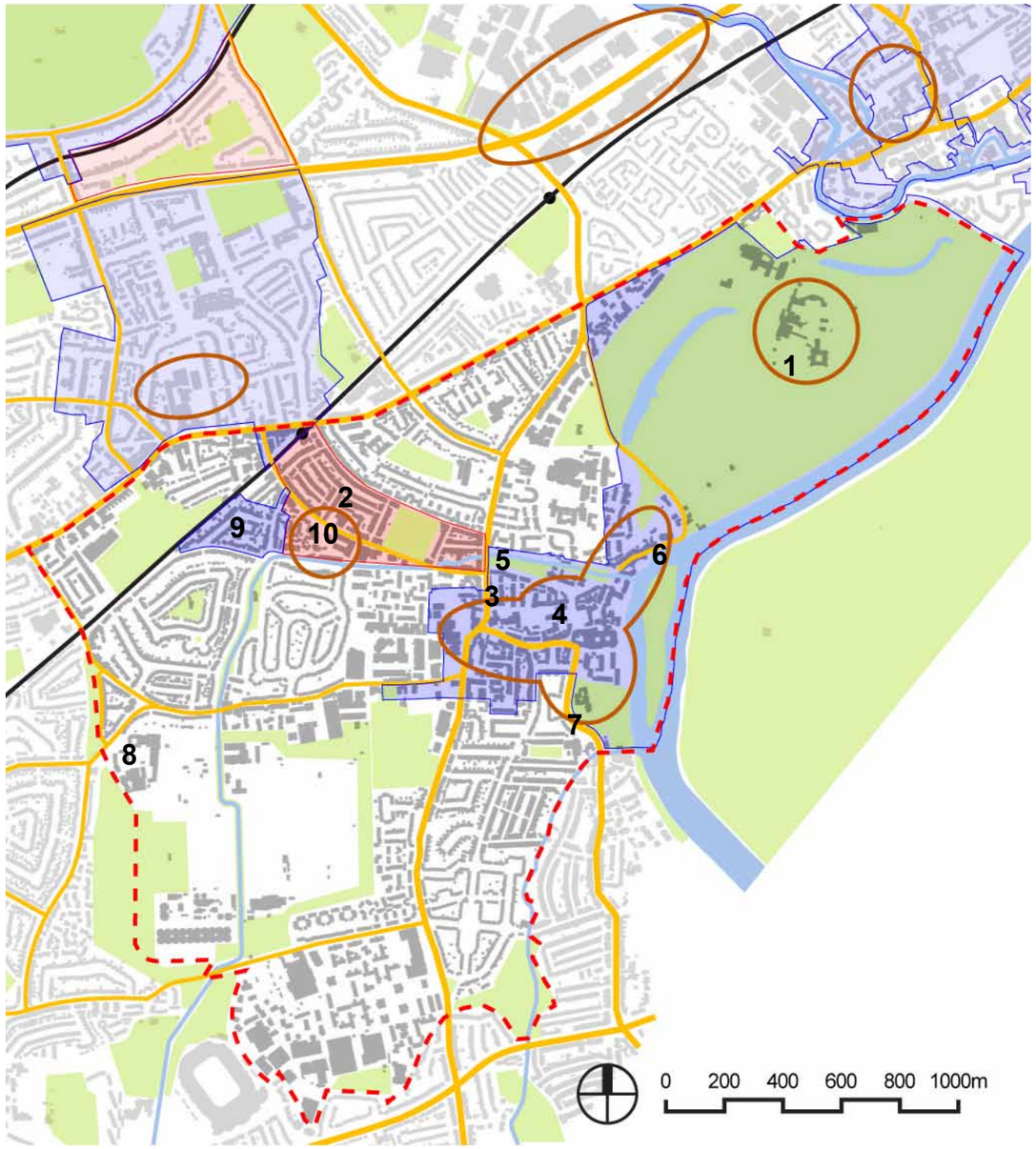
Mature trees and wildlife at Syon Park



Vegetation softening a pedestrian footpath off Linkfield Road

Isleworth

heritage assets



Conservation Area

Area of Special Character

Listed Building Cluster

As well as having areas of considerable archaeological importance, the study area has currently has 124 listed buildings of which the six at Grade I all relate to Syon Park. The main Conservation Area is an extensive one of at least four characters encompassing Syon Park House and its estate, the historic riverside settlement area and remains of the original core roads. Urban grid-infill of late Victorian houses and early urban communities are included. Older connecting roads and paths are considered to be of special character as is the cemetery and Brent Lea path link.

C18th alterations to Syon House [1] add to an incomparable ensemble, remodelled by architect Robert Adam with gardens redesigned by Capability Brown. The open landscape contained by characteristically high walls gives emphasis to the occasional gateways, such as the C18th gate and screen onto London Road (the Lion Gate), and the narrowness of Brent Lea pathway. Syon Park has retained many features from those of high art to old utility around the great estate. The river views share character and vistas with the World Heritage Site at Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew and the public path on the opposite bank of the Thames.

The presence of such an important estate has continued to influence the quality and scale of building in the area as a whole and their retention. A number of late C17th - early C19th buildings in London stock or red brick on, and linking, London, Linkfield and Twickenham Roads [2] have survived, where high walls, three public houses and two milestones add to the distinctiveness of the area.

The heads of South and North Street and the connecting Twickenham Road [3] are rich in listed (almshouses, three houses) and locally listed buildings, including a war memorial,church and school. South Street and Upper Square [4] with its pub, early shop and public hall, with the war memorial triangle, former pub and neighbouring buildings define the urban core. Outside, terraced infill behind older and relic walls has almshouses at Byfield Road, with locally listed houses and a former police station continuing the urban edge.

Much of the leat's watercourse is visible and now adds to local interest near St John's Gardens and Silverhall Park [5]. The mill basin and bridge are classical features. Unlisted cranes on the docks are unused but evocative.

Along the river's edge and around the squares the dense built form incorporates listed former school and pub buildings. Many listed C18th and 19th small buildings edge Church Street leading into the surprisingly open wharf with Thames vistas at the end of the Ait [6]. The wharf is fronted with taller, decorative houses, the London Apprentice pub and All Saints church, a picturesque group seen close-to from both directions and with Syon's decorative former boathouse a fine vista seen from the river.

The relocated Richmond Road has tall walls, gates and a gatehouse protecting Nazareth House [7], retaining a large parkland on the riverside. Further away, past locally listed Redlees on Worton Road, and more recent neighbours including the church of St Mary the Virgin, is Worton Hall [8].

Woodlands [9], the second conservation area, was developed with a number of different styles but mostly classical Georgian, increasing in dignity and value. On St John's Road [10] the church and related buildings create a rural-medieval scene.



The Lion Gate to Syon Park on the London Road



Almshouses off Twickenham Road at the head of North Street



The Old Blue School in Lower Square, Old Isleworth



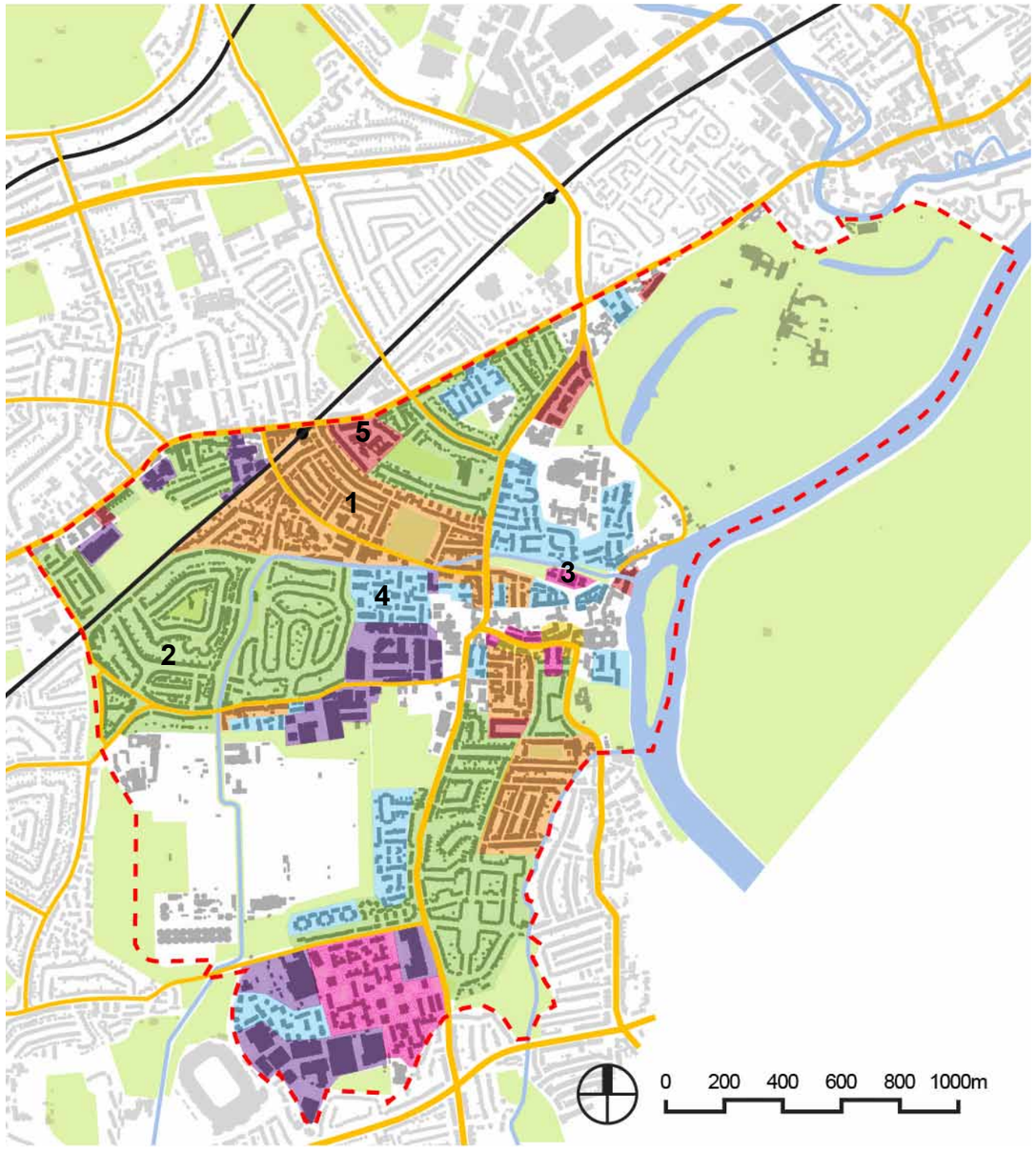
Early Victorian houses line Woodlands Road



St John's Church on St John's Road lies in a potential Conservation Area

Isleworth

urban types



Urban type 1 - compact grid
Urban type 2 - loose grid
Urban type 3 - slabs and towers
Urban type 4 - courts and cul-de-sacs
Urban type 5 - urban renaissance
Urban type 6 - big box
Urban type 7 - urban centre
Atypical (not representative of an above type)

The most dominant residential urban types by area within the Isleworth study area are the inter- and early postwar loose grid (type 2) followed closely by the earlier compact grid (type 1). The courts and cul-de-sacs (type 4) and the slabs and towers (type 3) of the later postwar years and the 1980s are also strongly represented. The exclusively commercial/retail big box (type 6) appears, perhaps appropriately, mostly on the fringes of the sewage works. Pockets of urban renaissance (type 5) have appeared more recently, mostly on the edges of the original historic urban centre (type 7) and where transport accessibility is good.

Isleworth has the largest area within the borough given over to an urban type which is atypical of the borough as a whole, in the form of the aforementioned sewage works. This is added to by the large area occupied by the hospital.

The earlier types (1, 2 and, to an extent, 3) are chronologically located roughly concentrically outward from the urban centre, with the other later residential types occupying mostly infill and comprehensive redevelopment sites across the study area but particularly around the edges of the sewage works and the hospital, a pattern which is likely to continue.

For more information on general urban types found in the borough, including historical development, aspects of form and SWOT analyses, see Section 4: Urban Types.



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3



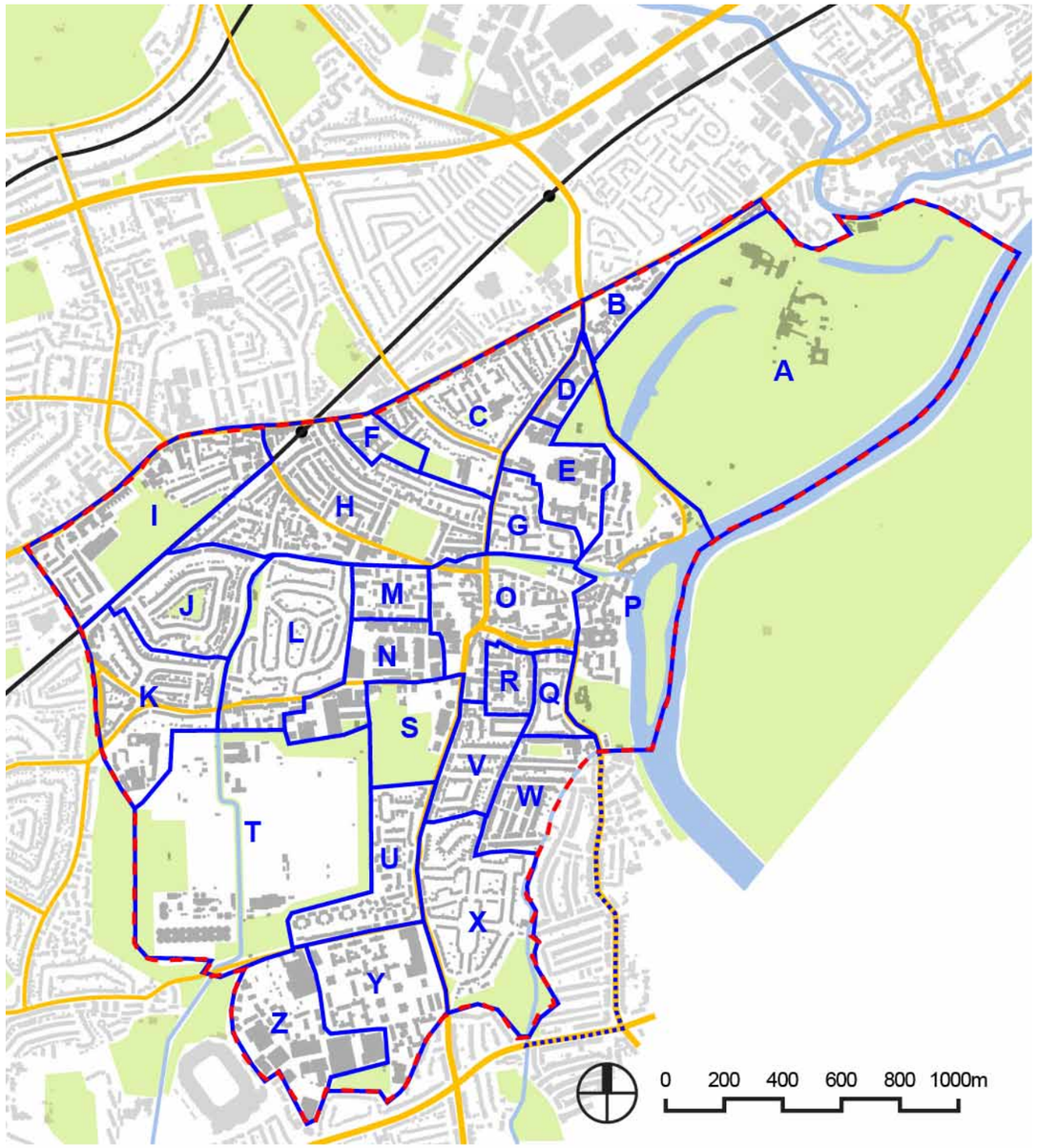
Type 4

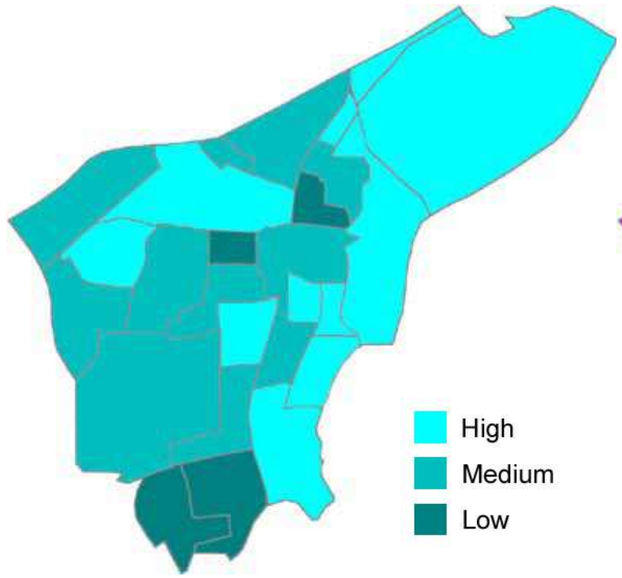


Type 5

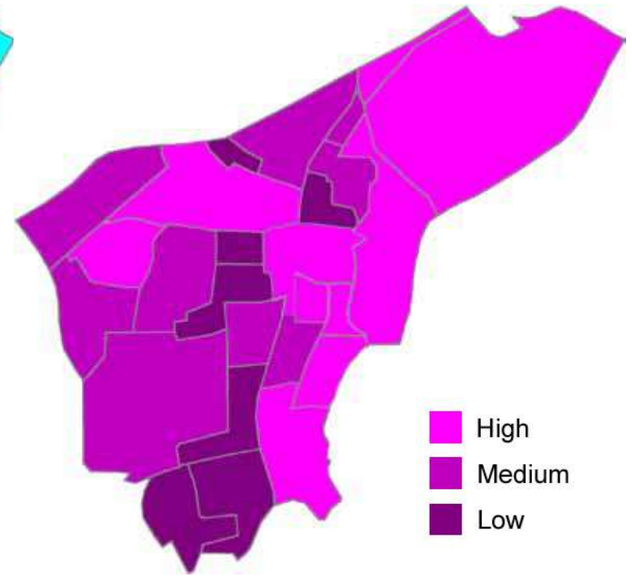
Isleworth

character areas and assessments

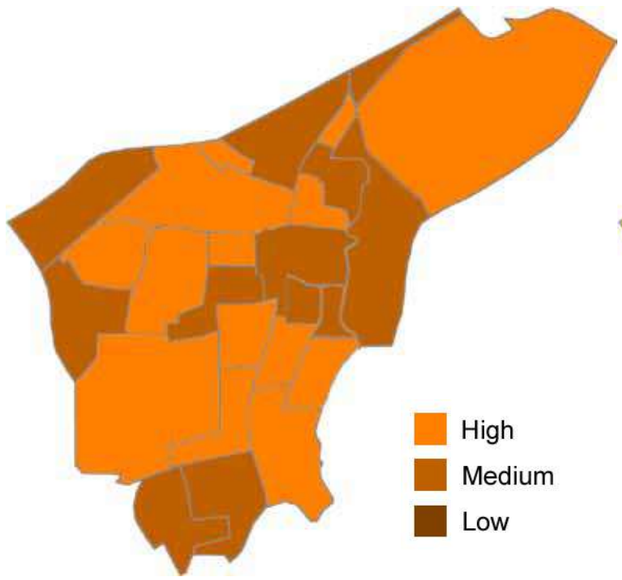




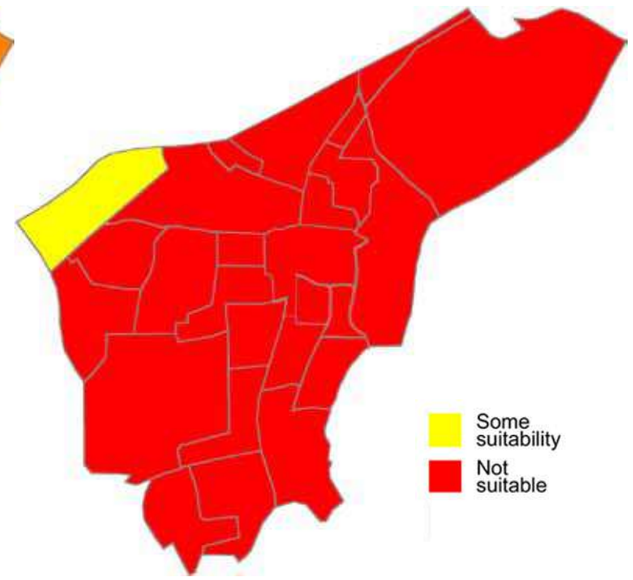
Design Quality



Sensitivity to change



Permanence



Suitability for tall buildings

A Character Area

For more information on characterisation and assessment see Section 1: Introduction - Methodology

Isleworth

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
A		Great Estate Relationship to the River Thames Urban type: Atypical	An 80ha Great Estate, comprising C16th Syon House surrounded by parkland situated along the River Thames forming one of the most picturesque, untouched and important open riserside landscapes in London. Syon House is 3-storied, crenellated and topped by a stone lion, with gable turrets. The park, part of which is SSSI-rated, is rich in biodiversity, comprises formal gardens, pasture land, rare trees, lakes and natural water meadows. A high brick wall forms the boundary with the entrance off Park Road marked by the early C19th Porters Lodge. The estate is largely hidden from view from surrounding streets, with the best views to be had from within the estate, from the River Thames and across the bank from Kew Gardens. Includes Pavilion boathouse, Stables, Great Conservatory and the recent addition of a C21st luxury hotel.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
B		Location between Syon Estate and London Road General uniformity of land use Some variety of period, height, scale and style. Urban type: Type 4 and 5	Located along and off the London Road until the junction with Twickenham Road, comprising notable C18th townscape including Coach & Horses public house and Syon Lodge, which all front onto the London Road. Recent Neo-Georgian town houses are set back in a gated development off London Road. Buildings are mostly 2-3 storeys, with a variety of setbacks and generally well defined front boundaries, consisting of brick walls with planting. Further south, Lodge Close, is encased by a high brick wall, is tree lined, comprising 1980s low rise houses and sheltered accommodation.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
C		General uniformity of land use, building period, type, scale and size Urban type: Type 2 and 4	Predominantly interwar suburban, 2 storey, semi-detached housing which fronts onto long streets that connect to Twickenham Road, via Amhurst Gardens, Teesdale Avenue, Teesdale Gardens, and includes a number of small cul-de-sacs and a central primary school. The interwar houses occupy medium-sized plots, have well-sized front and back gardens, with many front gardens paved over for parking. Houses display some variety through curved bay windows, gable ends, projecting and recessed porches. A 1970s infill residential development sits on former school playing field, at the rear of the interwar housing and is arranged in large U-shaped blocks. Includes the Rose and Crown public house, currently being converted into housing, the early C19th Thanet House, with its distinctive yellow brick, and a local shopping parade at Teesdale Court fronting onto London Road.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Isleworth

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
D	 	General uniformity of layout, period, building scale, style, density and materials Urban type: Type 5	A residential development located along and off Twickenham Road and Park Road built in 2000s, comprised of apartments. The development faces inwards in two linear blocks, with the rear of the eastern block overlooking (and, in turn, providing an interesting backdrop to) Park Road Cemetery. Buildings front onto a tree-lined shared surface courtyard, with parking spaces and a mixed palette of brick pavers. Buildings are 3-5 storeys in height with a mixture of gable and flat roofs, large, generous windows, protruding balconies and building lines which add a great deal of visual interest. Shared gardens front onto Park Road and Twickenham Road presenting a green edge to the street.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
E		Extreme uniformity of land use, layout and street relationship/setback. Urban type: Atypical	Comprising the West Middlesex University Hospital, set back from Twickenham Road behind an expanse of car parking, where workhouses once existed. There has been a hospital here since 1894. The complex today consists of a number buildings from the 1930s, 1960s and 2000s in a variety of styles, sizes and scales, laid out in an irregular, piecemeal fashion.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
F		General uniformity of structure, layout, land use, building period, style, density. Urban type: Type 5	Predominantly residential area located along and off the London Road consisting of houses and apartments. It differs from surrounding residential areas, in part because of the increased densities, scale, size and provision of apartments. Building heights, 3-7 storeys, with a 5 to 6 storey apartment block overlooking London Road and a 7 storey, bulky corner building located further back. Two and a half storey terraced housing runs along the western edge successfully taking their cue from the existing terraced properties on Linkfield Road. Includes, to the rear an underused open space in poor condition, only accessible from Primrose Close.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Isleworth

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
G 	General uniformity of layout and structure. Moderate uniformity of building scale, density, height and setback/boundary treatment. Location and access off Twickenham Road. Urban type: Type 4	This exclusively 1980s and 1990s residential area is located between West Middlesex Hospital and Mill Plat. Only Town Field Way accesses the estate, which is laid out in a series of cul-de-sacs and closes with a number of footpaths, some for residents only, making the area difficult to navigate. Mostly consisting of apartment buildings and terraced houses, of varying sizes, styles and heights of between 2-5 storeys. Dense trees and shrubs line the edge with Twickenham Road, adding to its detached, enclave like character.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
H  	General uniformity of layout and structure, plot and building pattern, scale and size, and relationship to street Contrast with surrounding character. Urban type: Type 1	A primarily residential area laid out on and off two long, curving streets of St John's Road and Linkfield Road, connecting London Road and Twickenham Road. Includes Isleworth Station (a local landmark), set back at an angle from London Road with a small, poor quality public space in front, which coupled with various bus routes provides good accessibility and make this a desirable area to live in. Comprised of mostly 2 storey, Victorian terraced houses on narrow plots with small front and back gardens in a variety of styles and materials. Building setbacks are generally small (1-2m), with boundaries pleasantly edged by low brick walls and planting. A mixture of small shops, cafes and businesses line St John's Road, often with residential above, as does St John's Church and The Woodlands Tavern public house, both local landmarks. Woodlands Grove and immediate surrounds consist of handsome and elegant 2-3 storey, C19th Victorian villas in a variety of styles and sizes. On Smallberry Avenue and Mandeville Road are large, 2 storey, interwar, semi-detached properties, some with extensions, many with paved front gardens. Includes the Victorian St John's Gardens with its children's playspace, seating and mature trees, a residential home, C19th Farnell's Almhouses, St John's Community Hall, two Victorian and one Edwardian public houses and some light industrial and business uses.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Isleworth

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
I		Mixed use nature and variety of building periods, types, sizes, scales and heights. Bounded by London Road and railway line. Town Centre/High Street function Relationship and access to Thornbury Park Urban type: Type 2 with some 6 and 5	Stretch of London Road and immediate environs up to the railway line with good accessibility, bus routes and close to both Isleworth and Hounslow East Stations. Mixed use and very varied, particularly along frontage to tree-lined London Road, where residential, offices, commercial units and shops with residential above intermix. Behind this frontage, low-rise, residential dominates, with 2 storey, interwar semi-detached houses on Sidmouth Avenue and 1980s/1990s 2 storey, brick terrace houses on Stanborough Road, and Birch Close. Building heights and scale vary greatly, from 2 to 5 storeys, with a number of large, 4 to 5 storey apartment buildings on the London Road. Thornbury Park occupies a large area in the middle of this character area, with its main, hedge-lined entrance opening onto the London Road.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Some
J		Moderate uniformity of land use, layout and structure, building type, period and style. Location between railway line and DofN River Urban type: Type 2	Exclusively interwar residential area lying east of the railway line and west of the Duke of Northumberland's River which provides a pleasant riverside walk with grassy banks. Characterised by its garden suburb-style layout, The Woodlands Estate's streets have wide pavements, grass verges and trees. 2 storey houses, semi-detached and in terraces of four, occupy large plots with good-sized front and back gardens and a well-sized open space with a community centre occupies the centre of the estate.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
K		Moderate uniformity of land use, building type and period Urban type: Type 2	Sussex Avenue, Worton Road and Farnell Road, largely comprises 2 storey, interwar houses in terraces of four on wider streets with fewer street trees, without grass verges, in contrast to Character Area J). Includes Oaklands School, St Mary the Virgin Church and a 1990s mixed type, residential estate on Gibson Close. Further south, includes C18th Worton Hall, the former C20th Isleworth Film Studios, industrial units to the rear and 2012 residences at Worton Road/Hall Road.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Isleworth

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
L		General uniformity of layout and structure, land use, density, scale and size. Some variety of building period and style Urban type: Type 2	Largely comprised of the Worton Estate, bordered on two sides by the Duke of Northumberland's River, laid out an a series of loop roads, accessed from Worton Road via Ruskin Road. Streets are wide with no tree planting or grass verges, however patches of green space exist at the corner of blocks, which are generally long and deep with internal rear access routes. Comprises 2 storey, postwar semi-detached houses and maisonettes with front or side entrances. Buildings are simply detailed, with hipped roofs and a mixture of brick and render. Includes a children's playspace and community centre to the west, adjacent to the river and the Royal Oak PH. Along Worton Road and Oaks Lane is a somewhat fragmented terrace of 2 storey, Victorian cottages with shallow front gardens.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
M		Extreme uniformity of layout and structure, land use, density, scale and size, relationship to street, setback and boundary treatment. Urban type: Type 4	Exclusively residential enclave laid out in a series of branching cul-de-sacs on former Isleworth Brewery land, accessed from St John's Road via Shirehorse Way. Comprises a mix of houses and apartments, including small, 2 storey semi-detached and terraces of fours occupying narrow, shallow plots and larger scale, 3 storey apartment buildings. Streets have narrow pavements, front boundaries are open with no wall or fence to allow for off-street parking, some are also planted with trees and small shrubs. To the north runs the Duke of Northumberland's River, accessible from Shirehorse Way and Pankhust Close, offering a pleasant riverside walk that unfortunately finishes as a dead end. Pedestrians can also access the estate from Braddock Close off St John's Road.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
N		General uniformity of land use Moderate uniformity of building scale, size and height. Location and access off Worton Road Contrast with surrounding character. Urban type: Type 6	Largely comprised of four distinct business parks, Isleworth Trade Park is a mix of light industry, offices and commercial units, some located on Worton Road and others accessed off it via Clock Towers Road. Along Worton Road are a number of 1930s, 1-2 storey business premises with Art Deco styling, intermixed with 2 storey, Victorian cottages. Two large buildings, with parking to the front behind a low brick wall, occupy land adjacent to Redlees Park. Further along Worton Road is a small row of Victorian cottages and a 'corner style' shop. Fleming Way Trading Estate consists of large, imposing, two storey sheds with pitched roofs, large entrance ways and deep parking courts with low brick walls. Adjacent, is Victory Business Park which consists of smaller scale, two storey office buildings, in red brick with large windows, surrounded by parking courts planted with hedges and trees.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Isleworth

character area

O









defining characteristics & types

Historic core and medieval street layout

Variety of building uses, periods, types, styles and materials

Town Centre/High Street function

Urban type:
Type 1, 3, 4, 7 and Atypical

description

This character area forms the civic, commercial, cultural and historic heart of Isleworth and is based on the medieval street pattern of South Street, North Street and Twickenham Road. It is generally characterised by a high quality, low-rise (2-4 storeys), compact, fine-grain townscape with a wide variety of building styles, including Georgian, Victorian and C20th architecture. The quality is however compromised by some lower quality later developments and a busy road with a hostile pedestrian environment.

South Street forms the local high street with a mixture of housing, shops, public houses, cafes and businesses, within a varied townscape of C18th to C20th buildings. Most notable are: the C18th George Inn; Our Lady of Sorrows Church, with its war memorial and popular square; C19th Isleworth Public Hall; the late Georgian King's Arms; The Castle, a 1930s rebuild of 18th century premises; and, where it nears Upper Square to the east, the green with its 1870 Glossop memorial and water-trough. Includes 1960s Shrewsbury Walk, arranged around a well planted green space with a variety of small shops and services on the ground floors with flats above.

Twickenham Road is a busy, heavily-trafficked main road, with an extremely varied, 2-3 storey, C18th-C20th streetscape and a mix of residential, shops and businesses, and includes the imposing C18th Gumley House with its associated Convent School. However the House, on the west side of the street, is hidden from view by a tall brick wall. Furthermore the footway on this side is particularly narrow and sometimes difficult to negotiate. At the corner of Twickenham Road and North Street sit the C19th Sarah Sermons Almshouses.

Along North Street, a terrace of red brick, Edwardian houses overlooks Silverhall Park and Mill Plat, a C17th narrow walkway that runs adjacent to the Duke of Northumberland's River. C17th Ingrams Almshouses, lie further east along Mill Plat.

Elsewhere there are postwar, late C20th and early C21st residential developments of various styles, scales and quality, including the inward-looking cul-de-sacs of Hartland Road and Harcourt Close, the recent Tolson House and Percy Gardens, with its 1970s 3 storey slab blocks and incongruous 12 storey tower block.

assessment

Design Quality - Medium

Sensitivity to change - High

Permanence - Medium

Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Isleworth

character area

P









defining characteristics & types

Historic riverfront and medieval street layout

Variety of building uses, periods, types, styles and materials

Relationship to the River Thames

Urban type:
Atypical and Type 4 with some 6

description

This heritage-rich character area is comprised of Isleworth's River Thames frontage and its immediate hinterland, as well as the area along the western edge of Syon Park.

Park Road runs southwards from London and Twickenham Roads and is strongly bounded on its east side by the high brick wall, and mature trees and shrubs of Syon Estate. On the west side is historic Park Road Cemetery with its Gothic chapel, ornate memorials and mature trees planted around its perimeter, and further south the Park Road Allotments.

Park Road meets the river with a spectacular reveal of the Arcadian landscape and turns into winding and sometimes heavily trafficked Church Street. Here the varied C18th-C20th townscape is of fine urban grain with a varied streetscape of 2-3 storey buildings occupying narrow plots. The C14th All Saints Church and graveyard, early C18th London Apprentice public house, pavilion boathouse, riverside walkways, slipway and embankment bordered by iron railings together provide a picturesque riverside frontage with stunning views of Kew Gardens and Isleworth Ait, a rare wilderness habitat. To the immediate west are pockets of late C20th and early C21st residential development of various styles, scales and quality, arranged on a series of closes, where the grain is coarser, plots are larger and streets wider.

The centre of the area largely retains a village feel, with narrow streets and small public squares framed by 2-3 storey buildings. It was in fact created mostly between 1986-8 in a pastiche of renaissance urbanism, an awkward mix of pre- and post-modern architecture with terraced houses, offices and a riverside pub. Though intriguing and picturesque it is remarkably confusing and illegible considering its renaissance influence, and is marred by a preponderance of surface parking and an office building whose large footprint is out of character. Historic Northumberland House and the Old Blue School face each other obliquely across Lower Square, a well-enclosed, comfortable public space with seating and trees which links to a village green to the west. With the exception of the pub, buildings back onto the River Thames though retain a close physical relationship to it.

The axis continues southwards through Upper Square (shared with Character Area O), becoming Richmond Road, separated from the river by the walled grounds of Nazareth Convent House, which prevents access to and along the riverfront.

assessment

Design Quality - High

Sensitivity to change - High

Permanence - Medium

Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Isleworth

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
Q		General to extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Contrast with surrounding character. Urban type: Type 2 with some 3	This residential area is mainly comprised of one large perimeter block with an internal access route, large plots, deep building setbacks, large front gardens, in an early postwar garden suburb style. Houses are mainly in terraces of four or six with projecting corners and side and front entrances. The block is bookended to the north by a 4 storey slab of flats which terminates the view south from high street functioning South Street through Shrewsbury Walk. The latter is a 1960s garden city/new town-style development, consisting of a variety of small shops and services with upper floor flats, arranged around a well-planted green space.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
R		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type and use. Urban type: Type 1	To the south of South Street is the secluded residential area comprising predominantly late Victorian and Edwardian dwellings, of various styles on Byfield, Algar, Tolson and Worple Roads, a distinctive neighbourhood known locally as the Four Roads. The mostly terraced housing is neatly laid out on a broken orthogonal grid, linked by narrow alleyways which derive from earlier market gardens, and retains many original features such as sash windows, porches and doors. There are some relic boundary walls from now disappeared very large houses that add visual texture and antiquity to the area.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
S		Bounded by Worton Road and Twickenham Road General uniformity of layout and structure and land use Urban type: Atypical	Bounded by Worton Road and Twickenham Road, this area contains a large park and an eclectic mix of uses. Isleworth Congregational Church elegantly frames the corner of the roads. Isleworth Leisure Centre and Library with its Art Deco architecture, and Isleworth Explorers Club, all front onto Twickenham Road. Redlees Park is a large open space with four entrances off both roads, containing mature trees, sports pitches, children's play areas, a bowling green, Redlees Cottages and Redlees Craft Centre, housed in the former stables. To the north-west is a 2000s 3 storey block of flats (Hippisley Court) fronting onto Worton Road with car parking behind.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
T		Extreme uniformity of layout and structure and land use Limited accessibility and isolation from surrounds Contrast with surrounding character Urban type: Atypical	Thames Water Mogden Sewage Works, built in the 1930s on former Mogden Farm, covers approximately 50ha and is accessed from Mogden Lane and Oaks Lane. The area contains a number of Art Deco infrastructure buildings, including the prominent 1930s office building with its central tower that ends the vista looking from Mogden Lane. A dense, slightly raised bank of vegetation wraps around the majority of the sites perimeter. The Duke of Northumberland's River passes through the site and offers a pleasant tree-lined walk, through an otherwise inaccessible part of Isleworth, although sections of the footpath are in need of improvement.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Isleworth

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
U 	Extreme uniformity of land use, building type, scale, size and density. Variety of building period Access off Twickenham Road/Mogden Lane Contrast with surrounding character Urban type: Type 4 with some 2	Exclusively residential area, situated between Twickenham Road and Mogden Lane. Houses back onto Sewage Works where a dense buffer of vegetation exists. Consists of postwar semi-detached houses in groups of four, on Lynton Close and Twickenham Road. Behind are two separate 1980s housing estates: Bankside Close is a discrete enclave of 2-3 storey houses and Beaumont Close, a mix of two storey terraced houses and 3-4 storey apartment buildings. Includes some interwar, 2 storey terraces, some which front onto Mogden Lane, C18th Mogden House and an ancient footpath that connects to Mogden Lane.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
V 	Extreme uniformity of use General uniformity of building period, type, scale and size, setback and relationship to street. Urban type: Type 2	Located between Twickenham Road and Worple Road, this exclusively residential area is largely defined by its mix of late interwar, two storey, semi-detached houses, arranged on a perimeter block layout with on street parking. Houses are varied, displaying hipped roofs, catslide roofs, bay windows, gable ends, a mixture of front boundaries and generally well sized front and back gardens, some densely planted, others paved over for parking. Includes a parade of shops with flats above on Twickenham Road and a Neo-Georgian crescent of townhouses built in 2000s on Elizabeth Gardens, off Worple Road to the north.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
W  	Extreme uniformity of layout and structure, period, plot and building pattern, scale, size and materials. Some variety of land use (small scale employment), detailing and finishes Urban type: Type 1	Victorian residential area, with a dense, compact, fine urban grain, consisting of long, rectangular blocks with two storey terraced housing occupying narrow plots, some long, others short. Houses are set back 1-2 metres from pavement edge, streets are long, with little tree planting, narrow pavements and on-street parking. Houses overlook the street, some flat fronted, others with bay windows that along with parapets gives a consistent rhythm to the street. Houses have low brick walls boundaries, and the shallow front garden space is often planted with windows boxes, small shrubs and climbers. The River Crane borders the eastern edge, although largely hidden from public view behind backs of houses, Percy Road affords views complemented by seating. Includes Worple Primary School which is situated in the middle of a block with housing to the north and south. The Victoria public house which occupies a corner plot on Worple Road/Talbot Road forms the heart to the area and has recently been sensitively renovated.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Isleworth

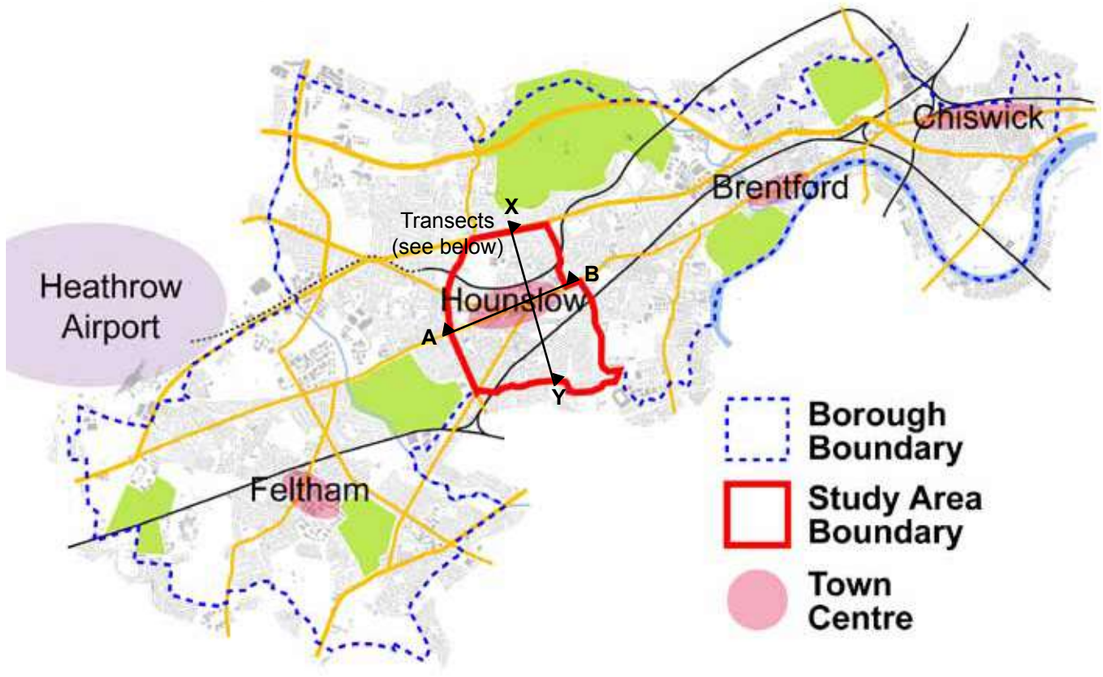
character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
X 	Extreme uniformity of layout and structure, land use, density, plot pattern and building period Urban type: Type 2	Early interwar 2 storey housing estate, formally laid out in a garden suburb-style with generous amounts of open space, large grass verges, wide front gardens, front boundary hedges and mature trees. Strong N-S and E-W axes with characteristic rectangular space at centre. Houses, either semi-detached or terraces of four, sit on wide, deep plots and very wide, tree-lined streets. Buildings have distinctive catslide hipped roofs. River Crane runs along the eastern border, where a pedestrian bridge affords access to St Margaret's via Northcote Avenue. Cole Park allotments lie to the south behind properties on Crane Avenue.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Y 	General uniformity of layout and structure, building pattern and period. Location and access to Mogden Lane and Twickenham Road Urban type: Type 3 with some 6	Comprised of the 1970s Ivybridge Estate, with its modernist layout of four 18-20 storey towers and four storey linear and L shaped blocks sitting in large areas of open space used mostly for car parking. Ivybridge retail park is accessed off Twickenham Road, and comprises a large, one storey building in a post-modern style with extensive car parking at the front. The area includes Isleworth Ambulance Station, Kirsten Lodge, Bridge Link community centre and Ivybridge primary school with its playing field. Some 1990s infill mixed type housing of between 2-4 storeys has been built to the south of mixed quality.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Z 	General uniformity of layout and structure, density, building height and period Variety of land uses; retail, residential and employment Location and access from Rugby Road Urban type: Type 6 with some 4	Consists of three distinct areas, all accessed off Rugby Road. A large, low-rise supermarket to the north, surrounded by a extensive car parking. South, is a 1980s residential estate, consisting of 2 storey terraced houses and small apartment blocks, between 3-4 storeys set on a long cul-de-sac (Varsity Drive). The rear of the buildings abut onto Rugby Road, along Varsity Drive they are set back at various angles with small parking courts in between. Further south, is an industrial estate with large footprint buildings of various styles, of between 1-2 storeys, surrounded by car parking. The imposing concrete frame of Twickenham Stadium looms in the background.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hounslow

3

Hounslow

present day context



The Hounslow study area is located in the centre of the borough. It is defined by the High Street which runs through its centre before it splits into the three major routes of Bath Road, Staines Road and Hanworth Road forming a fork heading in three directions. The Great West Road forms its northern edge and the borough boundary forms its southern edge with Whitton and Murray Park lying just south of the borough boundary.

Hounslow town centre (designated a Metropolitan Centre in the London Plan) sits in the middle of the study area. Both the underground and the main line service pierce through the study area above ground in an east-west direction, adding a visual and acoustic interest to the townscape.

The study area is relatively flat, gently sloping downhill in a south-easterly direction; it is also shaped by an east-west movement axis. Hounslow Heath lies 800m to the west.

Hounslow is rightly best known for its long high street, where the settlement originated as an important stopping point for the coaching trade and remains to this day its retail and commercial heart. It has suffered in recent times and lost trade to other nearby town centres. However much is being done to regenerate the town centre to ensure it remains a lively centre to Hounslow and to the borough as a whole.

The Piccadilly line and main streets that pass through the area, such as the High Street, Grove Road, Hanworth Road, Staines Road and Bath Road make Hounslow a place through which many people pass en route to somewhere else, often Heathrow, rarely staying to explore. These main streets are traffic dominated, especially Grove Road which took on vehicular traffic from the High Street in the 1980s and forms a pedestrian unfriendly girdle to the south. This limits and hinders pedestrian movement from established residential communities that surround the High Street.

There is a distinct divide between the areas north and south of the mainline railway line, much of the southern area consisting of much lower density inter and postwar housing with little variation or other uses.

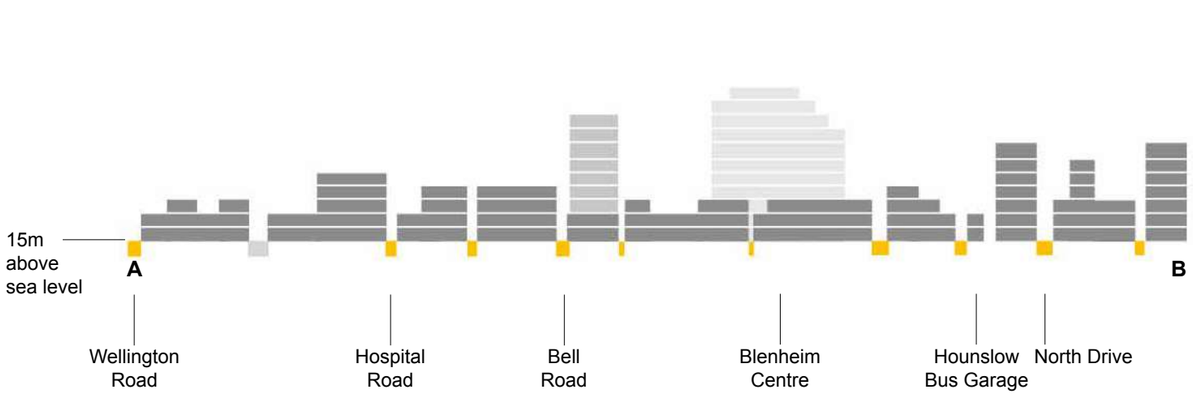


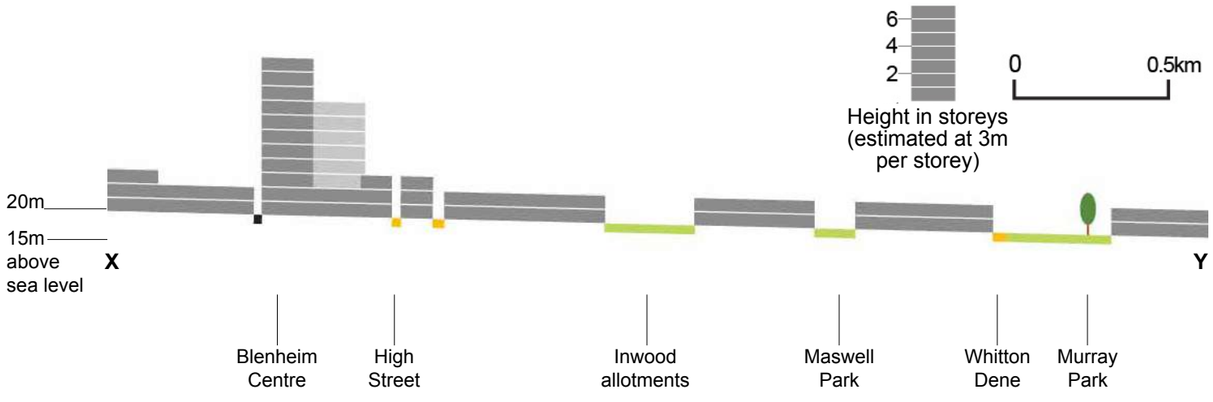
Busy by day but quiet by evening, the part-pedestrianised High Street is a current focus for regeneration



A prominent corner building with its distinctive dome marks the junction of the High Street and Bath Road.

Title page photo: Late Victorian terraced housing south of the town centre





Hounslow

historic context

Hounslow owes its location to the Roman Road and being on the edge of Hounslow Heath. The former forest's good water supply made it an obvious travellers' stopping point. The first settlement is described as a roadside village from the Saxon period named Honeslauu in the Domesday Book. The c1300 siting of a religious house near the present-day High Street seeded the town's later administrative importance in the mid C19th.

For many centuries Hounslow comprised buildings lining a length of the Roman Road to Staines and the west leading out into the Heath, which surrounded the south and west of the settlement. From the eastern end, tracks meandered south past Whitton to Hanworth and Hampton. At the western end, coaches tracked northwest towards Cranford Bridge, on the Bath Road. Sutton was a northerly hamlet on the edge of the Heath and had arable land on the town side. Also on the way to Heston and north of a water course which ran parallel with the high street. Lampton was another hamlet.

The town grew and prospered from the C18th due to the coaching industry, 150 coaches being timetabled per day, being the right distance from Hyde Park to make a night-stop and to refresh horses before the lawlessness of Hounslow Heath. A mix of homes, workshops, inns, shops and market gardens lined the high street, and clustered at junctions. Apart from the Heath which had military value for exercise grounds, land elsewhere was agricultural.

Coaching and Hounslow's prosperity collapsed after the opening of the Great Western Railway in 1841. However fortunes revived after a successful petition for a railway loop line to be built from Barnes to Hounslow in 1850. Main roads near the station such as Hanworth Road added to existing development including churches and larger villas to older properties. Heathland was enclosed from 1813 and sold for new roads and developed often piecemeal in single, pairs and short terraces of usually houses on angled streets around Whitton and Inwood Roads. Straight radial roads to the south west were densely followed and infilled with Victorian and Edwardian terraces. Military barracks were built in Pears Road, now sheltered housing.

Heston and Isleworth each half-ran Hounslow town, and in 1875 united in forming an Urban Sanitary District, which became an Urban District Council administered from Hounslow. The new railway to the north of the town in 1883 terminated at a station where the bus garage is now, made rapidly obsolete when the railway carried on further west with a station on Lampton Road and later on Kingsley Road. The railway led to rapid development up and around Lampton Road with good quality houses and terraces. From 1901 until the 1930s a tramway ran along the whole former Roman Road from Shepherd's Bush to south of the Cavalry Barracks.

The introduction of the Great West Road/A4 along the northern edge of the study severed but acknowledged the old lanes. A great deal of housing was built during the two world wars and immediately after, which urbanised nearly all of the remainder of the area, although retaining open land at Inwood and Lampton Parks.

The High Street retained its mostly comfortable scale and plot structure, with good (if neglected) frontages above the shops. Further east and west the area's fine urban rhythm and structure has been lost to larger scale development with a coarser urban grain.

Grove Road was enlarged to act as a bypass when part of the High Street was pedestrianised in the early 1990s, altering connections with the now very busy Hanworth and Bath Roads.

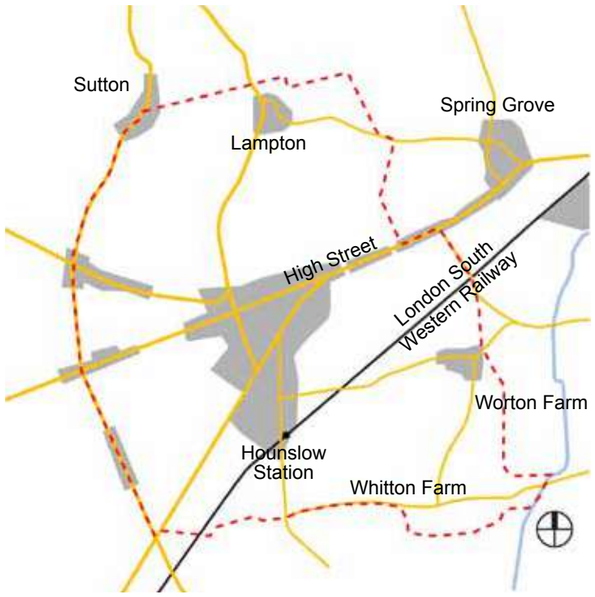


St. Stephen's Road, 1900s

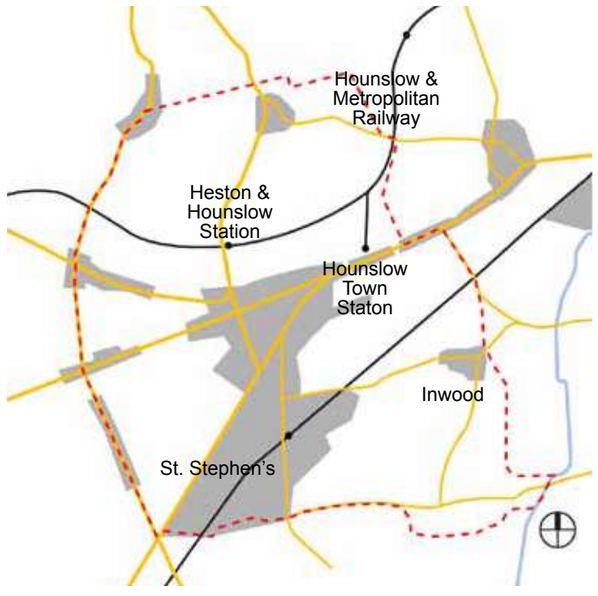


Hounslow High Street, 1900s

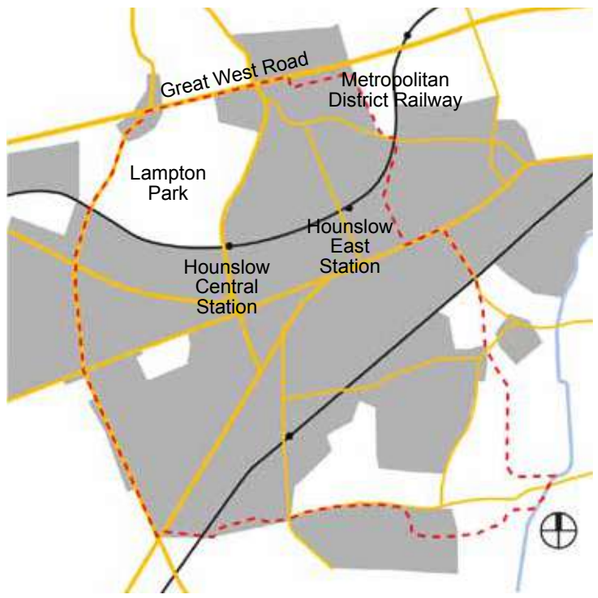
c1870



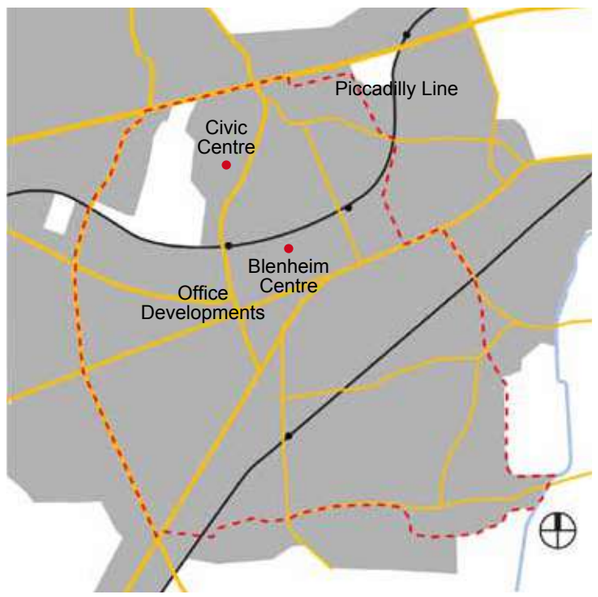
c1890



c1935

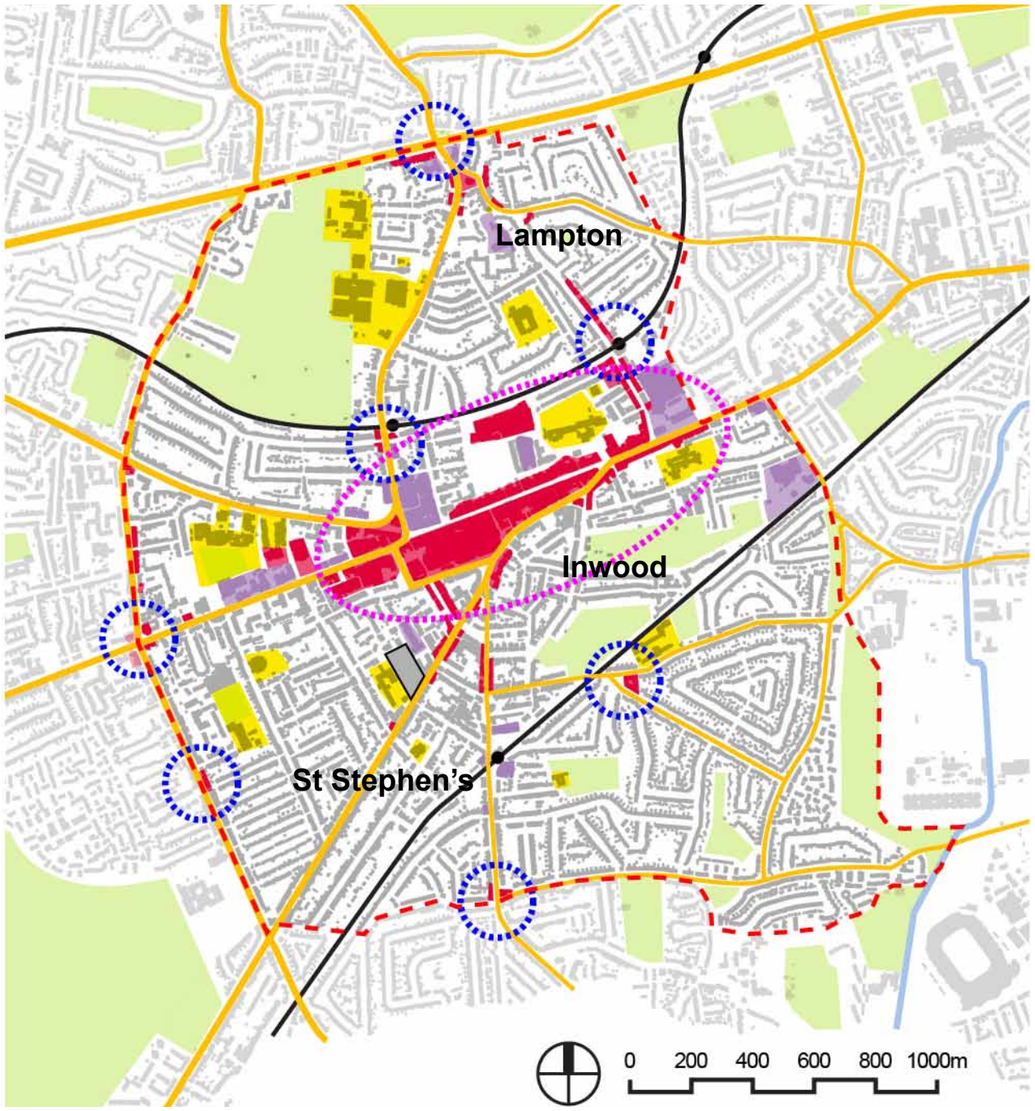


c2010



Hounslow

land and building use



Retail
Commercial
Local Centre
Town Centre
Community
Green Open Space
Neighbourhood Centre
Opportunity Site

A diverse and eclectic mix of retail, business, restaurants and cafes runs along the historic and formative High Street which constitutes the economic and shopping heart of not only this area but to surrounding neighbourhoods as well. Ancient routes between Hounslow and Heston remain but the Piccadilly line forms a substantial barrier with the effect increased by the new Blenheim Centre, which is set back north of the high street, fronted by a large expanse of car parking. The fine grain of plots and buildings along the High Street is an important characteristic to note and one which has been eroded in recent times with the preference for larger, wider plots and building footprints, particularly for areas just off the high street.

North and south of the town centre there are quieter predominantly residential areas. The hustle and bustle of the high street can quickly be escaped by turning off onto one of the side streets such as Chapel or Inwood Road. However, these side streets are often not well integrated into the high street. These residential areas represent a diverse mix of house types, sizes and ages, with the older Victorian housing stock located around Inwood Park, St Stephens Road and Grove Road. As one would expect the development density and intensity increase closer to the high street and main roads, such as Bath Road, Staines Road and Hanworth Road. Many of the older buildings that line the main roads have ground floor retail frontages and flats above. This provides an efficient use of space, increases economic potential for the building and ensures a lively street. It can also be seen in the new Blenheim Centre, though the scale is substantially larger and bulkier. Public houses have remained on routes relating to the stations rather than the High Street, where a number have recently closed.

Bath Road is predominantly residential with a wide variety of dwelling types, many from the late Victorian period. There are some business and retail premises closer to the town centre taking advantage of the accessibility and increased footfall.

Smaller clusters of local retail and business premises are located in the residential neighbourhoods forming local centres. These include those along Kingsley Road, Lampton Road, Wellington Road North and Heath Road. There are occasional business premises located along parts of the railway, particularly around Hounslow mainline station. The Civic Centre sits within Lampton Park and is set back and largely out of view from Lampton Road.

There are a number of schools in the area which sit in the heart of their communities, including Alexandra school in the north, St Marks in the west and Chatsworth School in the south. There is a multitude of smaller buildings that function as important community spaces, either religious or youth centres such as the Hounslow Youth Centre.



Small shop units line the eastern side of Kingsley Road (looking northwards)



The Civic Centre sits back from Lampton Road nestled in Lampton Park



Activity and commercial units along Staines Road close to the High Street



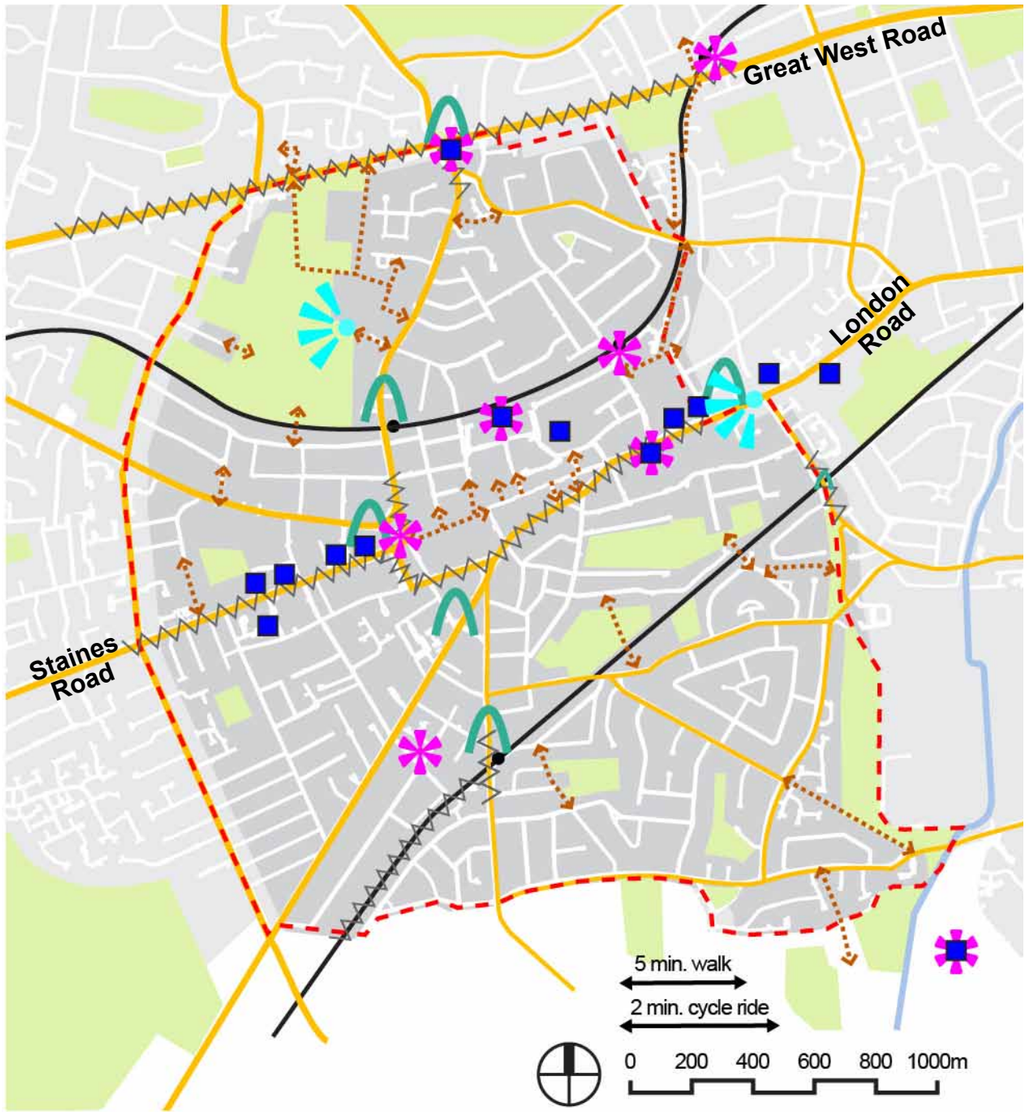
Late interwar semi-detached houses



Small parade of shops with flats above

Hounslow

movement & legibility



The overall movement structure is dominated by the east-west road and rail routes. The historic London Road that becomes the High Street is the principal movement route through the area and is lined with a fine and medium grain retail frontage, much of which is of heritage and townscape value. Other important east-west streets include Staines Road, Bath Road, Hanworth Road and the Great West Road (GWR) to the north, whilst north south movement passes along Lampton Road, Kingsley Road, Whitton Road and Bridge Road. Many of these busy, main thoroughfares are dominated by vehicular traffic and present problems to pedestrians crossing and the general walkability and public realm quality of the area. Some, such as the GWR are at least consistently tree lined adding a pleasant, green buffer between pedestrians and traffic.

The area is well-served by public transport, with Hounslow Central and Hounslow East offering Piccadilly Line access. Hounslow mainline train station lies to the south of the study area and offers connections to London Waterloo. However these busy public transport hubs are not located within or in close enough proximity to the town centre, which suffers as a result from a reduction in potential footfall. Improving this situation through increasing legibility and wayfinding could do much to improve the economic vibrancy of the town centre. Buses run frequently along the London Road/High Street and Hounslow Bus Station sits at the eastern end of the area. However many eastbound buses travelling through the town centre terminate at the bus station, sometimes resulting in long waits for buses travelling to Brentford, Chiswick and beyond. Due to the public transport nodes being dispersed across the study area there is no real public transport hub and it is necessary to walk 5-10 minutes between different services which limits the ease of connectivity for the area.

The overall quality of the pedestrian environment can differ greatly, moving from a pleasant and comfortable residential street such as Inwood Road to a much busier, traffic heavy main road such as Staines Road. Away from these main streets, some of the secondary residential streets are visually varied, tree-lined, with wide pavements, well-enclosed and offer some pleasing street scenes and vistas. The High Street is part pedestrianised with mixed success. In the evenings it can feel quiet and rather empty along certain sections, and many of the side streets offer little activity or interest. As one would expect most roads lead to the high street where a number of landmarks and gateways exist enticing local shoppers to stop and spend money.

Many smaller local landmarks can be seen. St Stephen's Church is a local landmark sitting on the intersection of Parkside and St Stephens Road. The new Blenheim Centre is a large, bulky building which can be seen from a number of places in Hounslow, including from Lampton Park. The Underground station platforms allow open and expansive views over a surprising distance, including a glimpse of Central London's BT Tower.



Hounslow East Underground Station



The mainline railway cuts through the study area with three bridges over a 2km stretch



Enclosed footpath leading to Lampton Park



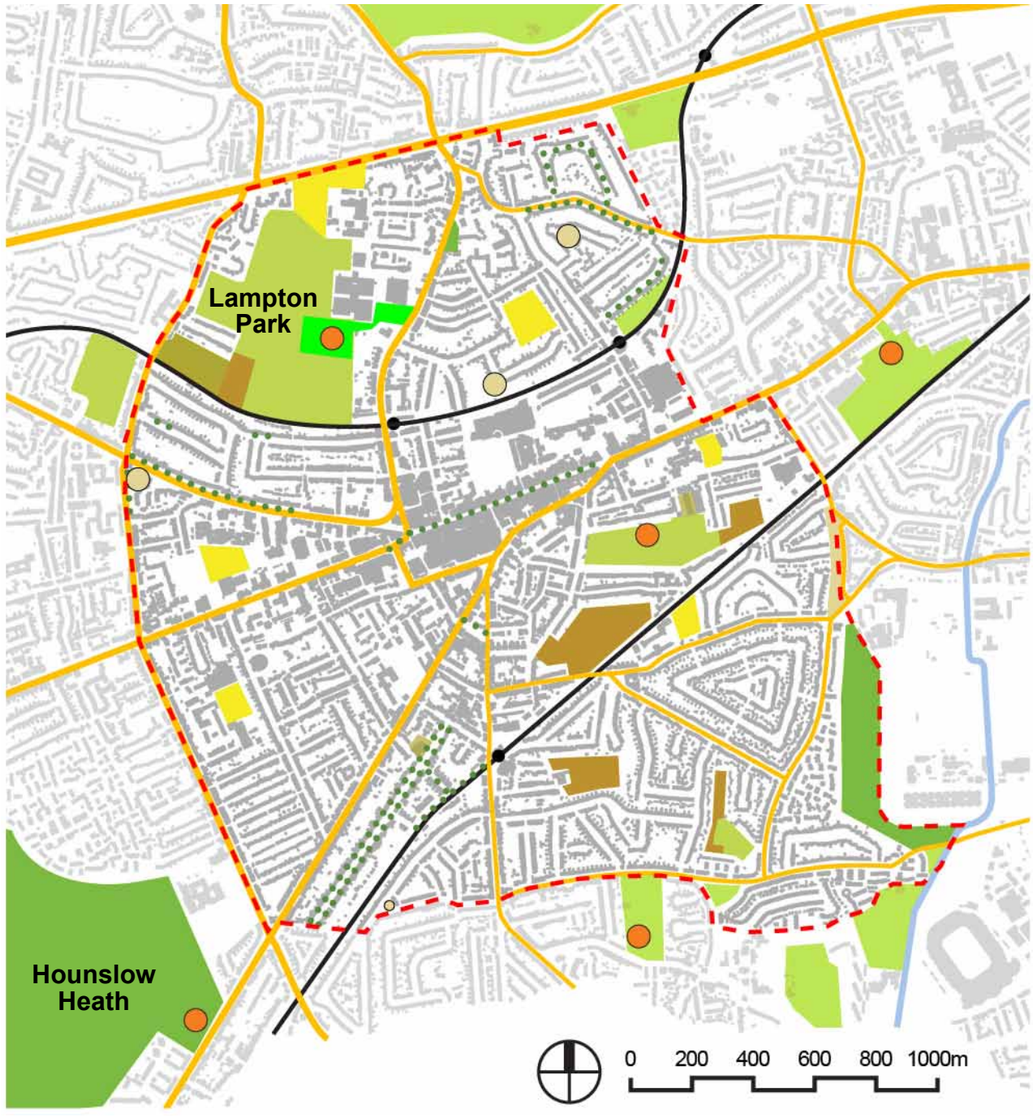
Main roads can be difficult to cross



St Stephen's Church, a local landmark

Hounslow

green and blue landscape



Public gardens
Parks & playing fields
Natural & semi-natural urban green spaces
Green corridors
School playing fields
Outdoor sports facilities
Amenity spaces
Cemeteries & churchyards
Accessible countryside (green-belt)
Allotments, community gardens & urban/city farms
Children's & teenagers' play areas
Rivers, natural water bodies
Canals, man-made water bodies
Wooded areas
Street trees

Streams and horseponds that once characterised the landscape in Hounslow all disappeared in the early 20th century. Today, there are not many parks due to much of it being a dense, urban centre with all the hustle, bustle and development associated. The notable exception is Lampton Park which is a large, civic public park with a range of sporting facilities and the Council Civic Centre located in the north-west. There is a notable shortage of small, local parks in the south western part of the area. However there are a number of smaller parks and spaces that are dotted elsewhere which offer an important place of rest and solitude alongside places for play and social gathering. These spaces range from paved urban spaces such as the civic square outside the Holy Trinity Church to mini-gardens such as the one next to 36 Bath Road with its dense planting, circular seating and tranquil atmosphere.

Even though there are no publicly accessible natural or semi-natural green spaces within the study area, the large, open expanse of Hounslow Heath is less than 10-15 minutes away by foot from the western edge of the study area, though it is not a particularly enjoyable journey, requiring a walk along the traffic-dominated Staines Road. The quality of many streets in the area is determined by the treatment and relationship of front gardens, and a major enemy of attractive front gardens and their mitigating effect on traffic is the car space. Often poorly surfaced, this is a condition that appears to be increasing.

Much of the green landscape is comprised of quite large, leafy back gardens particularly prevalent in the south of the study area. This private green landscape is important to protect for the benefit of wildlife, integrity of the house and plot relationship, and the overall character of the area. Amenity green space is evident in many of the interwar housing estates, though some are better used and looked after than others. Many offer a visual greenness rather than practical usable green space. There are quite a number of allotments that lie alongside the railway line or sit within parks, and these provide a place for people to grow their own produce whilst also acting as a visual and noise buffer to the busy railway. New Brentford Cemetery with its delightful chapel and mature trees lies off Sutton Lane and has been located there since 1903. There are a number of school playing fields attached to primary and secondary schools in the area, though the majority are fairly small and not accessible to the general public.

Street trees are much loved but often not planted regularly or have been lost over the years, this being particularly evident in character area C. St Stephens Road in character area H is lined with mature lime trees first planted back in the 1880s showing how much care, time and attention is needed to create a pleasant tree lined street. There is a major opportunity for a long-term outlook that seeks to reinstate street tree lines and improve the grass verges that soften the streetscene in this built up and dense study area. The Duke of Northumberland's River runs close to the eastern edge of the study area and due to the relatively flat open landscape views can be glimpsed.



Grass verges and greens break up the inter and postwar housing estates



Well tended grass strips and street trees bring the landscape into the street scene



Allotments are popular and well used



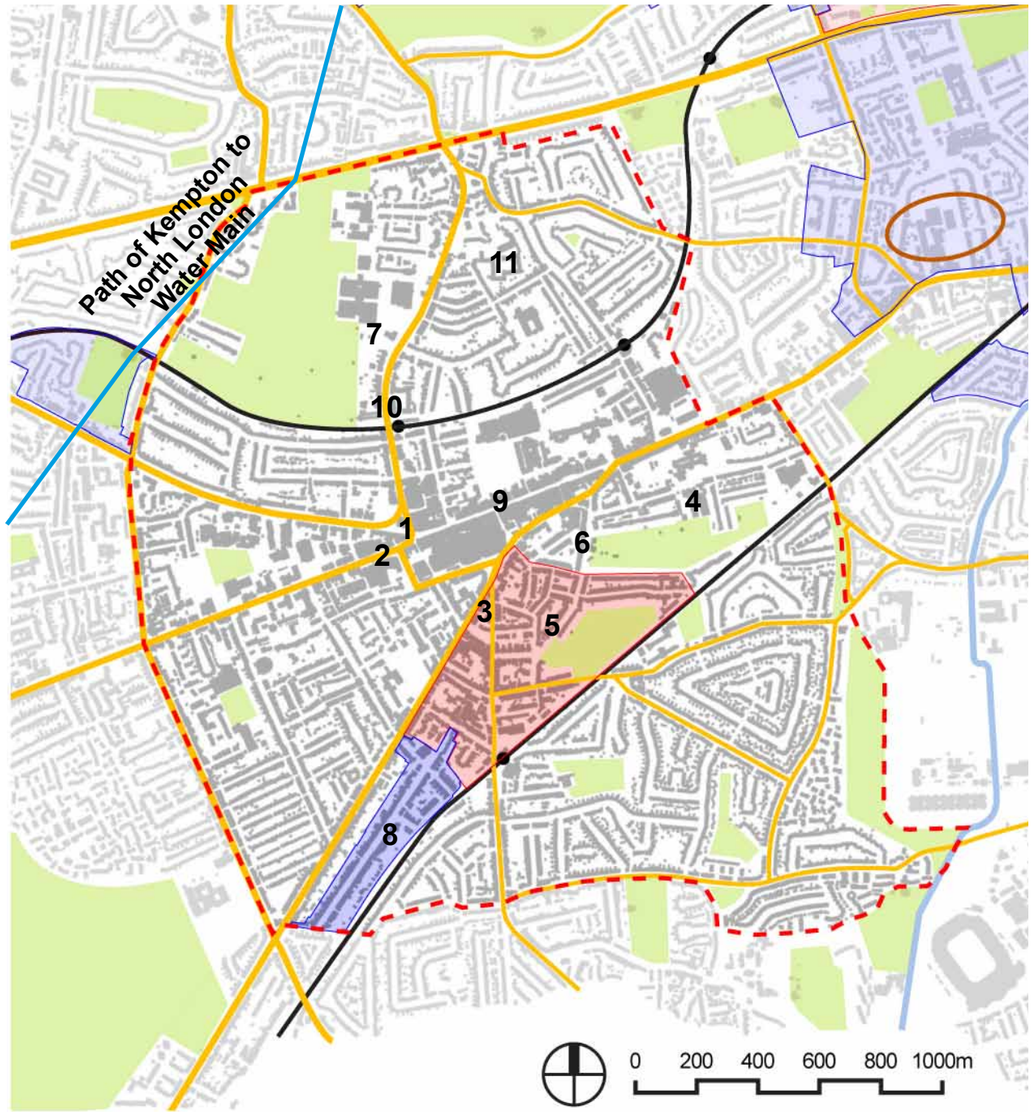
Expansive views from open space



Neighbourhood Parks - Inwood Park

Hounslow

heritage assets



Conservation Area

Area of Special Character

Listed Building Cluster

The 11 remaining listed buildings tell the story of different strategic periods, although demolition in the 1980s of the red brick and terracotta former council chamber and library in Treaty Road lost the area its early Edwardian flamboyance. An echo is provided by the locally listed red brick group of Neals Corner on the historic fork of Staines (Roman) and Bath Roads [1], and the locally listed wine bar beginning Bath Road. On the Bell/Staines Road corner is the locally listed Bell pub [2], a last but strategically important hostelry of the coaching days in an early Edwardian incarnation. Bath Road itself begins with a mid C18th listed group of 4 former cottages, in a Tudor Gothic fantasy style, now offices.

There is a small late Georgian classical house on the Hanworth/Whitton Road corner [3] and to its north on Bell Road are classically gable-fronted chapels, the later (1879) Methodist church being simpler than the congregational church of 1936. Also in brown brick and classically gabled, the Militia barracks of 1854 [4] was built in Pears Road next to a pear orchard. The last period recognised with a listing is an Art-Deco office front to workshops [5] located in Inwood Road.

Victorian cottages in Pears Road provide a visually interesting and comfortable streetscape with its sense of enclosure, architectural detail, human scale and the individuality expressed with various coloured facade treatments. The most intact area is in and around Inwood Road which runs from the town centre in a southerly direction [6]. Around this area generally are early and mid Victorian villas, pairs and terraced houses, of not fully acknowledged character and quality in an area considered to be of special character value.

On Lampton Road the early C19th double fronted house The Lawn is listed with its gate, and the house named Clovelly [7] remains at the entrance to the civic centre.

The later Victorian St. Stephen's Church and Road [8] is the only conservation area in Hounslow. Developed in a piecemeal way in the leafy south-western corner of the study area between the railway line and Hanworth Road, it comprises a variety of house types rather than terraces, with larger houses and gardens.

Other built vintages begin with relic tiny buildings along the High Street [9] (almost every other building being of some merit) and pairs of late Georgian small urban cottages and larger Victorian ones along Bath Road. Taller villas are found near Lampton Road [10]. The largest of the older buildings to the south of the high street are the remaining churches and chapels (many came and went in the late Victorian early Edwardian period), some converted to other worship or educational facilities.

The coming of the Great West Road and the interwar suburbs [11] brought some fine (though today often unloved) examples of the Tudorbethan style of houses and flats over shops.

The path of the early C20th Kempton to North London water main appears as a disjointed series of sometimes fenced linear open spaces and occasional utility structures.



St Stephen's Conservation Area



Militia barracks, Pears Road



Victorian cottages, Pears Road



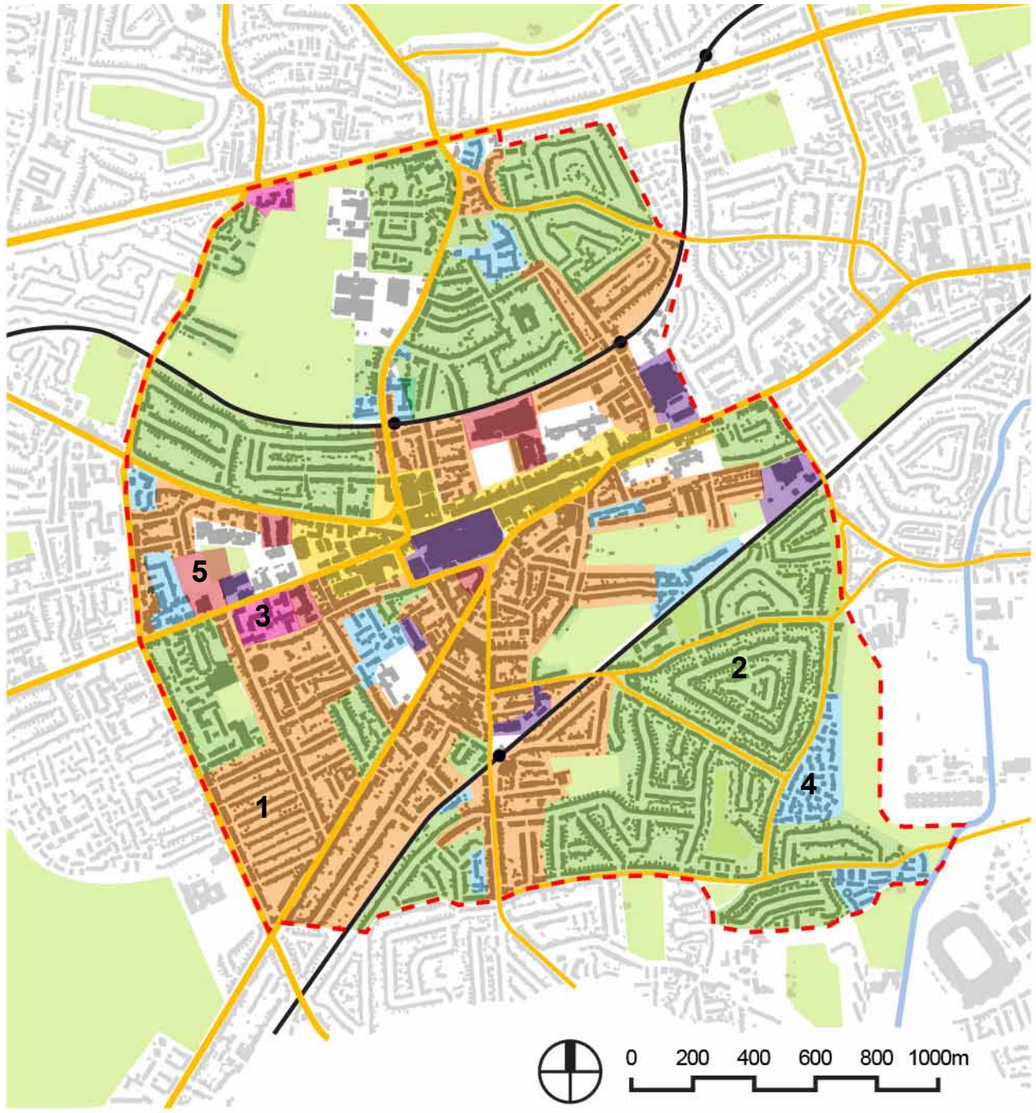
Victorian short terrace, Inwood area



Terraces and villas, Inwood area

Hounslow

urban types



Urban type 1 - compact grid
Urban type 2 - loose grid
Urban type 3 - slabs and towers
Urban type 4 - courts and cul-de-sacs
Urban type 5 - urban renaissance
Urban type 6 - big box
Urban type 7 - urban centre
Atypical (not representative of an above type)

The most dominant urban types by area within the Hounslow study area are the inter- and early postwar loose grid (type 2) followed closely by the earlier compact grid (type 1). There are remarkably few of the slabs and towers estates (type 3) of the later postwar years, though the courts and cul-de-sacs (type 4) typical of the late 1970s and 1980s are strongly represented. The exclusively commercial/retail big box (type 6) barely appears in this small, built-up study area, the town centre shopping mall and bus garage being exceptions. A major urban renaissance (type 5) project has appeared more recently just north of the original historic urban centre (type 7) where transport accessibility is good.

The earlier types (1 and 2) are chronologically located roughly concentrically outward from the urban centre, with the other largely residential later types occupying mostly infill and edge sites across the study area, a pattern which is likely to continue.

For more information on general urban types found in the borough, including historical development, aspects of form and SWOT analyses, see Section 4: Urban Types.



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3



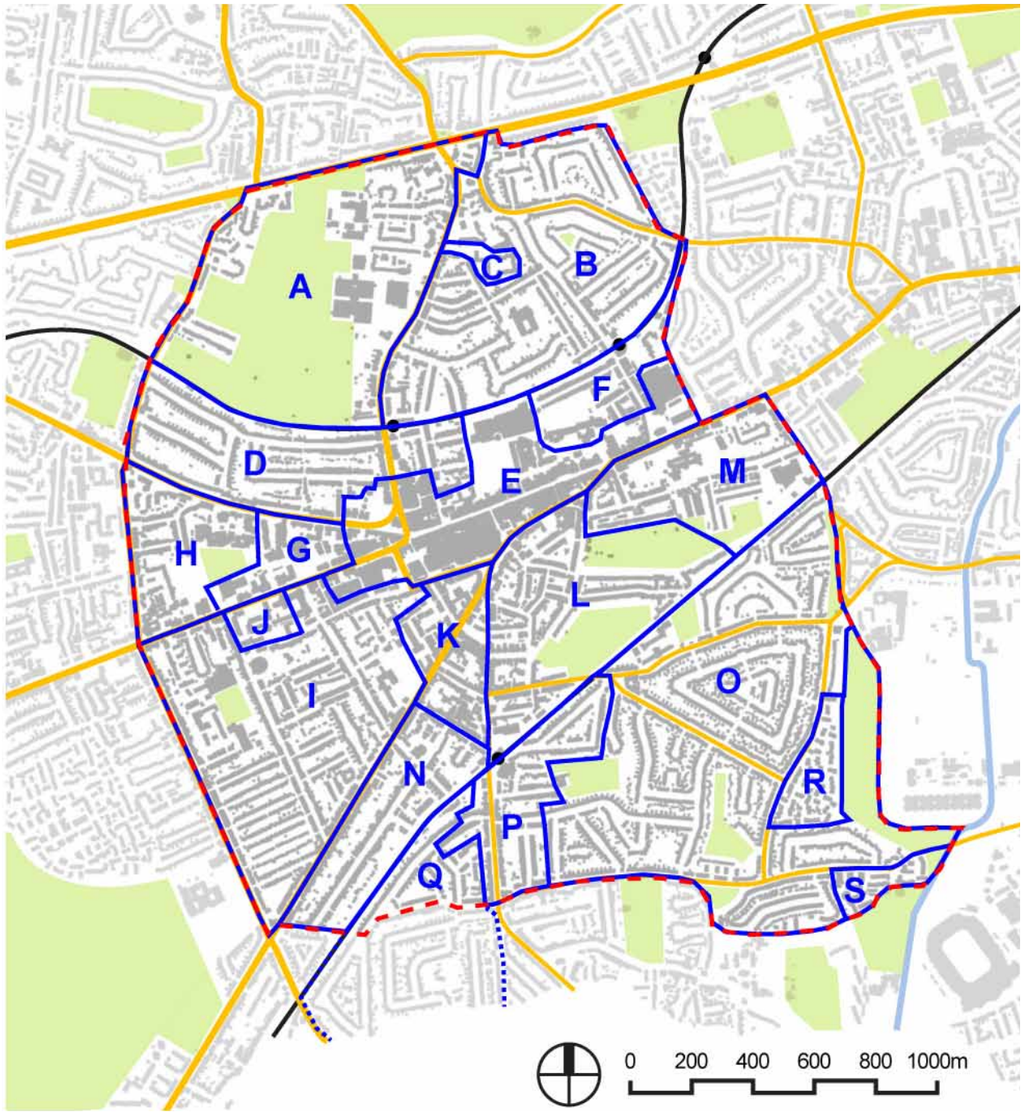
Type 4



Type 5

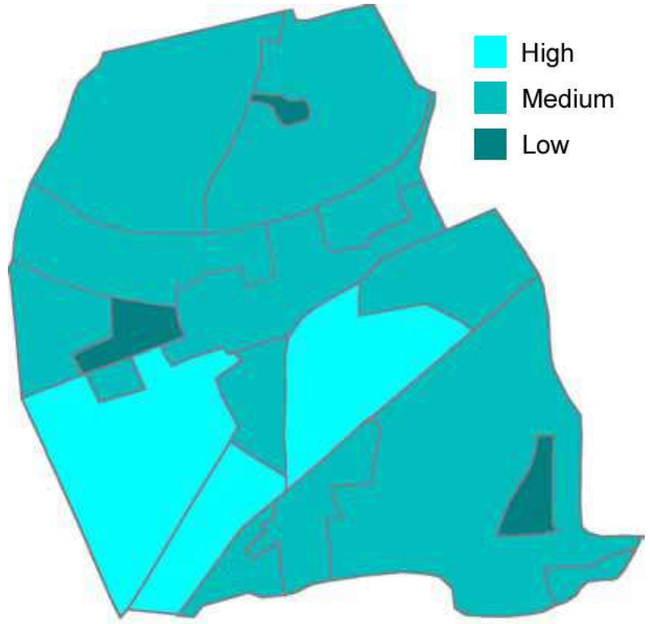
Hounslow

character areas and assessments

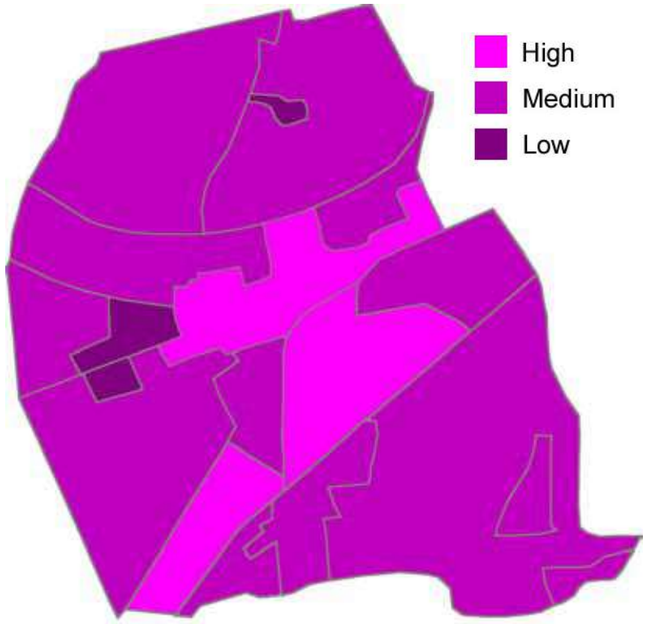


A Character Area

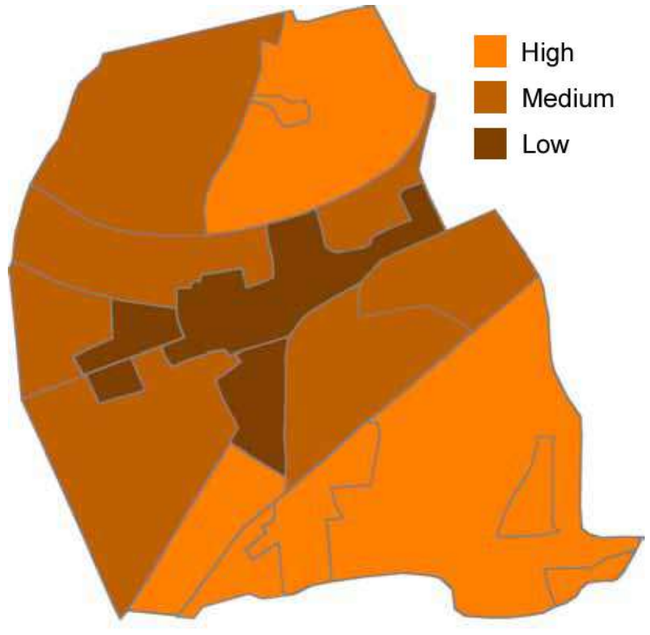
For more information on characterisation and assessment see Section 1: Introduction - Methodology



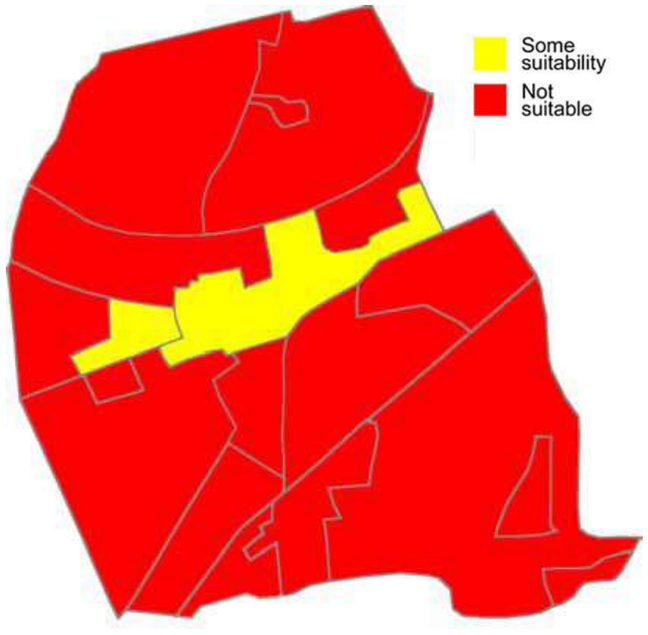
Design Quality



Sensitivity to change



Permanence



Suitability for tall buildings

Hounslow

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
A	 	Landscape, accessibility and relationship to Lampton Park. Urban type: Type 2 with some 3 and 4	Dominated by leafy Lampton Park, and with a number of civic uses (including the Civic Centre) located on its eastern edge along with a mixture of housing types, notably some large Arts and Crafts influenced detached houses. Retail frontage faces onto the Great West Road and Lampton Road. A number of footpaths lead to Lampton Park from Lampton Road and Bulstrode Avenue. To the west of Lampton Park lies mostly postwar housing of varying types and sizes and New Brentford Cemetery with its avenue of cedars and pines and small yet delightful chapel.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
B		General uniformity of layout, land use, building type, scale, density, street design and materials. Urban type: Type 2 and 1 with some 4	This area is mainly residential with some retail frontages on Kingsley Road and Spring Grove Road. The street layout is connected, with large blocks and a regularity to the street scene. The housing is mostly interwar or early postwar, consisting of mainly semi-detached with some 2 storey terraced housing facing the street with front doors at regular intervals. Some Victorian buildings can be found lining Kingsley Road, Spring Grove Road and Jersey Road which have a tighter urban grain, are more dense and narrow.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
C		Extreme uniformity of layout, land use, period, building type, scale and car parking treatment Urban type: Type 2 and 1 with some 4	This postwar residential enclave sits just off Lampton Road, accessible via only one street; Brookwood Road. It's size, scale and disconnected layout mark it out from its surrounds, which adhere to a street based layout. Buildings are large, U and L shaped blocks, 4 stories high surrounded by amenity land and car parking courts. They are double stacked maisonnettes accessed from the ground floor and from 3rd storey decks.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hounslow

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
D 	Location and relationship to town centre Extreme uniformity of urban grain, structure and layout, building types, scale, size and density. Urban type: Type 2 and 1	The area is characterised by its edge of town centre location, with a retail and commercial mix on Lampton Road around Hounslow Central tube station. Either side of this lies a mix of Edwardian and interwar terraced housing, turning into semi-detached further from Lampton Road. The front gardens range in size from with many being paved over for car parking creating a blurred edge between street and garden. Most homes are hipped or gabled roofed with bay windows and entrance porches creating a pleasant street rhythm.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
E  	Location and accessibility Town centre function Urban type: Type 7 with some 5 and 6	Characterised by its mix of uses, predominantly retail units on ground floor and offices above. A diverse mix of building sizes, types and ages line the high street, with a traditional pattern of narrow, deep plots. Building heights are fairly consistent, ranging from three to four stories offering a pleasent sense of enclosure to the public space, punctuated by narrow alleyways running north-south. The streets that sit behind and off the High Street and Kingsley Road are lined with late Victorian/Edwardian terraced housing. More recent, larger footprint buildings are evident, such as the Trinity Centre office complex, the mixed use Blenheim Centre with its Asda superstore with residential above, and more office buildings in the west. These give a much coarser grain to the townscape, with less visual variety and street level activity.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Some
F 	General uniformity of building period, scale, grain, size and type. Urban type: Type 1	This small area is characterised by its late Victorian architecture of terraced housing fronting onto narrow to medium enclosed streets in and around Hounslow East tube station. It has much in common with Character Area B to the north and operates as a transition edge to the town centre. Many of the buildings along Kingsley Road have shop units on the ground floor, the frontages are narrow, setbacks minimal and buildings provide a strong sense of enclosure to the street along with frequent front doors and overlooking.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hounslow

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
G		Edge of centre transitional zone Urban type: Type 7 with some 5	This can be characterised as an edge of centre area, defined by its disjointed and segregated feel, its mix of uses, particularly offices and its close relationship to the activity and bustle of the town centre. Large retail outlets and large office blocks dominate with some residential uses in a poorly permeable street layout of cul-de-sacs and car parks. Buildings range in height from 1 to 7 storeys, most are large in scale with various degrees of setback from Staines Road.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Some
H		General uniformity of building period, scale, grain, size and type. Urban type: Types 1, 4 and 5	This fairly mixed residential area has a great variety of housing ages, types, sizes and styles. Located between Wellington Road North to the west and the more commercial areas to the east, this area has recently seen a large new housing development just off the Staines Road. St Mark's School sits in the centre of the area. A fairly large area of Victorian terraced housing is evident along and off Wellington Road, as seen elsewhere, in Character Area F, houses are narrow, with minimal setbacks with a variety of finishes.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
I		Extreme uniformity of building type, period, layout and structure, density, relationship to street and building heights. Urban type: Type 2 and 1 with some 4	Bounded by Staines Road to the north and Hanworth Road to the south this large, compact area is predominantly residential, laid out in rectangular perimeter blocks. Within this structure are a variety of house types, ages and styles yet all defined by their relationship to the street, with front doors fronting onto the street, minimal setbacks and good street enclosure with low boundary walls. The majority of the area is quiet terraced streets of Victorian, Edwardian and interwar housing with a couple of schools, local corner shops and public houses.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
				

Hounslow

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
J 	Extreme uniformity of layout, building period, pattern and scale Urban type: Type 3	A residential estate built in the 1970s and set back off Staines Road and north of Grove Road. Access is via a few internal access roads and a far greater number of pedestrian footpaths making the estate overly permeable. 12 linear blocks of varying sizes sit within open space and car parking courts and one 15 storey tower with its distinctive curved roof sits almost centrally in the estate. The use of red brick and white render give a unified character to the estate.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
K 	Location, land use and accessibility, relationship to town centre. General variety of land use, building types, sizes, heights and scales. Urban type: Type 2 with some 5	Centred around the lively commercial parade of Bell Road which links directly to the High Street northwards. This area can be characterised as edge of centre and has a finer urban grain, is smaller in scale and not as busy as the town centre yet remains lively and provides a good mix of uses. Buildings are taller and bulkier than the surrounding, finer grained residential areas (Character Area M), with ranges from 2 to 5 storeys. More recent development, mostly residential, can also be seen.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
L 	Extreme uniformity of layout and grain, plot pattern, building period, types, size, heights and scale. Urban type: Type 2 and 1 with some 4	A predominantly residential area consisting of mainly small scale, narrow Victorian terraced homes with shallow front gardens set on long narrow blocks with long, regular, well enclosed streets. Larger Victorian 3 storey townhouses can also be found on a number of streets. Inwood Road functions as the spine to the area, running in a north-south direction with Inwood Park, a pleasant, large neighbourhood park and allotment gardens located to the east providing a green buffer to the railway line.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
			

Hounslow

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
M 	General uniformity of block pattern, plot pattern, building scale and size. Location and accessibility, set around Pears Road Urban type: Type 2 and 1 with some 4, 6 and 7	Located just off the High Street and bounded by the railway line to the south, this is a predominantly residential area with a mix of housing ages and types set around the long, slightly winding Pears Road, which forms the spine to the area and gives it sense of spatial coherence. Victorian, interwar and postwar housing is evident, set on a fine grain, walkable block pattern. A number of civic uses are located off Pears Road including a school, and allotment gardens abut the railway line next to the Council depot.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
N  	Extreme uniformity of period, land use, layout and structure, block and plot pattern, building type, scale, size and height. Urban type: Type 1 with some 2	This predominantly residential area is centred around St. Stephens Road, a wide street lined with mature lime trees that runs north to south, punctuated by St Stephen's Church which functions as a local landmark. Late Victorian detached and semi-detached homes with large, often densely planted front gardens dominate with some interwar homes intermixed. There is a rich variety in the material palette used, giving visual interest in the street scene combined with an overall strong spatial coherence.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
O 	Extreme uniformity of block size, street layout and structure, plot pattern, building type, size, scale and materials. Urban type: Type 2	A variety of large interwar semi-detached and short terraces of four homes set around large sweeping crescents and gardens of which Central Avenue forms the spatial spine to the area. Plots are wide and long, occupying large blocks which reduce pedestrian permeability. They have large front and back gardens giving a generous, suburban but not particularly leafy character to the area. Most houses have hipped roofs with large projecting bays and large chimney stacks. Streets are long and fairly wide, but mostly not tree-lined.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
P		Extreme uniformity of plot pattern, period, density, scale, size and height. Urban type: Type 1	Predominantly more compact, dense Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing (compared to Character Area O) clustered along and off the principal and lively Whitton Road with its small scale retail and commerce and where a Victorian pub stands proudly on the corner acting as a local landmark. As you move away from Whitton Road, along the side streets the denser Victorian type changes to the wider, less compact interwar type with its larger blocks, wider plots and larger houses.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Q		Extreme uniformity of layout, block and plot pattern, building period, size, scale and materials Urban type: Type 2 with some 4	This suburban residential area is defined by its mixture of large interwar semi-detached and detached homes occupying wide, deep plots with generous front and back gardens. There are distinctive streets consisting of single storey detached houses with dormers. Streets are wide, with sporadic tree planting and boundary treatment of low brick walls and hedges. Many of the houses have parking on plot.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
R		Extreme uniformity of layout and structure, land use, building type, size, scale and height. Urban type: Type 4	This residential enclave consists of red brick houses either in semi-detached or groups of four or six units set on a series of short cul-de-sacs. The houses turn their back to Hall Road unlike their older interwar neighbours, with high fences abutting onto the pavement. Internally, houses seem randomly grouped in blocks and are orientated in many different directions. Setbacks are large and front boundaries are poorly defined.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
S		Extreme uniformity of layout, structure, building scale and size. Urban type: Type 4	With a spatial structure similar to Character Area R, these homes are set back from the main street of Whitton Dene. Houses turn their sides or backs to this street and high fences abut the pavement. Houses are in groups of four or short terraces, orientated away from the street and towards internal green spaces. In two distinct styles, either red brick with porches or weather board clad in a mock-regency style.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

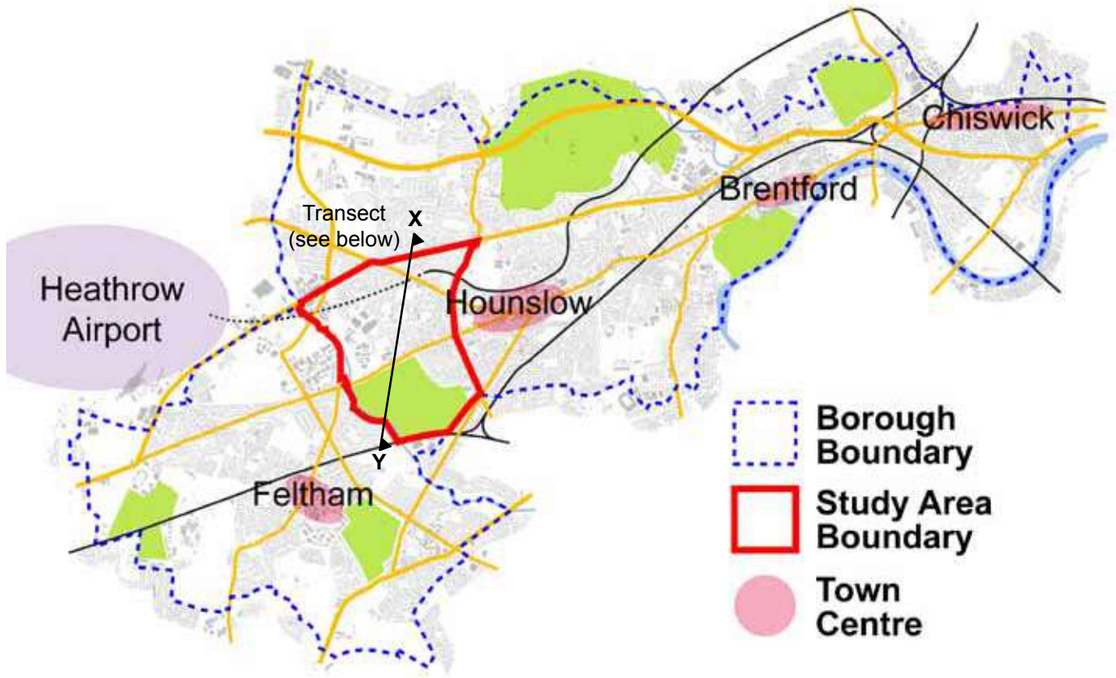


Hounslow West

3

Hounslow West

present day context



Hounslow West sits almost centrally in the borough flanked by Bath Road and Staines Road, which were the two diverging coaching roads from Hounslow and remain the principal routes to this day. Hounslow West underground station is located in the northeastern part of the study area, about half way along Bath Road. Hounslow town centre is about 1 kilometre east of Hounslow West along Bath Road. The large expanse of Hounslow Heath occupies the southwestern portion of the area, with access on Staines Road.

The study area is relatively flat, sloping gently downhill southeastwards to the Thames following the River Crane. The River Crane forms the area's western edge, taking in Hounslow Heath on its way.

Dominated by Hounslow Heath and the Cavalry Barracks, Hounslow West is defined by its relationship to neighbouring Hounslow, Bath Road and the High Street. It has for centuries only really existed as the location of the Barracks, evidenced by the fact that the original name for the train station was Hounslow Barracks.

The busy Staines Road and Bath Road cross through the area giving it two distinct feels: one of bustling activity and the other of quieter residential streets that are only one turn off these busy main routes.

The distinction between Hounslow and Hounslow West is subtle and many might not appreciate any changes in character. Having said that, the cluster of restaurants, shops and cafes in and around Hounslow West tube station has a distinct character which is different to the busier and more built-up Hounslow to the east.

There are a number of housing estates, nearly all built pre-WWII or post-WWII which share many similar characteristics yet have subtle differences in style, material or detail. These residential estates now constitute much of modern Hounslow West and give it its suburban character.

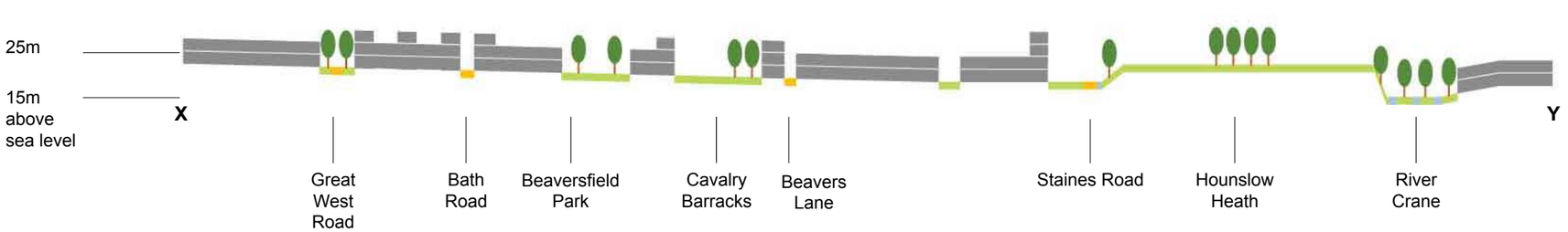


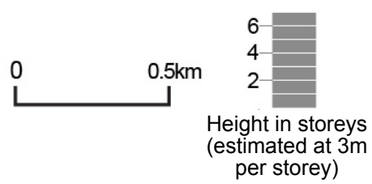
Shops, cafes and restaurants line this busy section of the Bath Road opposite Hounslow West underground station



Typical local pub and restaurant in large free-standing inter-war building on major road

Title page photo: The interwar Moderne-style Underground station





Hounslow West

historic context

Hounslow West evolved between the Roman Road and the later Bath Road for travellers to the south west. In 18th century maps Staines (Roman) Road is described as the Great Western Road leading to Salisbury. The Bath Road was shown as leading to Maidenhead and Reading. Both had become important C17th and C18th coaching routes as they radiated out from Hounslow across Hounslow Heath. This was a large area of lonely heath land covering some 1,600 hectares at its peak.

The military importance of the area related to the wide open spaces following deforestation in the mid C13th and the strategic relationship between London, Windsor and Hampton Court. The slightly raised, dryer ground west of Hounslow enabled hunting and large scale training exercises, especially for cavalry and encampment. It was notably used by Cromwell at the end of the Civil War (1647). General Roy was able to set out the base-line for triangulating what became the Ordnance Survey, in 1794, across the Heath.

Halfway between the two roads is the site of the Cavalry Barracks, from 1793 and in part responding to threats of Napoleonic invasions. To the south of the barracks, Hounslow Heath remained open as far as the earlier C16th millstream and reservoirs alongside the river Crane, and the Hounslow gunpowder mills, now outside the borough boundary. The main approach to the Barracks is from the Roman Road, facing south towards the Heath.

The Heath between Staines Road and Hanworth Road along the southern edge (partly outside the borough) was not enclosed in 1818 but passed to the War Office as a Military Exercise Review Ground. The south-west corner of the ground was cut off by the railway line to Windsor via Feltham in 1850. Very little development occurred until after WWI apart from a cluster (pubs, chapel, villas and stables) around the access road junctions. By 1865 this was mapped as Barracks Road, with Barracks Lane (now Martindale Road) leading down from the north past a small school. A road from Beavers Farm ran around the south wall of the barracks, and

Along the Bath Road intermittent groups of early Victorian (or older) housing appeared; St Pauls Church was built in 1874 between large villas and a street-edging terrace. The Metropolitan District Railway arrived and Hounslow Barracks station was built on Bath Road in 1884 between the church and barracks lane. Further east the enclosed land was grid-infilled along Wellington Road (and Cromwell Road, in the Hounslow study area).

The station was reconstructed as Hounslow West in 1925. In conjunction with suburban infill of the 1930s the station formed a community focus, with a bank, a post office, a pub and shops, and for a while a cinema. In the 1970s the line was extended further west to Hatton Cross and ultimately to Heathrow Airport.

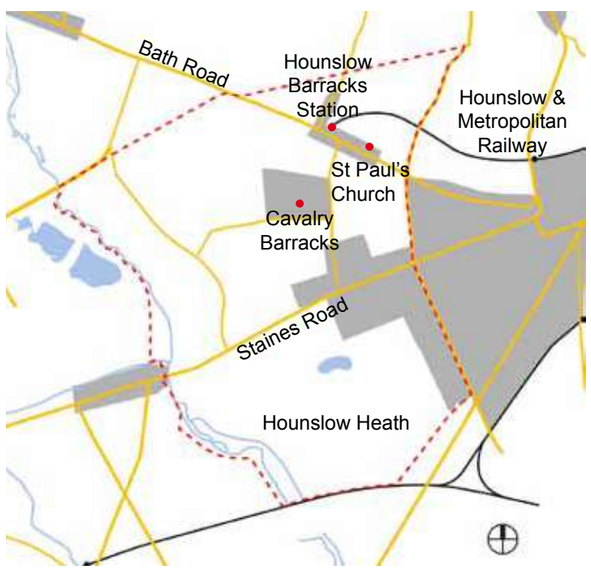


Hounslow Barracks HQ building, 1870

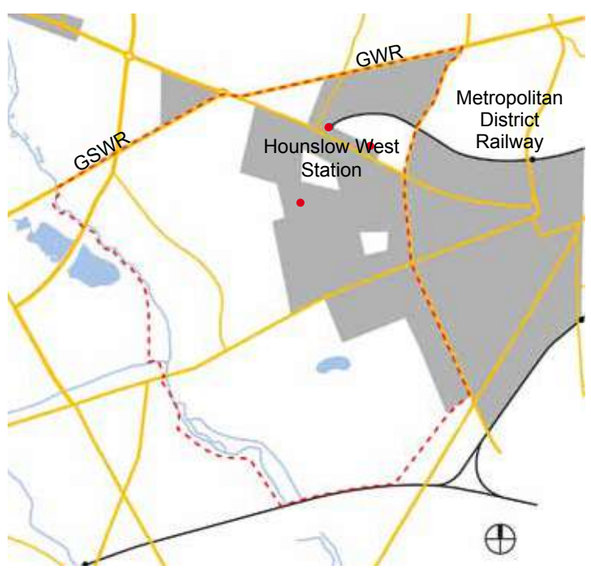


Garden Suburb-style estate off Great West Road, mid 20th century

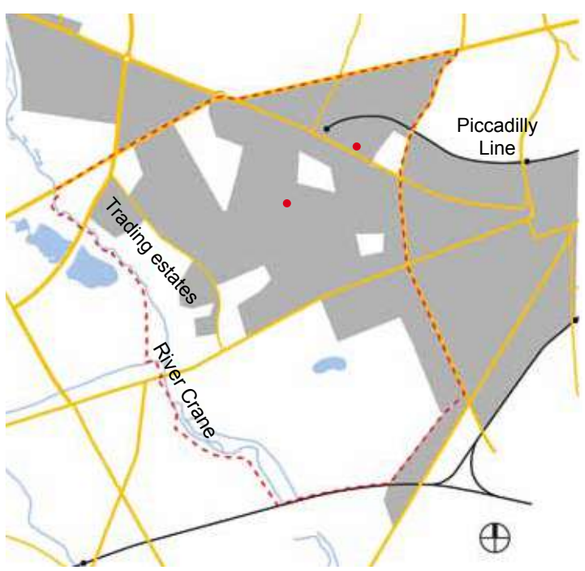
c1920



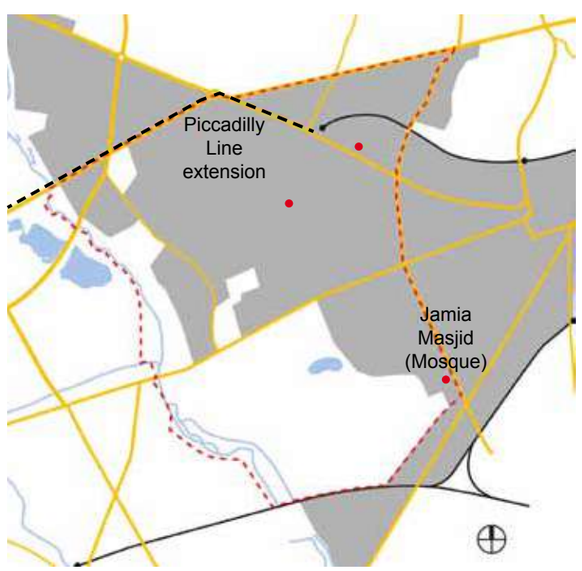
c1935



c1965



c2010



Hounslow West

land and building use



Retail
Commercial
Local Centre
Town Centre
Community
Green Open Space
Neighbourhood Centre
Opportunity Site

Hounslow West is largely residential in the north and southeast with large expanses of open space in the southwest and west where Hounslow Heath and the River Crane lies.

The majority of non-residential uses lie along the principal thoroughfares of Bath Road and Staines Road which were the original two toll roads from Hounslow travelling westward. The Bath Road is full of variety, lined by a mixture of residential and concentrations of retail and commerce, in and around the junction with Wellington Road North, Sutton Lane, Vicarage Farm Road and Hounslow West underground station. It is worth noting that retail only ever lines one side of the road at any one time. The residential mix includes blocks of flats, larger town houses and smaller two storey detached and semi-detached houses from a range of periods and styles. St Paul's Church provides a consistent visual landmark along Bath Road, its spire elegantly rising above the two-three storey buildings. Staines Road has a similar land use pattern to Bath Road but has a less physical and visual coherent character. Mixed use junctions/small linear parades are evident along Staines Road, at Wellington Road North for example where a mix of shops, pubs and commerce mark the crossing of two busy routes. However some of the historic pubs are shut/boarded up showing the changing demands in the area. Conversion to chain supermarkets is becoming commonplace.

There is a large concentration of business and industrial uses in the western half of Hounslow West, along and off Green Lane. This low rise, large footprint mix of offices and warehouses is interspersed with large open spaces giving a sparse, undefined and shapeless form and character to this stretch of Hounslow West.

There are a number of small local centres located within the residential estates, providing important local convenience in the form of a corner shop, public house, pharmacy etc. More of these exist in the higher density, more compact late Victorian and Edwardian housing in and around Martindale Road.

Much of the civic and community uses are located outside of Hounslow West in larger, more established areas such as Hounslow and Heston. There are however a number of primary schools, including Hounslow Heath Junior School and the Heathland Secondary School with its sports pitches and fields, located in the far south-eastern corner.

A major feature of the area as has been noted in the history section is Hounslow Barracks. Sitting centrally along Beavers Lane, it holds a prominent position and has a strong physical, visual and social presence in the area with associated army housing nearby.


Shops, cafes and restaurants along the lively Bath Road


The Barracks have dominated the centre of Hounslow West for centuries

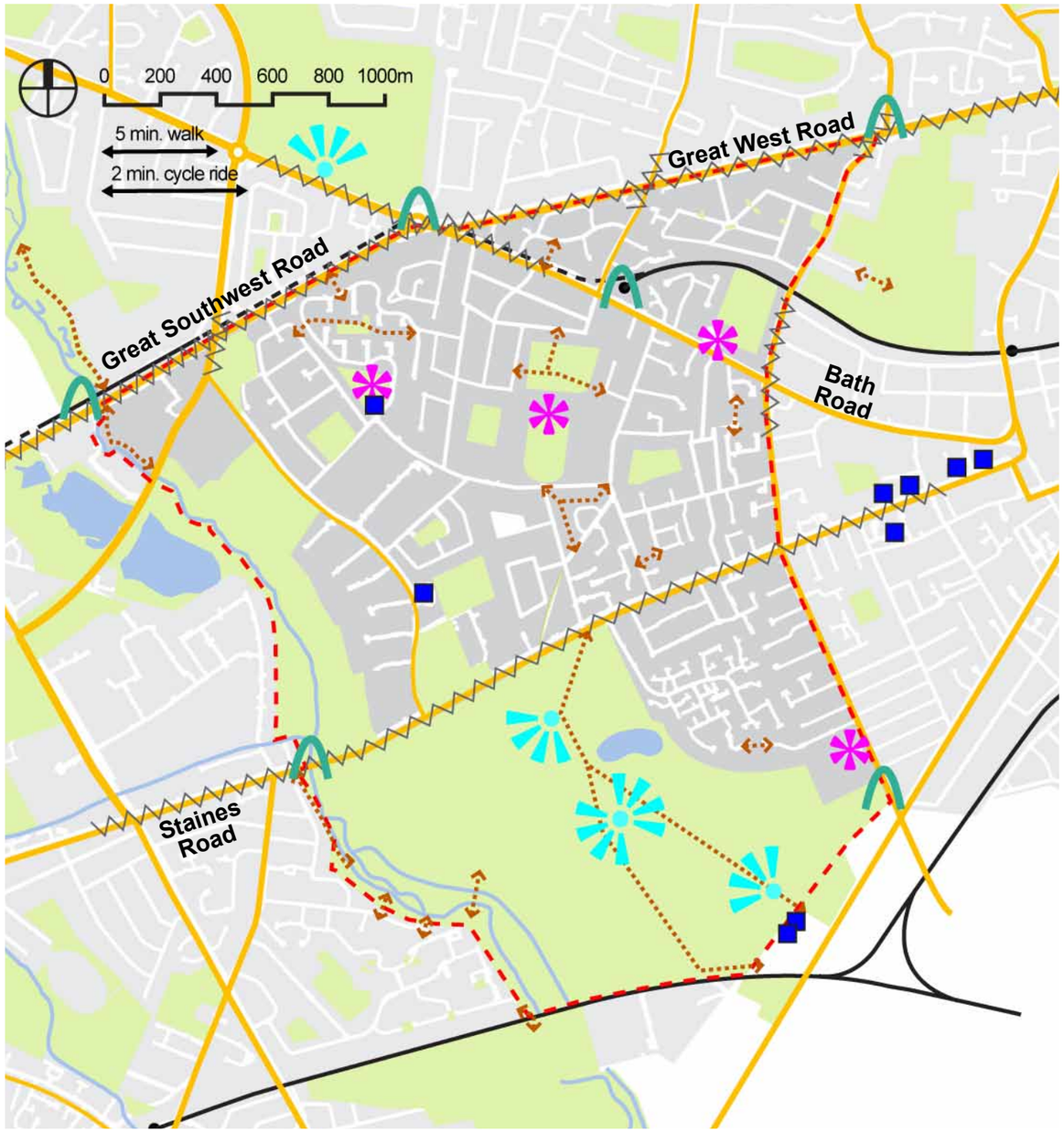

A variety of businesses along Staines Road


The Duke of York pub on Martindale Road


Hounslow Heath Junior School can be seen in distance surrounded by housing

Hounslow West

movement & legibility





Hounslow West was historically a place to pass through, with the two coaching roads (Bath Road and Staines Road) crossing the area from Hounslow. These east-west routes still provide the overall urban structure to the area, with smaller, more local streets connecting to them, ensuring that no one is much more than 800m from them. As they play such an important role, their quality, treatment and design is therefore critically important for the overall enjoyment of Hounslow West. Bath Road is more attractive, visually and physically coherent, less traffic-dominated and provides a much better pedestrian experience than Staines Road, its southern neighbour. Key north-south movement routes include Sutton Lane, Wellington Road, Green Lane, Vicarage Farm Road These are historic routes used to link settlements and market gardens but now connect residential areas. Sutton Lane/ Wellington Road is the most important and connected north-south street as it runs from Norwood and Heston in the north to Whitton and Twickenham in the south.

Walking around the area is easier and more enjoyable in the north-eastern and central parts of Hounslow West. The street network is well-connected with some activity and well-enclosed by houses with front doors onto the street. Martindale Road is a good example of such a street, as are parts of Beavers Lane.

Public transport provision can be described as adequate, though residents in the south are more than 20 minute walk from Hounslow West station. This is exacerbated by the poorly connected street pattern found in this area. Thee station, which sits fronting onto Bath Road, is very much a local landmark, with its distinctive tall heptagonal ticket hall and Art Deco style. The station was built in the late 1920s, replacing the former Hounslow Barracks station. This is the only railway station in the area, with buses being the only other public transport option. Buses largely run along Bath Road and Staines Road, providing transport to Hounslow, Osterley and Chiswick where more public transport options are available.

There are a number of important views including, the spire of St Paul's, open views of Hounslow Heath, the minaret of the Jamia Masjid mosque and the dominant bulk of the Vista Business Centre. There are a couple of tall buildings, one a residential tower and the another an office. However, as both are in locations which do not need marking by a tall building, the resulting views can disorientate ones sense of location. Around Hounslow West station is the most important gateway to the area as well as being a key activity node, and much more could be done to improve the public realm quality, making a civic square to celebrate this area.



A major barrier to pedestrian movement - the Great West Road



Hostile-looking footpaths in poorly arranged housing estates



The spire of St Paul's Church provides a constant reference point along Bath Road



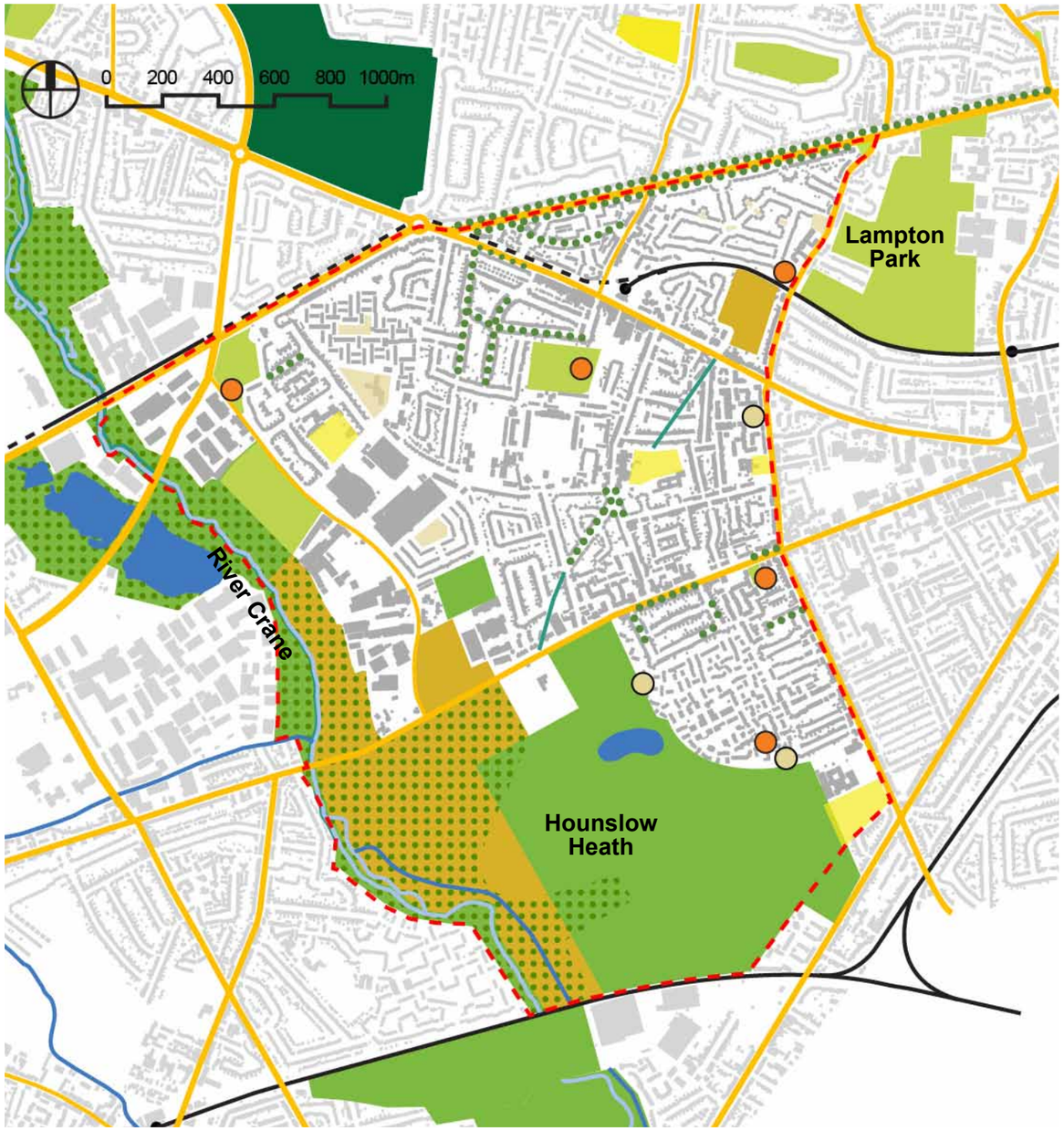
An inhospitable, traffic dominated gateway to the area at junction of Bath Road



The dominant backdrop of the Vista Business Centre from Marnel Way

Hounslow West

green and blue landscape



Public gardens
Parks & playing fields
Natural & semi-natural urban green spaces
Green corridors
School playing fields
Outdoor sports facilities
Amenity spaces
Cemeteries & churchyards
Accessible countryside (green-belt)
Allotments, community gardens & urban/city farms
Children's & teenagers' play areas
Rivers, natural water bodies
Canals, man-made water bodies
Wooded areas
Street trees

Hounslow West benefits from having Hounslow Heath on its doorstep, 80ha of a wide variety of habitats, including heath, meadow and wetlands. It once would have covered West Hounslow, when it was 1,600ha in size. Now it provides a unique wildlife habitat as well as a leisure and educational role for Londoners wishing to escape city life for a while.

The River Crane runs along the western edge of Hounslow West and passes under Staines Road, at a point where Staines Road feels like a busy village lane with overhanging vegetation flanking either side. The river forms a key part of the natural landscape that includes Hounslow Heath and on very few occasions does human activity/ development interfere with this valuable ecosystem. However, much of this wild landscape is inaccessible and/or very difficult to navigate, being sandwiched between warehouses, industrial units and the busy A30, A312, Staines Road and the eastern side of Heathrow. There are stretches of this unique woodland habitat that transport you back to how the whole area used to be before the suburban developments arrived.

Beaversfield Park provides an excellent neighbourhood park for Hounslow West and provides for a wide range of activities. Accessible from three directions, Rosemary Avenue, Ivanhoe Road and Ravensdale Road, it is well connected into its surrounds and is well used and loved as a result. Another large park, located to serve the communities in the northwest of the area, abuts onto Chester Road and is mainly an open field with a children's playground. There is also a large pleasant open space located at the junction of Staines Road and Green Lane, bordered with closely planted, mature trees giving a strong sense of enclosure.

Some of the housing estates are characterised by their green landscape, street trees, grass verges and small greens. Of particular note are the estates around Renfrew Road, Moulton Avenue and further south around Manor Avenue. Some estates, particularly in the western side have under-used, poorly defined or looked after amenity space, and much more could be made of these spaces for the local residents' enjoyment. There is some consistent, pleasant street tree planting in and around Corporation Avenue which also benefits from a long, linear green corridor, though access appears to be restricted.

There are no allotments in the area. There is a large bowling green located just north of St Paul's Church by the railway line. Hounslow Heath golf course is located just north of Staines Road adjacent to an industrial estate.


Wide open landscape of Hounslow Heath


Densely planted trees and shrubs buffering the housing from the Bath Road traffic

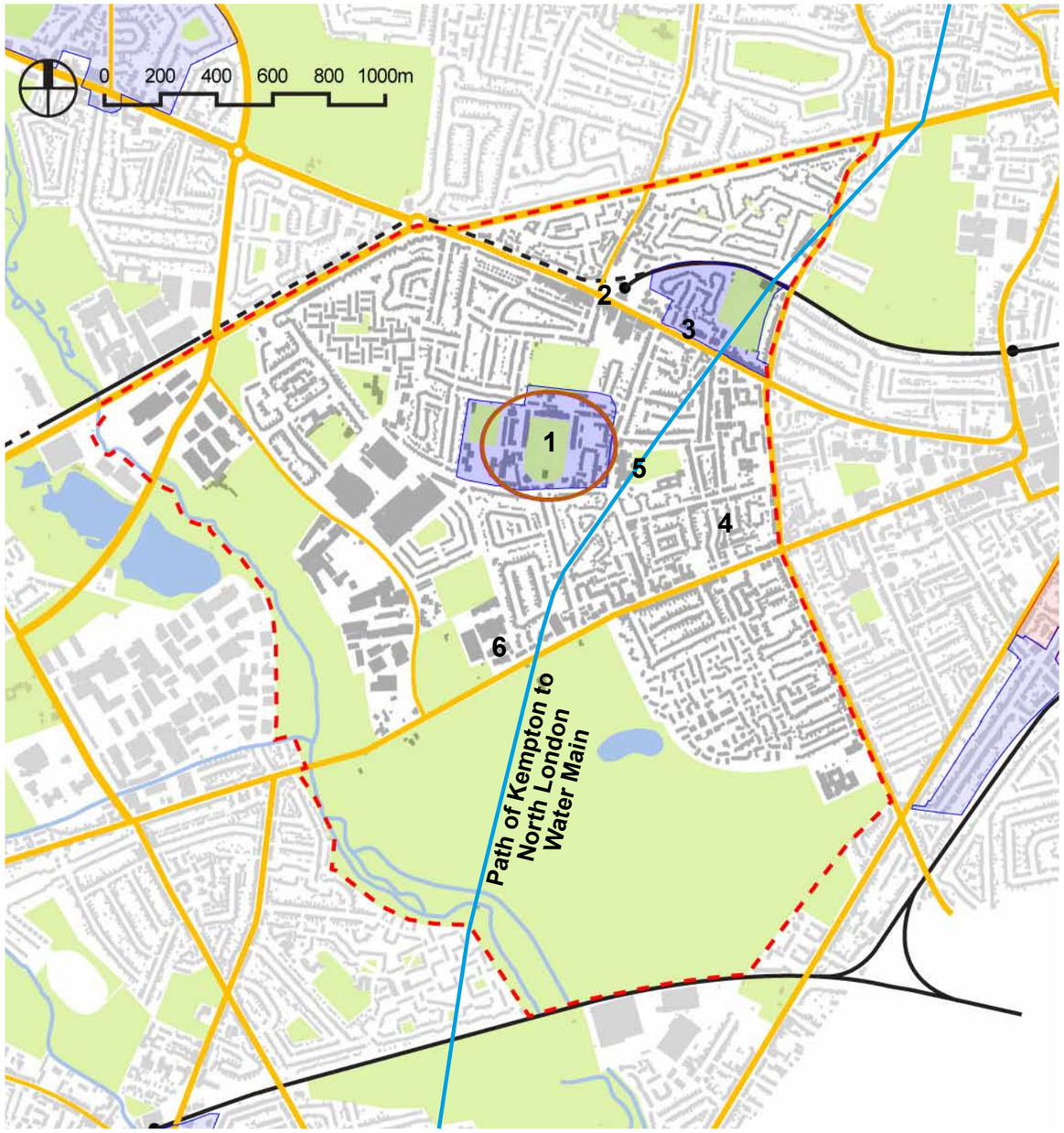

Beaversfield Park - a garden and park for the residents of Hounslow West


The River Crane which passes through the area - a great place for flora and fauna


A fenced-off linear green space just off Barrack Road, path of old water main

Hounslow West

heritage assets



Conservation Area

Area of Special Character

Listed Building Cluster

The Heath and roads as route networks were the reason for constructing the Cavalry Barracks [1]: on the south side a milestone (11 Hyde Park corner / 6 Staines) near Barrack Road, and a boundary stone to the west of that are now listed. Barracks as permanent buildings was a relatively new concept at the time; comprising a walled enclave, this is now a conservation area, containing 13 listed buildings and at least 12 more units of other mess and domestic accommodation. A parade ground is the focus of the original core together with officers quarters (extended), stable and dormitory ranges, former hospital and coach houses. These were augmented during the C19th with a chapel, married quarters, barracks for officers, Barrack Master's house, hospital, Naafi and armoury. Buildings are in local brown brick and classical in style. Many buildings were refurbished and adapted, and new barracks were built, between 2007 and 2013.

The strategic importance has made the Barracks itself formative. Access to the expanded Cavalry Barracks brought the railway further west and, to the south along Staines (Roman) Road, the tramway from Shepherds Bush terminated just west of Barrack Road in 1901. Relics and fragments of the early station building are still to be found within Charles Holden's 1925 station [2], one of his great Piccadilly Line listed buildings.

St Paul's Church [3] (1874) was designed by Habershon and Pite as a landmark in Gothic style and gives the impression of an older settlement. With a large open green area to the north and a later enclave of houses this forms a second conservation area. Due to the width of the Bath Road and heavy traffic, the conservation area cannot encompass the many characteristically simple late Georgian cottages in brown local brick on the opposite side or further along Bath Road.

Growth naturally occurred westwards out of Hounslow, so most of the older infill is around Bath Road, Staines Road, Sutton Lane, Wellington Road, Standard Road and Martindale Road [4]. East of the Barracks and south of St Paul's, early infill might be considered to be of special character value, including compact, well-enclosed and humanly scaled townscape. In and around Standard Road and Martindale Road: late Victorian, Edwardian and early interwar townscape. Standard Road and Clare Road offer particularly well intact streetscapes, with their narrow, deep plots, 4-5 metre house widths, shallow front gardens, low boundary brick walls and their firewall parapets and chimney stacks. These areas are worth mentioning for their street scale and size, long, rectangular block sizes and walkable layout with intersecting streets at around 150 metre intervals. Hounslow Heath Infant School [5], which has been on that site since the late 1890's, should be considered for local listing. On the southern end Edwardian terraced homes retain their elaborately detailed bay windows, recessed doorways and ground floor render. Eaton House [6] on Staines Road is an elegant 3 storey 1930s brick office building, recently refurbished for use by the Home Office.

The path of the early C20th Kempton to North London water main appears as a disjointed series of sometimes fenced linear open spaces and occasional utility structures.



The Barracks as seen from Beavers Lane



St Paul's conservation area with the church spire as the focal point.



The Duke of York pub on Martindale Road acts as a local reference point and landmark



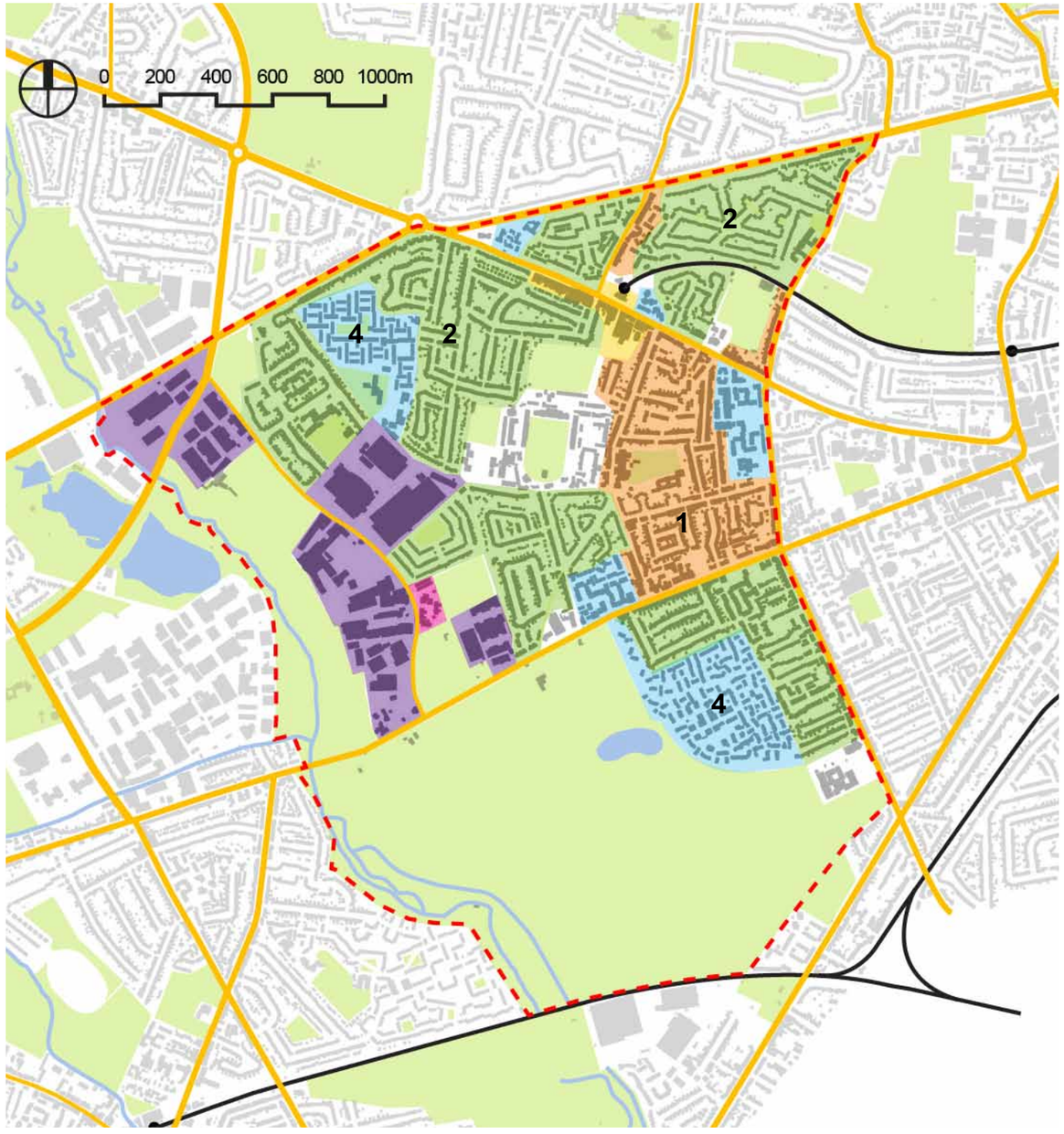
Elegantly proportioned Edwardian terraced housing on Martindale Road



1930s Eaton House on Staines Road

Hounslow West

urban types



Urban type 1 - compact grid
Urban type 2 - loose grid
Urban type 3 - slabs and towers
Urban type 4 - courts and cul-de-sacs
Urban type 5 - urban renaissance
Urban type 6 - big box
Urban type 7 - urban centre
Atypical (not representative of an above type)

The most dominant urban types by area within the Hounslow West study area are the inter- and early postwar loose grid (type 2) followed by the earlier compact grid (type 1) and the courts and cul-de-sacs (type 4) of the later postwar years and the 1980s. The latter appears in the form of infill and extension development. The exclusively commercial/retail big box (type 6) appears on the western fringes by the River Crane.

The earlier types (1, 2 and, to an extent, 3) are chronologically located roughly concentrically outward from the urban centre, with the other largely residential later types occupying mostly infill and comprehensive redevelopment sites across the study area but particularly around the edges of the sewage works and the hospital, a pattern which is likely to continue.

Hounslow West not surprisingly manifests typologically and morphologically as an extension of neighbouring Hounslow to the east.

For more information on general urban types found in the borough, including historical development, aspects of form and SWOT analyses, see Section 4: Urban Types.



Type 1



Type 2



Type 2



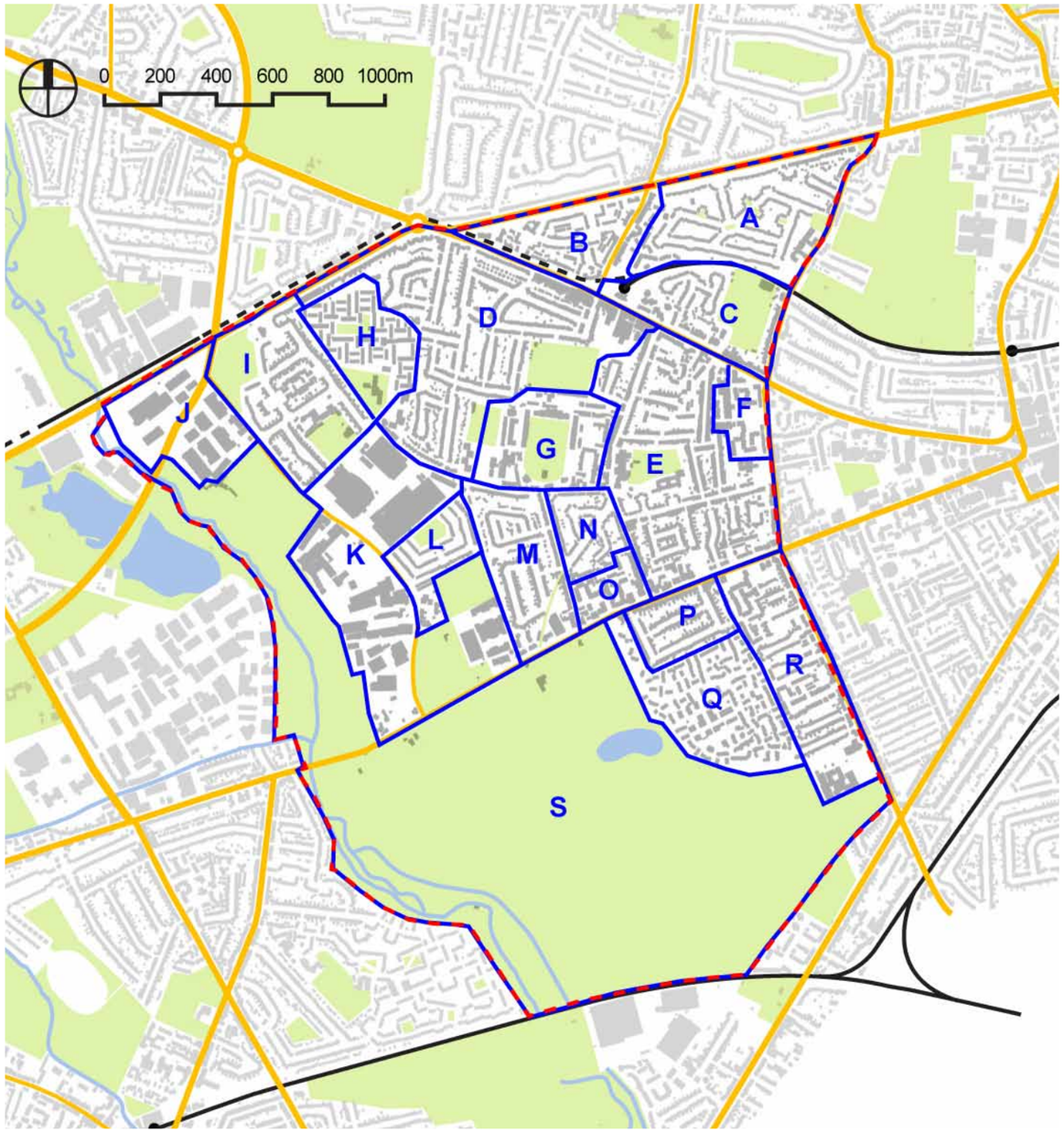
Type 4

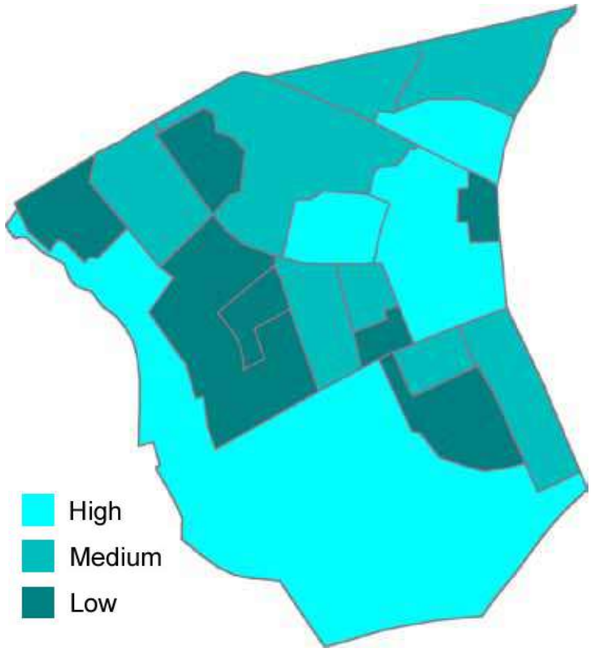


Type 4

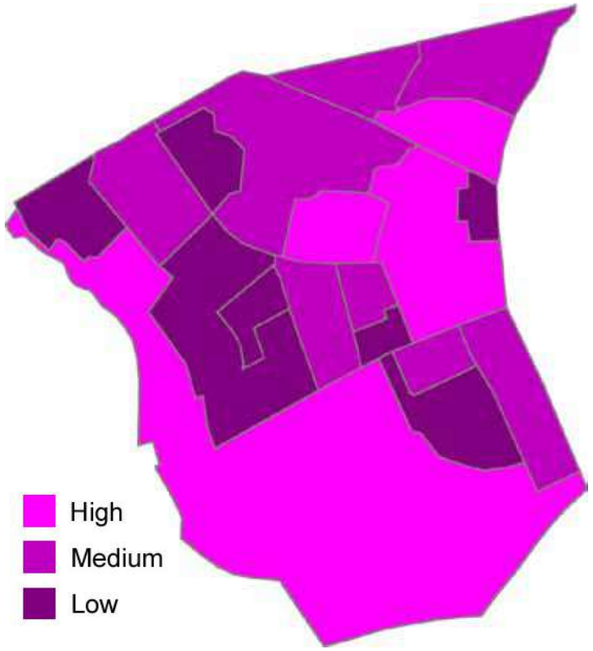
Hounslow West

character areas and assessments

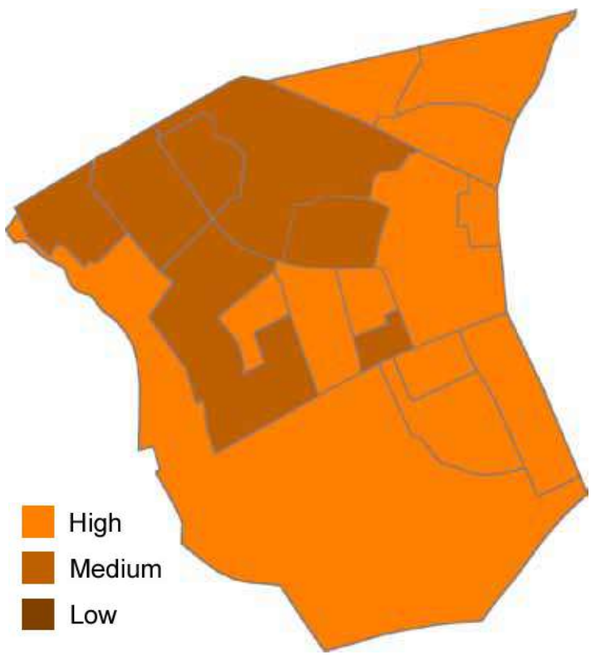




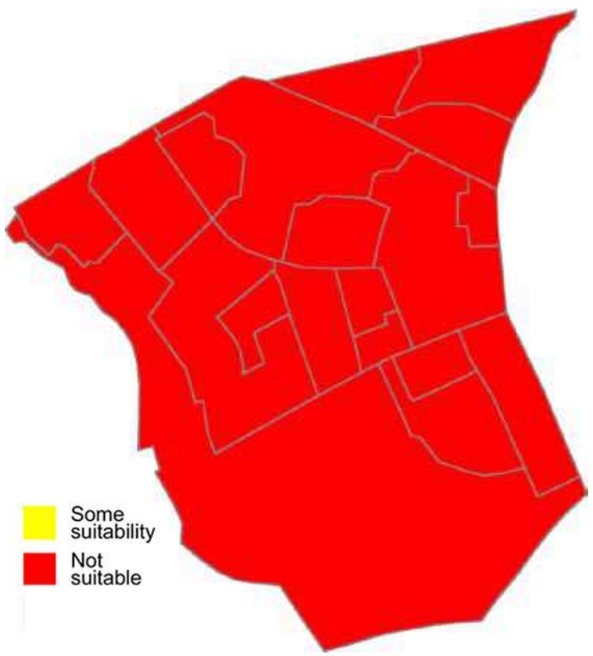
Design Quality



Sensitivity to change



Permanence



Suitability for tall buildings

A Character Area

For more information on characterisation and assessment see Section 1: Introduction - Methodology

Hounslow West

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
A 	General uniformity of location, accessibility, land use, layout, density, building size and scale, boundary treatment. Urban type: Type 2 with some 3	A residential area, bounded to the north by the Great West Road, to the east by Lampton Park, and the south by Underground line. This area consists largely of semi-detached and 4 unit terraces of early postwar housing with large back gardens set on a number of wide avenues radiating out from Moulton green space, garden suburb style. There are also small pockets of other types of housing along and off Sutton Lane. Harris Close differs the most from the prevailing pattern, consisting of 5-6 storey L-shaped slab blocks.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
B 	General uniformity of location, land use, layout, density, building type, parking treatment Urban type: Type 2 with some 4	Leafy, postwar semi-detached and short terraced housing set off the Great West Road. Characterised by its large grass verges, green spaces and dense shrub and tree planting, it has a garden suburb feel to it. Blocks are medium sized with internal parking courts with garages. Along the historic route of Vicarage Farm Road are stretches of Victorian terraces with their narrow, long plots which once formed a much longer street scene but is now intermixed with interwar houses and mansion blocks.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
C 	General uniformity of location, land use, layout, density, building type, parking treatment Urban type: Type 2 with some 1 and 4	This area is bounded by the Piccadilly Line to the north and Bath Road to the south. It is an architecturally rich area, as it features the iconic frontage of Hounslow West Station and St Paul's Church's elegant spire. There is variety along Bath Road, with its row of Victorian terraces with their ground floor shops and businesses and large detached homes set back behind leafy back gardens. Set back from Bath Road is a mixture of large, affluent, interwar semi-detached houses and 1980s apartment blocks set on a series of cul-de-sacs.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
D 	Extreme uniformity of layout, land use, building type, period and scale and size. Urban type: Type 2	This period and type of housing dominates much of Hounslow West. Consisting of a mixture of short terraced and semi-detached houses set on a regular perimeter block layout. There is some variety at the building scale with some houses having bay windows, projecting porches and gable ends. There is overall consistency in their size and scale, with most houses generally occupying medium to large plots, 6-7m wide with deep front and back gardens and setbacks deep enough to park a car.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hounslow West

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
E 	General uniformity of layout, accessibility, building type, size and scale, street width and enclosure and relationship to street. Urban type: Type1	This area has the greatest architectural and townscape variety of all. A residential area consisting of a mixture of Victorian and interwar housing set on narrow to medium wide streets, in a perimeter block layout of long, narrow blocks. House types vary from compact, narrow fronted Victorian and Edwardian terraces, many now rendered or pebble dashed with minimal setbacks to larger semi-detached and detached interwar houses with deeper setbacks often paved over for car parking. Larger houses and apartment blocks front onto Bath Road.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
F 	Extreme uniformity of layout, accessibility, building period and materials Urban type: Type 4	A modern, mixed, residential housing development, with car parking courts and set around a large area of green space. Disconnected from the streets that surround it, it is only accessible from either Bath Road in the north or Cambridge Road in the south. A mixture of terraced houses and apartments are arranged in L-shaped, T-shaped or linear blocks clustered around a series of courts, some with car parking. The materials are a modern version of the characteristic London Stock brick.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
G 	Land use, history, building period and location Urban type: Atypical	The Cavalry Barracks sits centrally in Hounslow West and has been present in this area since the late 18th century. It is the oldest built feature in the area, full of listed and locally listed buildings, and has a strong, wel-defined presence to this day. Encircled on its southern edge by a high brick wall with its entrance on Beavers Lane, its other edges back onto the back gardens of surrounding housing. The formal arrangement of the buildings around the parade ground are an defining characteristic and from Beavers Lane, it is possible to see the grand edifice of the Main Building.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
H 	Extreme uniformity of layout, building period, type and arrangement, materials and style. Urban type: Type 4	This area consists of irregularly laid-out concrete housing blocks built in the late 1960s. The layout ensures vehicles and pedestrians are segregated, with roads for cars and footpaths for pedestrians making moving around quite confusing unless you know the estate well. Buildings are constructed with fair faced concrete blocks detailed with white rendered indentations and window frames. Buildings are clustered in blocks of between four and six and heights range from two to four storeys with hipped roofs.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hounslow West

character area

defining characteristics & types

description

assessment

I





General uniformity of accessibility, land use, plot and block pattern, building type and period.

Urban type:
Type 2

Consisting of low density, postwar housing arranged within 5 blocks just off the Great West Road. Homes are detached, semi-detached and terraced with gable or mansard roofs with large front and back gardens. Residents have access to a large recreation space with a children's play area and Beavers Primary School.
A high density, infill residential development is currently being constructed with a mixture of housing types set around a central square.

Design Quality - Medium

Sensitivity to change - Medium

Permanence - Medium

Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

J



Extreme uniformity of layout, land use, building type.

Urban type:
Type 6

Located along and off the Causeway, these trading estates are accessed via the Great South West Road, the Causeway and Green Lane. The buildings are large footprint sheds with wide and high entrance doors for lorries to load/unload. Warehousing and distribution appears to be the primary activity, with a high volume of lorry traffic entering and exiting these estates. The estate buffers onto the edge of the River Crane and associated woodland. Some of the buildings are at a more human scale than is usual for such estates.

Design Quality - Low

Sensitivity to change - Low

Permanence - Medium

Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

K



Extreme uniformity of layout, land use, building type, scale and size, relationship to street.

Urban type:
Type 6

Comprised of a number of large business parks and industrial estates, including the Heathrow International Trading Estate, Heathrow Causeway Estate and Prologis Park. Buildings vary in size, from large to small footprints, mostly one to three storeys high and surrounded by large expanses of car parking. Buildings are set back far from the street and often have high perimeter fences, some with wide landscaped edges and dense shrub planting.

Design Quality - Low

Sensitivity to change - Low

Permanence - Medium

Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hounslow West

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
L		General uniformity of location, accessibility, building period, style and materials. Urban type: Type 2 with some 3	A physically and visually isolated residential area south of the barracks and sandwiched between business parks. Accessed from Green Lane or Beavers lane. Consisting of low density, postwar suburban semi-detached and terraced homes in the north laid out around a large green space. To the south is a thirteen storey tower block and three long apartment blocks of four storeys. Buildings are set back far from the street with little to no front boundary definition or treatment.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
M		General uniformity of layout, land use, building period, type, relationship to street, scale and size. Urban type: Type 2	This predominantly, low density residential area consists of two storey interwar housing set on cul-de-sacs just off Staines Road. The majority of houses are large, semi-detached with bay windows and generous front and back gardens. Many homes have been added to and adapted over the years, with prevalent front garden parking spaces. Larger scale office buildings and an apartment block face onto Staines Road with large setbacks and low boundary walls which reduce the attractiveness of the frontage.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
N		Extreme uniformity of layout, building type, setback, boundary treatment, materials, details including doorways. Urban type: Type 2	Similar to Character Area M but different in style and feel, this area consists of late interwar short terraced housing with interesting pitch doorways and hipped roofs. Homes are large with deep front gardens, which are mostly not paved over for car parking, adding to the leafy feel of the area. Streets are very wide with two storey houses resulting in low levels of enclosure, combined with wide gaps that exist between each terrace run. This opens up views and light to the back gardens and street.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
O		General uniformity of land use, layout, building period, scale, size. Urban type: Type 4	This area consists of a high density, mixed type, court-style housing estate. Set along and off Staines Road, it bounds the street with high brick walls, back end of garages and gardens. There are three internal access roads and many footpaths connecting up the various block entrances and houses. Blocks are arranged around car parking courts and grassed areas. A parade of shops and an old Victorian pub occupy the south-western corner and clearly front onto Staines Road in contrast to the other buildings.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hounslow West

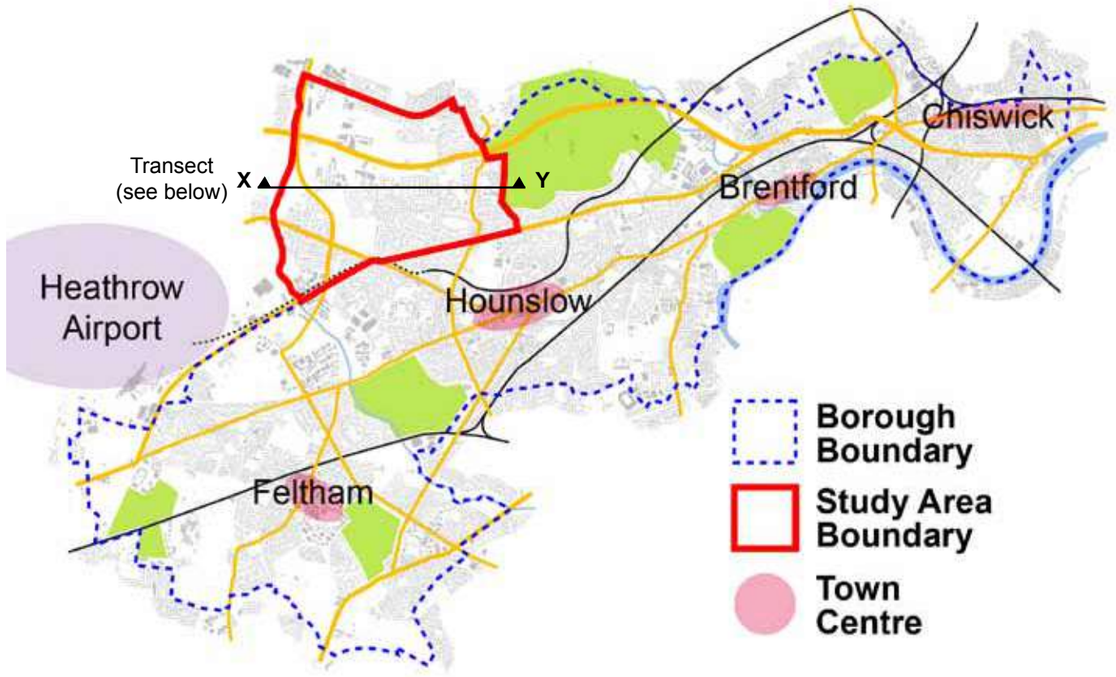
character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
P 	General uniformity of building type, period, size and scale. Urban type: Type 2	Consisting of two storey interwar housing set on irregularly tree planted streets along and just off Staines Road. Houses occupy large, deep, wide plots arranged on a rectangular perimeter block. Houses are predominantly semi-detached with a short run of terraces on Munster Avenue. Most houses are hipped roofed with bay windows and recessed or projecting porches. A parade of shops and businesses occupies the ground floor of an interwar block with flats above which front onto Staines Road.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Q 	General uniformity of location, accessibility, layout, building period, type and relationship to street. Urban type: Type 4	This large, mixed type, low density residential estate is laid out in a series of cul-de-sacs with only two access points from the surrounding main vehicular routes. Its layout consists of a series of small cul-de-sacs with buildings arranged irregularly around, on a number of different positions and orientations. There are a mixture of housing types including terraced, semi-detached and flats, with heights ranging from two to five storeys. The scale and size of houses is small and boxy, some with projecting porches. The use of red brick dominates with some cream coloured render treatment.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
R 	General uniformity of location, accessibility, layout, building type, size, scale and style. Urban type: Type 2	Predominantly large, interwar housing of various styles, arranged along and off Wellington Road with some Victorian terraced cottages along Wellington Road. Characterised by their close relationship and access to Wellington Road, these homes are laid out on east-west cul-de-sacs, with most homes orientated in a north-south direction. The more recent housing occupies smaller plots. Along Wellington Road and at the junction with Staines Road are a few shops, pubs and businesses providing local convenience.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
S 	General uniformity of use Large publicly accessible green open space Nature conservation area Green Belt Urban type: Atypical	Large expanse of open space bounded by Staines Road to the north, the River Crane to the west and residential areas to the south and east. Main access is from Staines Road where there is a car park. A golf course occupies much of the west side.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Cranford and Heston

3

Cranford and Heston

present day context



The study area of Cranford and Heston is located to north-west of the borough, with the London Borough of Ealing to the north and the London Borough of Hillingdon to the west. It is a relatively secluded and quiet part of the borough and still retains a feeling of remoteness reinforced by its limited accessibility.

Hounslow and Hounslow West sit to the south of Cranford and Heston with the Great West Road acting as the edge and divide. The eastern edge of Heston is lined by Osterley Park, behind St Leonard's Churchyard and Heston Community School.

There has long been a close association with aircraft in this area, which lives on in local street names such as Spitfire Way. Heston Aerodrome existed here from 1929 to 1947 until the larger Heathrow airport was built to the immediate west.

The area occupies the highest land in the borough, rising from 20m in the west to its peak of 30m around Heston.

The study area is bounded by the Grand Union Canal along its northern edge and the River Crane along its western edge. This river has shaped the historic development of the area significantly. More recently, so has the busy M4 motorway which splits the area in two.

Cranford and Heston, once two separate villages with quite different identities are now merged together with swathes of inter and postwar housing dissected by busy highways. Heston still retains much of its historical village centre, where St Leonard's Church still stands. Cranford does not quite have the same coherence to its historic centre as its neighbour.

The M4 passes through the area in an east-west direction, dividing it into two distinct parts. The northern half has two characters, a commercial one running alongside the M4 and a postwar residential one running alongside and off the canal and the eastern end. To the south of the M4 lie the historic centres of Cranford and Heston surrounded by inter and postwar housing with some more recent developments.

The area is poorly served by public transport contributing to its remote and secluded feel, with only buses directly serving the communities. Hounslow West tube station is around 1km to the south of the population centre of the area and Osterley Station around 2km eastwards. The busy highways have had a significant impact on the character and feel of Cranford and Heston. Bath Road, Parkway, Great West Road and Great South West Road have disrupted and disconnected the area and have more generally degraded the pedestrian environment. This contributes to the area feeling as though it is a place to pass through in a rush. The area is both acoustically and economically dominated by Heathrow Airport, which lies in close proximity to the west, with the flight path crossing the area generating a great deal of noise pollution.

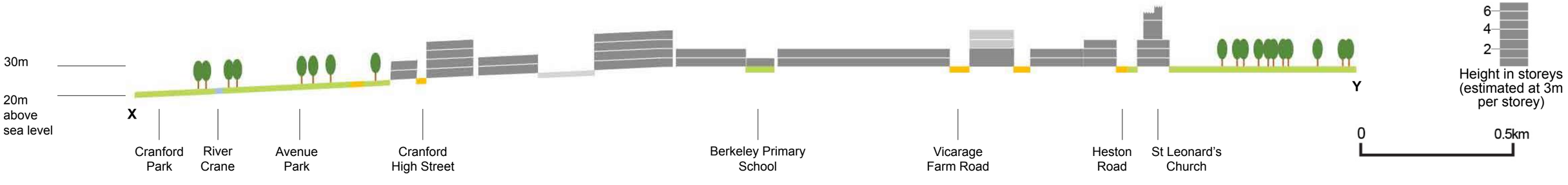


St Leonard's Church dates back to the 14th century and still stands as a focal point and landmark in the area today



The M4 traverses the north of the area, dividing it into two distinct parts

Title page photo: Heston Community School at the historic village centre



Cranford and Heston

historic context

Cranford and Heston have distinct, separate, settlement histories and administrative backgrounds, whilst being adjacent Saxon and medieval villages within Hounslow Heath, lying north of the Bath Road. Archaeology shows also the considerable pre-historic activity around Cranford.

Heston and Cranford were linked by way of a winding upland east-west lane. Heston lay at the northern tip of Isleworth Hundred and Cranford in the much larger Elthorne Hundred, together forming the northern edge of Hounslow Heath.

The River Crane, forming what is now the borough boundary, winds southward to be crossed by the Bath Road. The Cranford Bridge on Bath Road was rebuilt in 1776 and widened and strengthened in 1930. On the west side of the Crane Cranford House was the focus of the Park and the Manor area, with its church alongside. From the rectory all the way south to the back lane near Bath Road was farm land alongside the Crane.

Park Lane (Cranford Lane in 1865) appeared to divert nearly as far south as the Bath Road before its own bridge crossed the Crane into the borough; then after a short length as a back lane angled north east, here known as the ‘High Street’ although commercial activity followed the lower (Bath) road. Inns (one with Tudor remains), smithy and post office related to Bath Road. Some terraced houses but mostly larger properties in very large areas of land followed the High Street. The Avenue was presumably there before 1808 Avenue House on High Street, opposite its north end and a large pond. Cranford Lane with a pub on the corner then headed east to Heston, Tentlow (later Southall) Lane continued north to cross the 1769 canal. Little development other than a few workers terraces took place until well into the C20th. By 1934 there was a hall and a war memorial hall. The current church was constructed opposite The Avenue in the 1970s.

Heston long had a link with Isleworth: Osterley Park and Spring Grove lay within its Parish until the mid C19th. Heston was a village spread and formed along linking roads. The east end related strongly to open, high quality wheat lands around the emparked area of Osterley. The parish church of St Leonards, one of the founding medieval churches of the London Borough of Hounslow was established on the Osterley side of the lane from Lampton.

By the mid C17th, lanes and enclosed arable fields linked Lampton, Sutton and Heston, as they lay on the edge of the Heath. Lampton and Sutton disappeared under the A4 in 1925. In Heston, settlement concentrated at widespread junctions. St Leonard’s was also the apex of incoming roads: from Sutton,



Cranford High Street at junction with Cranford Lane, 1950s



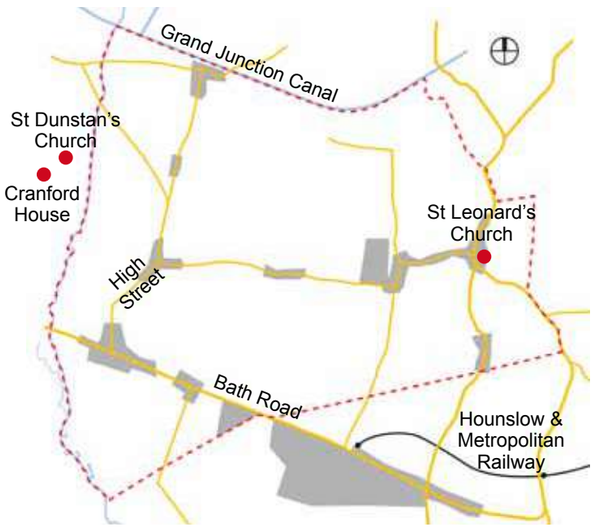
Heston Church from New Heston Road, 1907

and from Lampton and combined as the focus of early development, pubs ad community buildings. A second green formed further north next to the former Heston Farm, and gained its own later church as a focus.

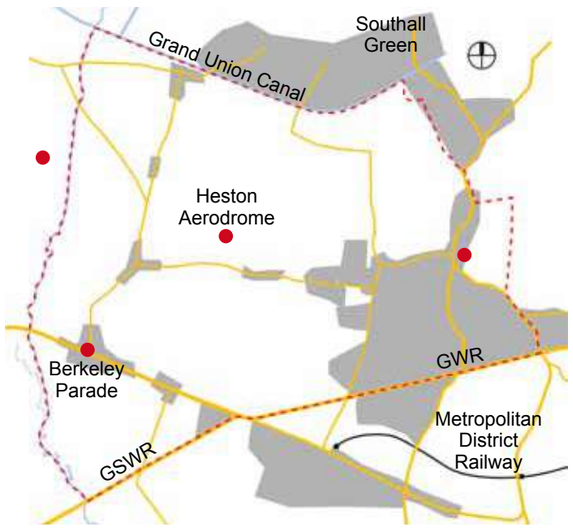
The canal of 1793, with tow-path and Grand Junction cut to Paddington on the north side, brought housing development to the Ealing side, not the open land to the south. North Hyde bridge to the west had gained a military village of barracks and support buildings by 1865. The canal edge as far as Hyde Lane bridge wasused for military purposes. This length was cleared for housing in 1936. To the south of this strip, land remained open, being used for Heston Airport from 1929 until after WW2. The area since has been the site of large industrial units.

The Parkway was built in 1959 as a bypass and this became a link to the 1960-64 motorway. Both had considerable impact on the area. Much of Heston was developed in the early 1930s and this extended westward towards Cranford later, which also became developed to the west and south of the Parkway.

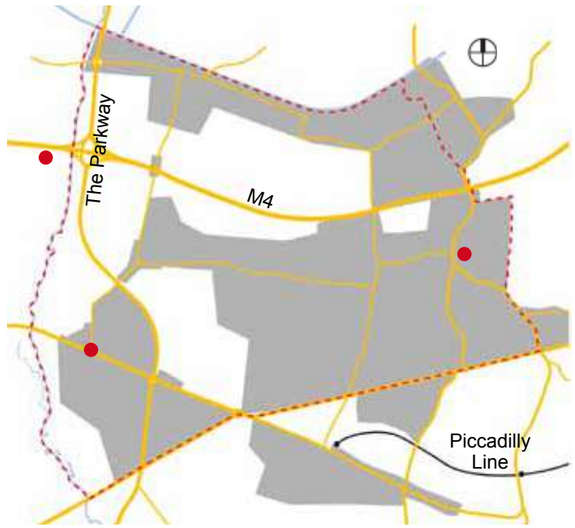
c1895



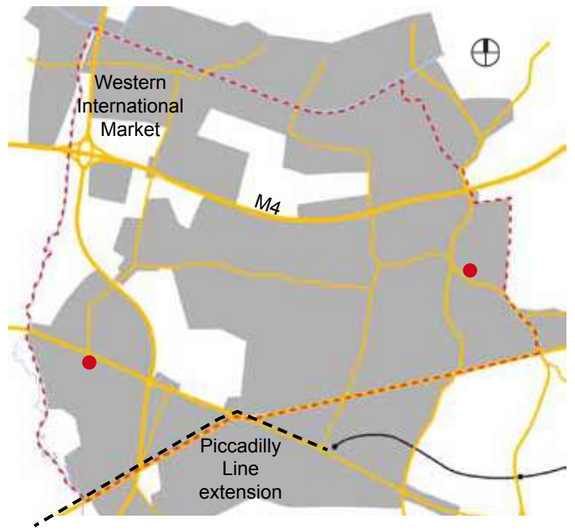
c1935



c1975

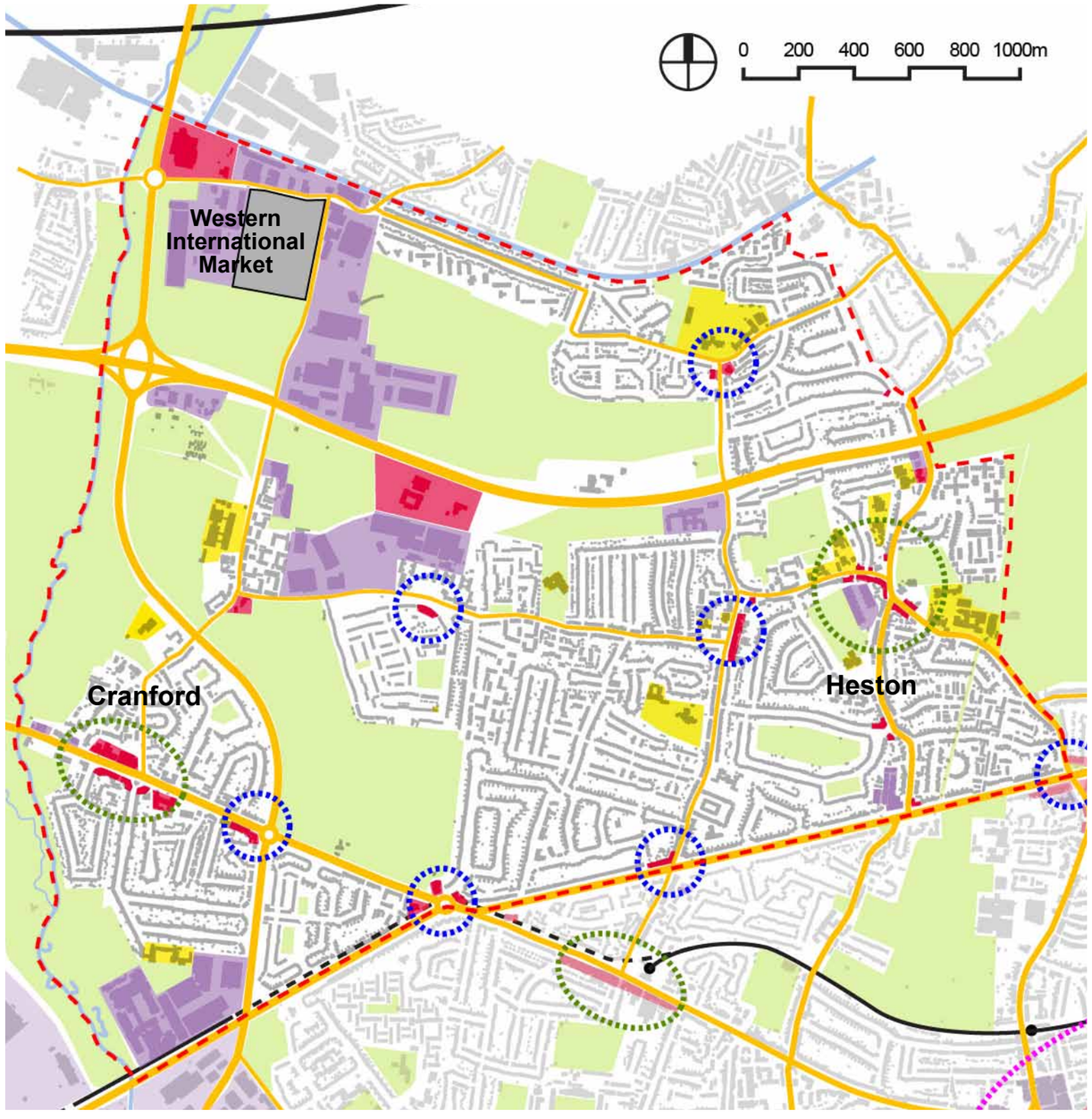


c2010



Cranford and Heston

land and building use



Cranford and Heston are both predominantly residential in use with much of the housing built during the interwar period and postwar period consisting mainly of two storey semi-detached or short run terraced properties on wide streets with grass verges and planting.

The historic cores of Heston Lane and Cranford High Street are denser and tighter in form with buildings providing a good level of street enclosure, more mixed in use with shops, business and civic uses clustered with a mixture of housing from small Victorian terraces to larger detached homes set back from the street.

Cranford High Street no longer really functions as a high street, with most activity occurring on the Bath Road where there are a number of hotels, shops, cafes, businesses and also Cranford Library. However, due to the heavy traffic of the Bath Road it fails to provide a heart to the area and is not a pleasant space to spend much time.

This is in contrast to Heston where there is a clear centre and focal point in and around Heston Road, New Heston Road and Church Road. There exists a varied collection of shops including a few pubs, library and a church, which all cluster in and around the memorial gardens, which is a delightful public space to stop and pass the time of day set against the backdrop of St Leonards.

The M4 has had a significant impact on the area, with new businesses and service stations setting up alongside, particularly on the northern side. They are low, large footprint buildings with plenty of car parking taking up a large amount of space. A leisure centre and golf course are located here too. To the eastern end there is a large school surrounded by postwar suburban semi-detached housing in a variety of styles set on some pleasant tree-lined streets with a number of wide grass verges/linear green spaces.

Large areas of open space remain and cover much of Heston and particularly Cranford. These vary in type, function and quality and overall add to the rural village feel that defines a good deal of this area.

There are a number of schools and community facilities in the area with Heston Community College standing out for its elegant Victorian and interwar architecture.



Businesses that line off the M4 corridor



Retail parade with flats above in Heston



Small scale shops, cafes and businesses that line parts of Bath Road



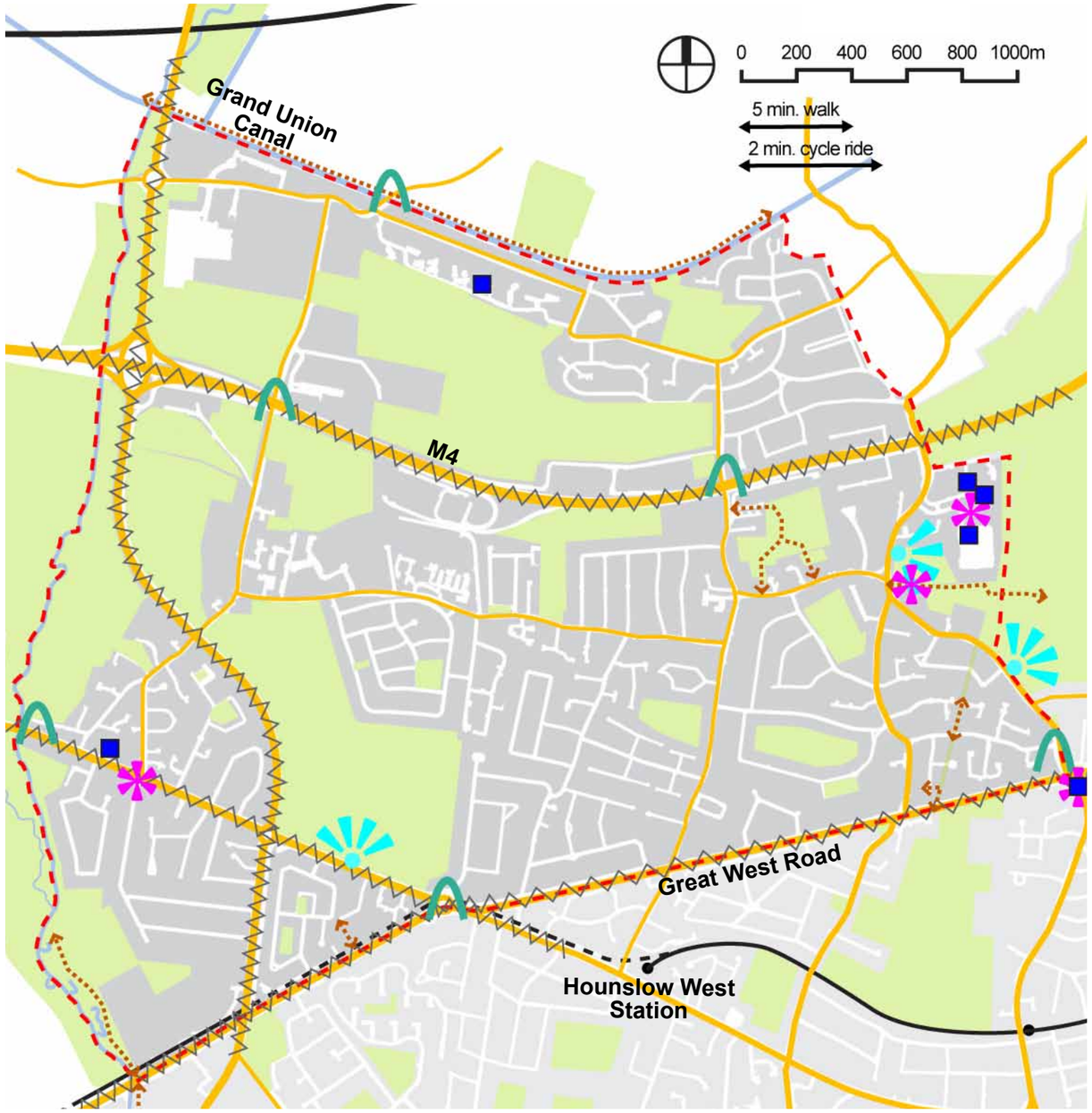
Victorian cottage set back off Cranford High Street adding to a rural charm



Cranford Community College set back off Cranford High Street

Cranford and Heston

movement & legibility





This is an area of stark contrasts in terms of ease of movement. On the whole, distances to local shops and services are too great (over 800m or more than 10 minutes walk) and public transport is limited. This is caused and exacerbated by the low density, suburban character of the area which caters and relies upon the car. Both Cranford and Heston have grown from villages, with nearly all this growth arising post-1920 (due to the Great West Road being built) on former market garden land. This growth has not sought to make optimum use of land and has made it difficult to make public transport viable.

Its local street network is on the whole well connected, permeable and easy to navigate. The area is well served by main roads, including the M4, A4, A30, A312. However these roads function as traffic dominated highways inhibiting and impeding pedestrian movement both along and across. The general pedestrian environment is poor, unwelcome and uncomfortable with few crossing points and with traffic travelling at considerable speed. The Parkway has cut Cranford in two, severing the high street into two sections, and along many sections there is not even a pavement for pedestrians.

The M4 was built in 1964 which dramatically changed the look and feel of the area, as well as increasing traffic and limiting pedestrian movement north to south. Two crossing points exist in the area, both offering a poor pedestrian environment. Public transport in the area is limited and the general PTAL rating is low. There are no mainline or underground stations in this area, the closest being Hounslow West 400m from the southern edge of study area. Buses serve the area and are the only real public transport option. Cycling is not particularly well catered for, especially along the main streets where traffic is heavy and no designated cycle lanes exist, except for the Great West Road where segregated lanes exist.

There are expansive views across Rectory Farm as you walk along Bath Road, where you can see the housing in the background. Views across the churchyard in Heston offer a glimpse of Osterley Park and surrounds. Entering Cranford and Heston requires on numerous occasions to cross over water, namely the River Crane or Grand Union Canal. This is a pleasant experience along with the pedestrian routes across the fields which are a physical relic of former uses.



Main roads create barriers for pedestrians



Pedestrians not catered for along Parkway



Entering Hounslow from Ealing across the Grand Union Canal



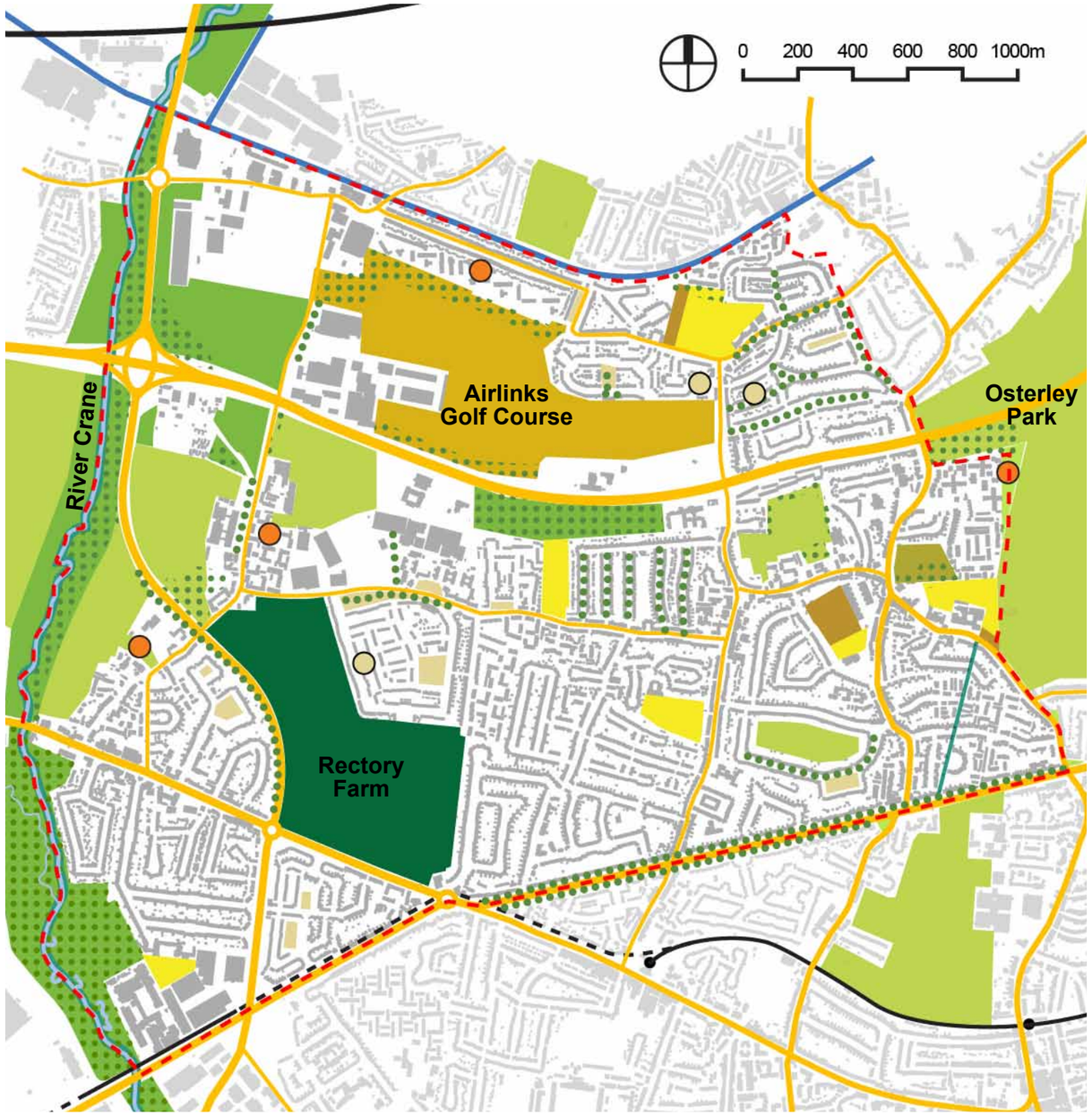
Our Lady church tower - a local landmark



Open expansive views across Rectory Farm

Cranford and Heston

green and blue landscape



Public gardens
Parks & playing fields
Natural & semi-natural urban green spaces
Green corridors
School playing fields
Outdoor sports facilities
Amenity spaces
Cemeteries & churchyards
Accessible countryside (green-belt)
Allotments, community gardens & urban/city farms
Children's & teenagers' play areas
Rivers, natural water bodies
Canals, man-made water bodies
Wooded areas
Street trees

There is a considerable amount of open space in the Cranford and Heston study area, partly due to its agricultural past, still evident today with the 40Ha Rectory Farm, a farming field, which since Norman times has not been built upon. Of great prominence, in both landscape and historical terms is the River Crane and the semi-natural parkland that borders both sides, where footpaths allow access to this unique and beautiful river habitat, which at its widest offers over 250m of riverside parkland.

There are many notable neighbourhood parks, a number of historic and civic value, and all offering a place to unwind and relax, be active or enjoy nature and local wildlife. Cranford Park (London Borough of Hillingdon) and Avenue Park (London Borough of Hounslow) form one large open space of 60Ha with a history dating back to Saxon times. Cranford Park lies to the west and Avenue Park to the east, a footbridge over the River Crane connecting the two parks. The parks today comprise C13th St Dunstan's Church, mature woodland, a C16th oak tree and meadows. Heston Park, somewhat hidden behind buildings that line New Heston Road provides an important civic space for local residents and contains playing fields, courts and a children's playspace. The Green is a well enclosed and overlooked triangular piece of open space, framed on its northern end by Our Lady Queen of Apostle Church. St Leonard's Churchyard and fields behind form an expansive area of open space, the churchyard, the largest in England, comprises mature trees and shrubs and is bordered by housing on the northern and eastern sides where the towers of Heston Farm loom in the distance.

Due to the prominence of 2 storey, suburban, detached or semi-detached house types, much of the green landscape consists of large, private front and back gardens, which function as an unseen green lung for the area and local wildlife. However, front gardens, 2m deep (or greater) are often paved over for car parking and fail to green and soften the streetscape. Unfortunately, street trees are infrequent and where they do exist they are often irregularly planted and in poor condition, such as in Character Area E. Grass verges, and pocket triangles are common, both narrow and wide and provide a soft, green, permeable edge to the street, though they are often broken up by driveway entrances. As many houses have large front gardens, some of which are densely planted, streets can still feel leafy even without street trees and grass verges. Where this occurs (Character Area F) it dramatically improves the ambience, look and feel of the area. Water defines the western and northern edges of the study area, and has proved formative in its development and resulting character. The River Crane flows gently through a series of green spaces, largely unspoilt and a haven for wildlife due to its relative inaccessibility. The Grand Union Canal runs across the area's northern edge and provides a more urban water setting with buildings on the Hounslow side abutting directly onto the waters-edge.


Lush greenery of Avenue Park


Heston Churchyard offers views eastwards

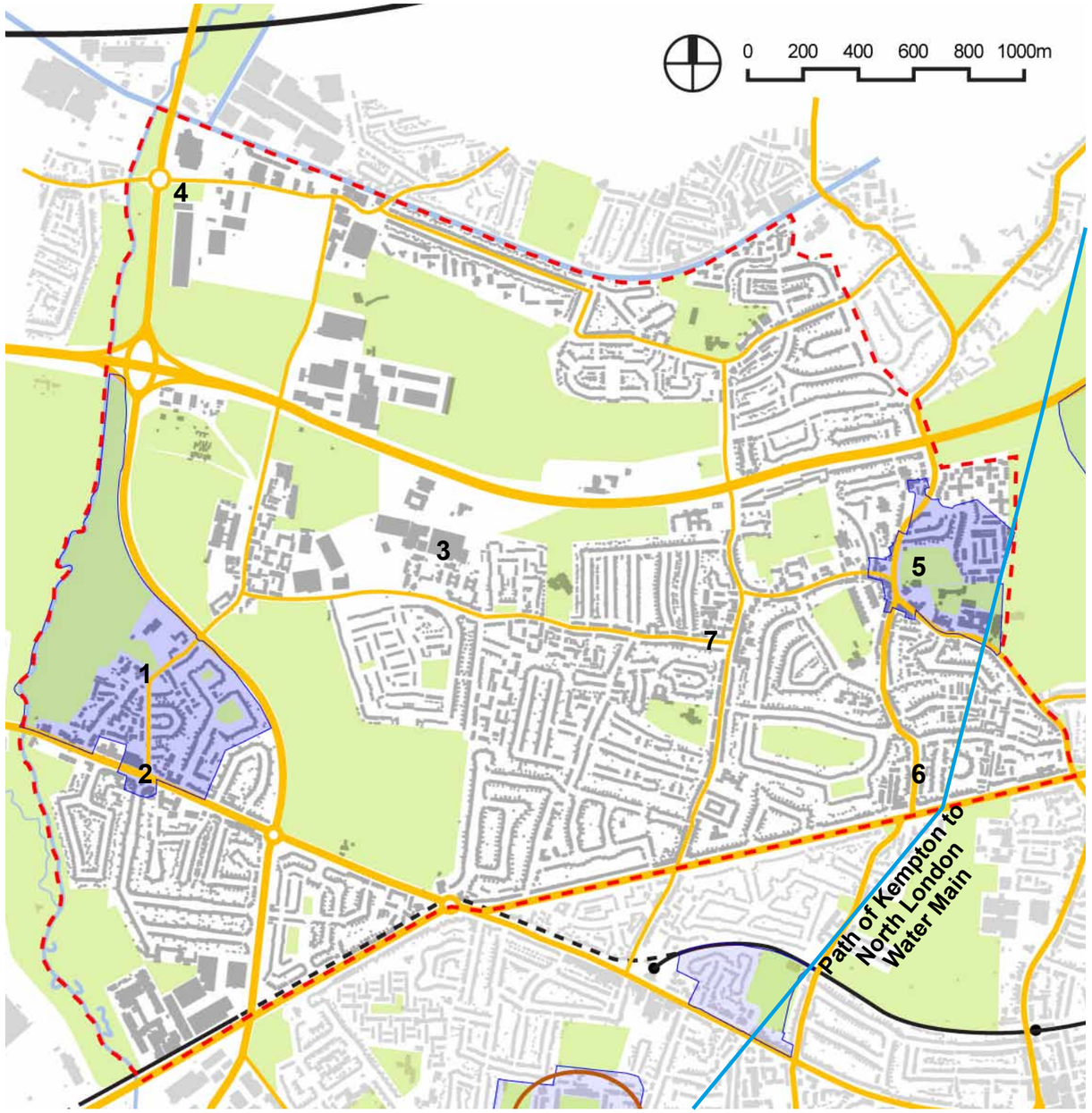

Grass verges, strips and triangles character-ise the inter and postwar housing estates


Crane Valley Park


Densely vegetated bank of River Crane

Cranford and Heston

heritage assets



Cranford was described for centuries as one of the smallest and prettiest villages in Middlesex. Cranford Conservation Area [1] is focussed on the early developed section from the listed C18th Crane Bridge near Bath Road, and along the High Street length of Cranford Lane, where the only remaining large house, with stable buildings, is listed. A village relic is the circular listed 'Lock-up' on the wide verge.

Whilst the majority of the Park, and most built relics including the listed church lie within London Borough of Hillingdon, the former Rectory lies in London Borough of Hounslow and is listed. The grand Avenue remained undeveloped until 1932, when the Berkeley Arms was relocated there to allow road widening in the main Cranford Bridge area. Its trees and the open junction with High Street now form a rural village-green character, emphasised by a 1970s church. On the Bath Road junction [2] whimsical 1930s buildings still mark three of the four intersection corners with the former coaching highway.

Between Cranford and Heston villages, one of Heston Airport's aircraft hangars [3] of 1929 -1935 is a listed building, and the Brentford drinking fountain of 1877 was relocated to the new Western International Market [4] in 1974 from its position in the former market at Kew Bridge.

Heston conservation area includes the Green, but is focussed on St Leonard's Church [5]. Graded at II* the tower dates back to the C14th and the listed war memorial in the centre of what is now a traffic island, lych gate, vicarage and lodge add to the group value; paths and cemetery add to the open setting. To the south, one of the older shops is listed, near networks of paths which are agricultural survivals. There are pubs on old sites, and community buildings including early schools to be added to the local list. Further south again, the Hermitage [6] lies in a long plot alongside one of the old linking roads, Upper Sutton Lane. This listed late medieval adapted hall house was fire damaged in 2003 and neglected for ten years. It also has a small but unusually well-built air raid shelter in the grounds.

Heston's junctions are important places for finding heritage assets and character. The long links in an agricultural landscape meant pubs were sited along the lanes or at the edges of the smaller settlements rather than at the centre. Cranford Lane, Vicarage Farm Road and New Heston Road [7] are part of the same layout.

A growth boom occurred when the Great West Road was built in the 1920s, with the population doubling in size between then and the late 1930s. The postwar period again saw considerable growth. The M4 has dissociated the area, as the canal and airport did before but it is harder to ignore. However, the area retains a village character which can be used as a design reference.

The path of the early C20th Kempton to North London water main appears as a disjointed series of sometimes fenced linear open spaces and occasional utility structures.



The Lock-up, Cranford Conservation Area



Whimsical 1930s buildings at Bath Road



War memorial, Heston Conservation Area



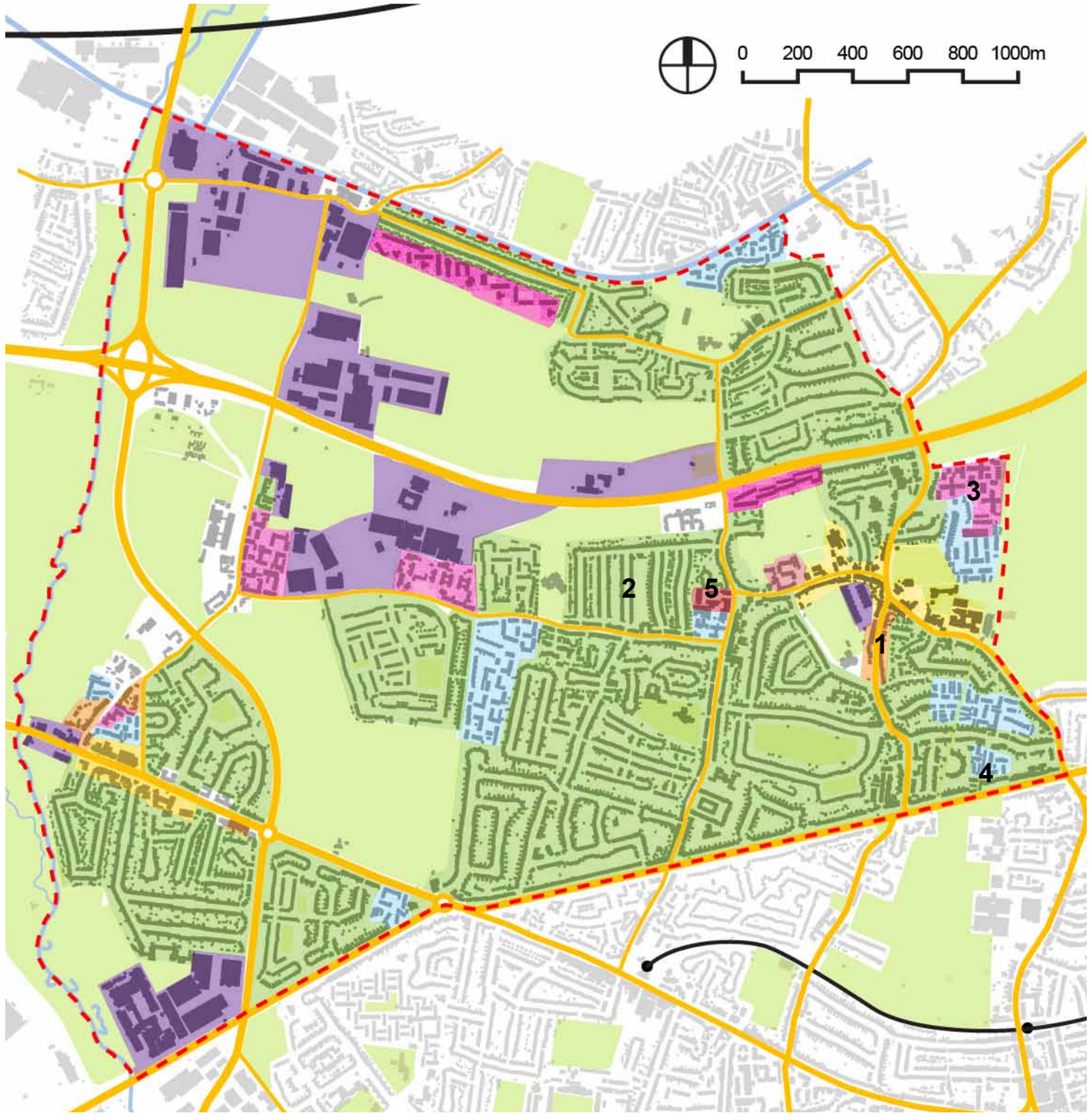
St Leonard's Church, Heston



Curiously gable-ended cottages, Cranford

Cranford and Heston

urban types



Urban type 1 - compact grid
Urban type 2 - loose grid
Urban type 3 - slabs and towers
Urban type 4 - courts and cul-de-sacs
Urban type 5 - urban renaissance
Urban type 6 - big box
Urban type 7 - urban centre
Atypical (not representative of an above type)

The most dominant urban type by area within the Cranford and Heston study area is by far the inter- and early postwar loose grid (type 2). In some parts the housing takes the form of single storey bungalows. The slabs and towers (type 3) appear as fringe developments and the courts and cul-de-sacs (type 4) as infill. The exclusively commercial big box (type 6) appears largely to the west of the area and along the edges of the motorway. A couple of small pockets of urban renaissance (type 5) have appeared more recently, mostly on the edges of the original historic urban centre (type 7) of Heston. There are only remnants of what can roughly be described as compact grid (type 1).

The locations of the different types in relation to growth differs from the older parts of the borough to the east, with little in the way of a steady chronological differentiation outwards from the urban centres (only to a very limited extent in Heston). Growth occurred relatively suddenly and rapidly over the interwar years, northwards from the Great West Road, quickly enveloping the existing settlements with classic suburbia (type 2).

For more information on general urban types found in the borough, including historical development, aspects of form and SWOT analyses, see Section 4: Urban Types.



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3



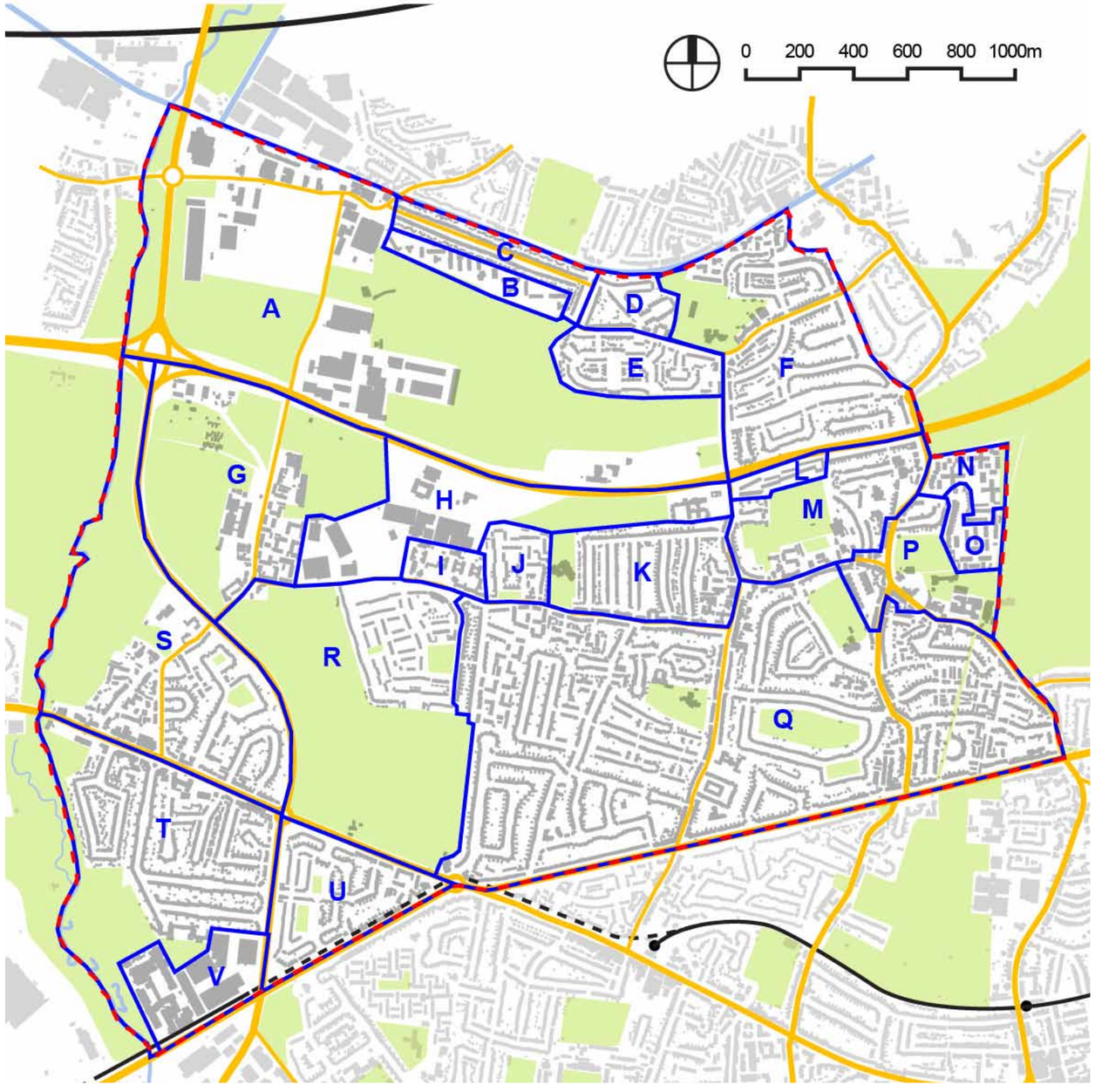
Type 4

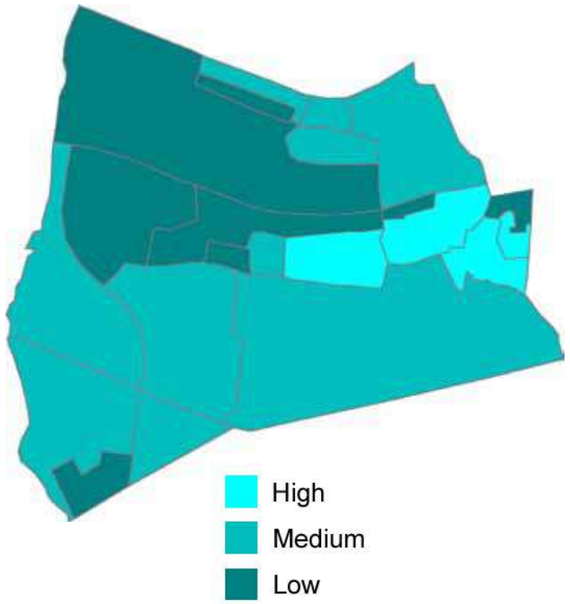


Type 5

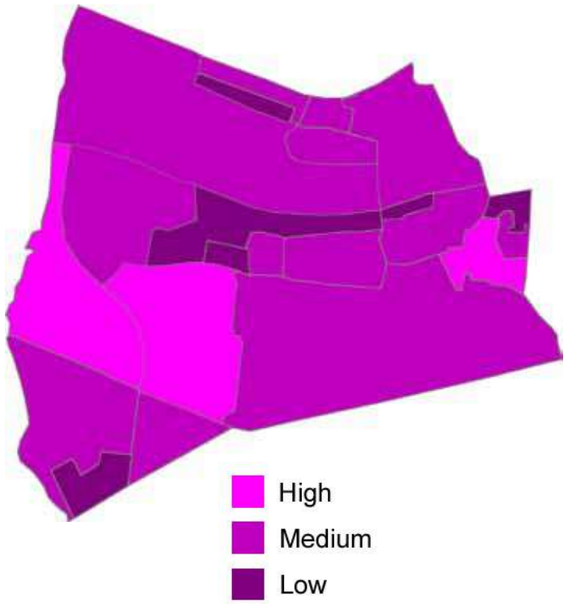
Cranford and Heston

character areas and assessments

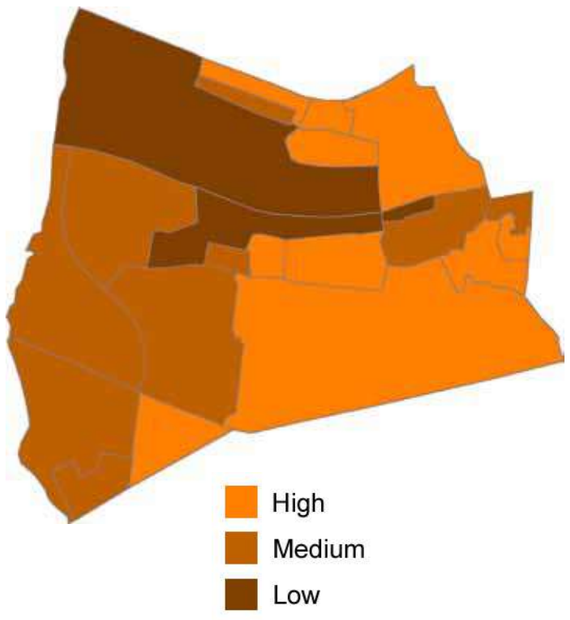




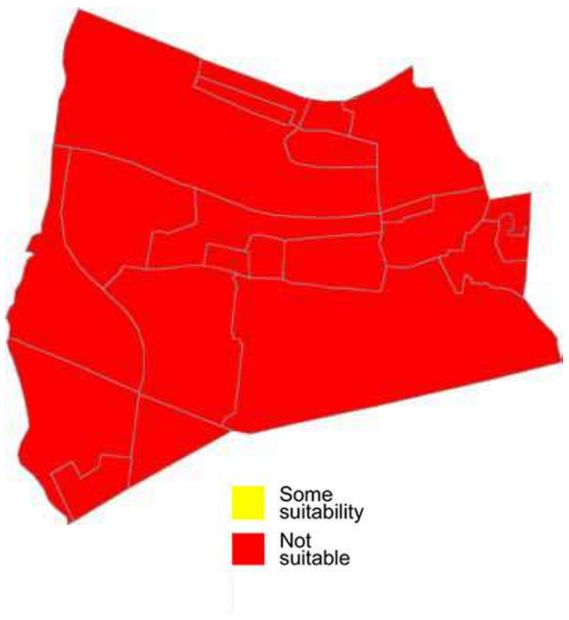
Design Quality



Sensitivity to change



Permanence



Suitability for tall buildings

A Character Area

For more information on characterisation and assessment see Section 1: Introduction - Methodology

Cranford and Heston

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
A		General uniformity of layout, structure, scale, density, urban type and land use. Urban type: Type 6	Largely non-residential area, north of the M4, comprising Airlinks Business Park, Square One Heathrow, Tesco supermarket and other retail stores, Airlinks golf course, David Lloyd Leisure and the Western International Market. Defined by its proximity and relationship to the M4, many buildings have large footprints and are surrounded by car parks set back from the heavily trafficked roads of Southall Lane and Hayes Road. Includes a large amount of open space, including the 18 hole golf course, however, much of it is inaccessible to the public and provides little amenity value.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
B		Extreme uniformity of land use, layout, design and style of buildings Urban type: Type 3	Mainly postwar housing blocks of flats and maisonnettes. Buildings are mainly 4-6 storeys with one 14 storey tower block surrounded by green amenity space and car parking with some tree and shrub planting. Newer terraced homes line the rear of this estate and back onto the postwar semi-detached homes in Character Area C. The housing blocks are set back from Convent Way with grass verges abutting onto the pavement giving the street no real sense of enclosure or definition.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
C		Extreme uniformity of layout, design and style of buildings, residential use, scale and massing, linear nature, building type and density Urban type: Type 2	A long residential street of postwar semi-detached houses with 3-4m setbacks mostly paved over for parking. Some houses are indented further creating a grass verge midway along the street which pleasantly breaks up the uniformity. Boundary treatments are varied, though most have low brick walls defining the plot edge and little or no wall to the front street edge. Overall architectural consistency has been lost in many sections of the street with unsympathetic additions.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
D		Extreme uniformity of building period, type, size, scale and materiall, layout and structure, street based model with green amenity spaces, bay windows, porches and materials Urban type: Type 2	Interwar homes built in the 1930s located adjacent to the Grand Union Canal, built at a similar time and style to those north of the Canal. Set on a couple of closes around a triangular green space, this mixture of well-presented terraced and semi-detached homes with hipped roofs and bay windows have generous front gardens and large back gardens, with many having been extended and added to over the years.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Cranford and Heston

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
E		Extreme uniformity of scale and density, consistent use of materials; red brick, simple, minimal detailing, garden suburb style; deep front gardens, long back gardens, small green spaces Urban type: Type 2	A low density postwar estate consisting of 2 storey homes with generous front and rear gardens set around King Arbour Green. Homes are arranged in terraces and semis with gable roofs, with some set-back on small crescents and greens adding to the leafy and green suburban feel. The Ringway is the only access in and out of the estate along with a narrow, shrub-lined footpath that runs from North Hyde Lane to the Ringway. There has been some recent infill development within the middle of the block west of King Arbour.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
F		Extreme uniformity of building type, age, size and scale with some later additions, residential in nature, garden suburb style, perimeter block layout with extensive grass verges, edges, linear strips and street trees Urban type: Type 2	A low density, suburban mix of immediate postwar housing with some newer infill developments from the 1970s and 1980s. There is a generosity and spaciousness to the layout, a garden suburb feel of avenues and lanes edged by linear parks, greens and grass verges. Homes are mainly short runs of terraces or semi-detached with hipped roofs, some have bay windows and porches and the majority have large front and back gardens and are set on wide streets sometimes with grass verges.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
G		Patchy and disjointed layout, location along Cranford High Street, building period, pattern and layout Urban type: Type 3 with some 6 and 2	This area is bounded by the M4 to the north, Cranford Lane and High St to the south and Parkway to the west. There is no strong discernible character to this area, feeling patchy and undefined in many ways. It is dominated by Cranford Community College, Concorde Sports and Leisure facilities and the Redwood Estate which sit on opposite sides of the high street and generally fail to address and animate the high street. All these mono-uses tend to sit in isolation from each other and the public realm fails to bring them together.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
H		General uniformity of land use, building type, scale, size and layout. Urban type: Type 6	This mono-use area consists of large business and industrial buildings surrounded by large areas of car parking sitting in front of the Heston M4 Services. A couple of hotels are also evident taking advantage of the M4 corridor. The buildings have little to no relationship to Cranford Lane, being set back behind shrubs and offering no animation to the street.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Cranford and Heston

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
I		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, urban type, use, period and materials Urban type: Type 3	This area known as Harlech Gardens consists of a dozen or so 4 to 5 storey postwar housing blocks with gable roofs sat freestanding mainly perpendicular to Cranford Lane. Most buildings are set back from Cranford Lane and where they are not they turn their back on the street providing a blank, dull edge.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
J		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, urban type, use, period and materials Urban type: Type 2	A 1960s mixed type suburban estate of modest gabled roofed terraced houses, mansion blocks, and semi-detached set around Northfield Road. Characterised by their uniformity of red brick and red tile roofs there is a plain consistency in visual appearance broken up with varying setbacks and grass verges and small greens.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
K		General uniformity of urban layout and structure, building scale, density, type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2 with some 4 and 5	This area is characterised by mostly large and medium, late interwar, detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows set on wide tree-lined streets with narrow grass verges giving a leafy, garden suburb feel. Houses are mostly bay fronted with porches, some recessed, some protruding. Large front gardens can be found, some paved over, some heavily planted. Houses face onto the northern edge of Cranford Lane providing a good sense of street enclosure.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
L		General uniformity of layout, building type, scale and size Urban type: Type 3	This area consists of 4 long block, deck access maisonettes, 1 short block and one set of terraced housing facing north-south surrounded by car parking and grass. Blocks are 4 stories high, of red brick, with recessed balconies. Garages run parallel to the housing blocks which have strong horizontal rhythms, minimal detailing and small windows. Disconnected from surrounding street network and abutting onto the M4, the estate has a very distinct character defined by its isolation.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Cranford and Heston

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
M		Location, land uses, accessibility and movement, layout Urban type: Type 2 with some 3, 5 and 7	With Heston Park at its centre this area is characterised by its location at the edge of the centre of Heston village. There is a mix of residential types and ages, including Victorian, interwar, postwar and more recent housing all displaying different styles yet sharing a similar scale, size and height of 2 stories. This area is also the civic heart to Heston with the swimming baths, library, nursery, Royal British Legion, school and Village Hall.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
N		General uniformity of period, style, type, layout, building pattern, scale and size Urban type: Type 3	Heston Farm housing estate with its cross-shaped slabs, towers and terraces, sits south of the M4 and to the east of Heston Road. Buildings are set back from and have little relationship to the street, and are laid out around expanses of grassed areas and parking courts. Footpaths criss-cross the large undefined areas of open space. Though sharing similarities with Character Area L in terms of period and style, this area has fundamental differences including layout, building type and scale.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
O		Extreme uniformity of land use, layout, period, building style and materials. Variances in density, scale, size and building type Urban type: Type 4	A late 1960s residential estate of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses and flats set around landscaped gardens and greens. Buildings are laid out on a loop road, located between St Leonard's churchyard and fields to the east. Buildings have a consistent style and use of materials, timber panelling, strong horizontal lines and flat roofs. There is a fairly strong relationship to the street, with a variety of building setbacks evident, with car parking provided mostly on plot.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
P		Location, history and period, land form and layout, grain and scale, accessibility and movement Variances in density, scale, size and building type Urban type: Type 7 with some 2, 6 and 1	Centred around the village green and St Leonard's Church, this area is the historic and current heart to Heston. Spanning out from the centre run Heston Road, New Heston Rd and Church Road. There is a finer grain of buildings in this area, with many Victorian properties still evident.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Cranford and Heston

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
Q		Extreme uniformity of building period, type, scale, size, density and layout. Urban type: Type 2 with some 4	With the construction of the Great West Road in the 1920s these new homes sprang up adjacent to it. A large area defined by its suburban qualities of low density, inter- and postwar housing. Consisting mostly of semi-detached and terraced houses in a number of styles. There are also pocket of 1960s and 70s housing where some have departed from the street-based forms found elsewhere. Homes vary in size but all have relatively large front and back gardens, some heavily planted whilst others are paved over for parking.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
R		Extreme uniformity of layout, building age, size, scale, height, density, details and materials. Urban type: Type 2	A postwar housing estate with a mix of housing types and sizes including terraces, semi-detached and flats set on a perimeter block layout with some short, square-ish blocks. Homes are modest with very little ornament or detail. The streets are wide, some with deep grass verges and buildings give a low level of enclosure to the street. This estate sits adjacent to and has views of (but no access to) Rectory Farm which is a large field with very few distinguishing characteristics or features.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
S		Location, accessibility and history. General uniformity of land use and layout. Urban type: Type 2 with some 7 and 6	This area comprises the historic Cranford Village bounded by the Bath Road to the south, River Crane to the west and the Parkway to the northeast. Cranford High Street functions as the spine through the area and is cut in half by the recent Parkway Road. A diverse area, with housing from many different eras and styles, yet dominated by interwar semis. Avenue Park dominates the area sitting adjacent to the River Crane. A great deal of infill development has occurred along and just off the High Street in recent times.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
T		Location and accessibility Extreme uniformity of building type, period, Urban type: Type 2 with some 7 and 6	Mainly interwar semi-detached houses and short terraced runs set south off the Bath Road in a linear grid pattern. The majority of retail and commercial uses line the Bath Road in a variety of building types and styles. Houses occupy wide, deep plots with large back gardens and 3-4m front gardens, many converted over for parking space.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Cranford and Heston

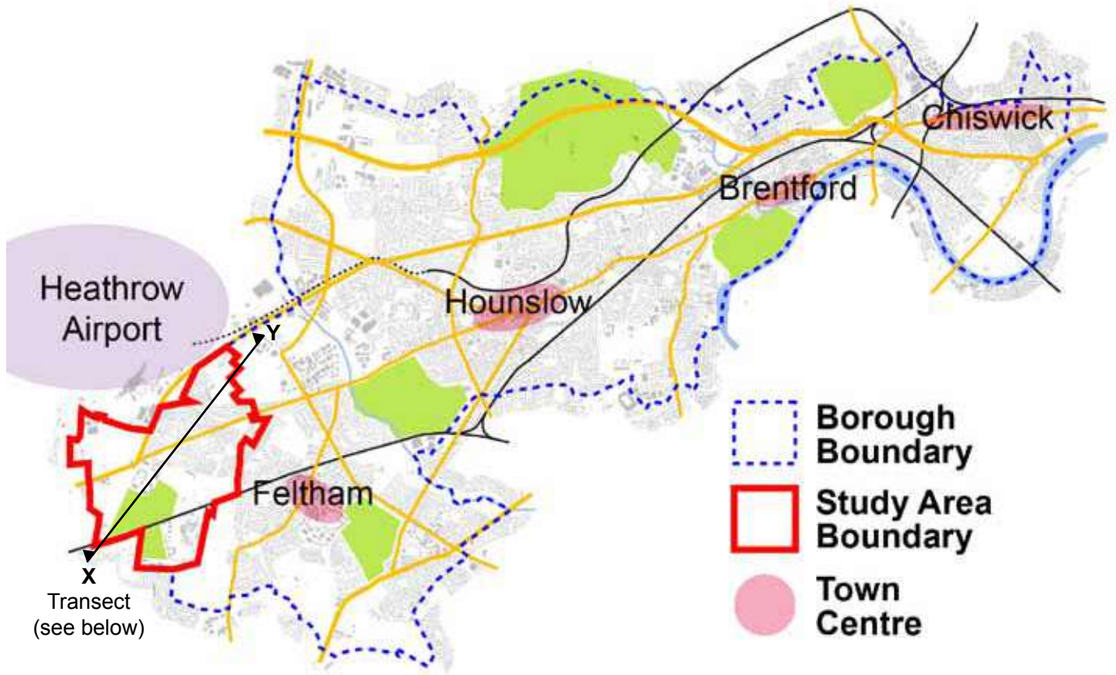
character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
U 	Location and accessibility Extreme uniformity of type, layout, density, scale and size Urban type: Type 2 with some 4	A triangular area of land bounded by the busy Bath Road, Parkway Road and the Great West Road. It feels like a residential island, with mainly inter- and postwar housing of two storeys set on wide streets with large green spaces, grass verges. This area can be characterised as low density, comprising a mixture of housing types and styles, including semi-detached, terraced and detached bungalows all with generous front and back gardens.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
V 	Extreme uniformity of land use, layout and type, scale and massing. Urban type: Type 2 and 1 with some 4	Large industrial and business estate set off The Parkway. Comprising of modern, large footprint buildings with few or no windows and blank facades surrounded by car parking. Access is restricted and the estate is designed as a self-contained area. Buildings are mostly double height with brick and sheet metal facades with varying architectural styles.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Bedfont

3

Bedfont

present-day context



The Bedfont study area is located in the southwest of the borough on the edge of Greater London. It is crossed east-west by the South West Trains railway line from Hounslow town centre and Central London towards Reading and by the A315 Staines Road from Hounslow town centre and the east of the borough. It is also accessible via the A30 Great South West Road from Central London.

The area is bounded to the south and west by Green Belt land, to the east by the Feltham study area and to the north by Heathrow Airport. Bedfont and its neighbours Feltham and Hanworth are relatively cut off from the rest of the borough by open land and large trading estates. All three form the 'West Area' of the borough.

The area is almost level with a slight upward slope to the north. Two artificial rivers cross the north of the area east-west. To the north, south and west lie large areas of semi-rural open space with some woodland and extensive lakes derived from former gravel pits. The waterways and some of the spaces are designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

Residential use predominates and the area may be classified as mostly postwar outer suburban. There are however large areas devoted to employment uses such as trading estates, mineral works, utilities and a business park. Most of the residential areas are fairly homogeneous with few parts showing any diversity of character.

The main historic core lies to the west of the study area, focused on the parish church and the village green of East Bedfont. Short rows of late 19th century houses lie to the east along the major routes, where the study area merges almost imperceptibly with Feltham.

There are very large areas of open space, much of it natural or semi-natural, reflecting the area's Greater London fringe location. The urban environment is generally of good quality with an even distribution of open spaces, though only the east of the area is well-served locally. Feltham is the nearest major centre.

The area is both acoustically and economically dominated by Heathrow Airport.

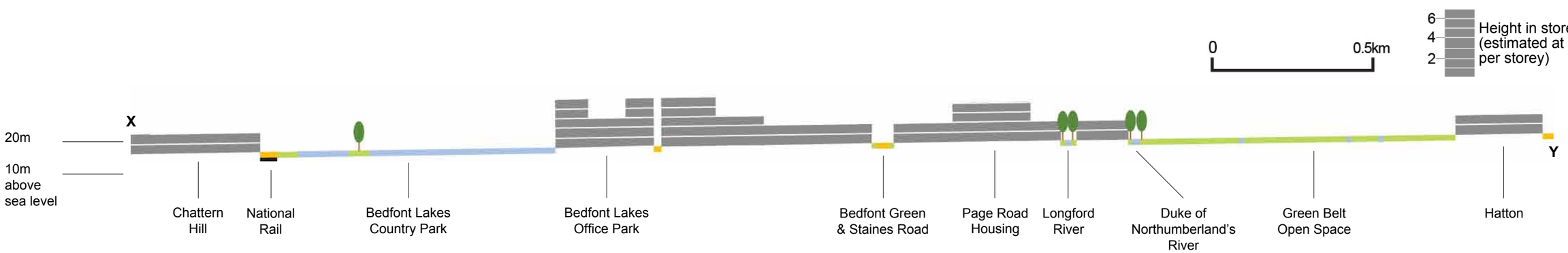


Bedfont lies at the urban-rural fringe of Greater London



2000s estate regeneration, central Bedfont

Title page photo: The 1930s Arts and Crafts Garden Suburb-style Fairholme Estate off south side of Staines Road



Bedfont

brief historic context

Bedfont is the borough's westernmost area, the hamlet being a roadside village on the Roman Road about half way between Hounslow and Staines, on the route to Silchester which, before the Romans, was the Iron Age Atrabartes' tribal settlement called Calleva. Silchester was one of the few Roman towns to disappear entirely but most of the route remained an important road to Salisbury, and in this area skirted to the south of Hounslow Heath, once part of the Forest of Middlesex.

The area follows the Roman Road out to West Bedfont just outside the borough, a relic swallowed by Heathrow Airport. Bedfont Green lies at the heart of the Saxon village straddling the Staines (Roman) Road and is part of a staggered junction with a route creating a northerly link to Hatton and thence Harlington. To the south, minor tracks led to Bedfont Green South, from which one southward fork became Bedfont Lane and the route to St Dunstan's, Feltham.

Bedfont formed an ancient parish near the northern edge of the Spelthorne Hundred of Middlesex. In 'Highwayman's Heath' (1935) Gordon S Maxwell described the name as being Bedefunte in the Domesday survey and located the old boundary mark of Windsor Forest at Bedfont. The parish centred on St Mary's Church, set back on Hatton Road but edging the Green. A large amount of the central Green remains, together with the heavily rebuilt church and topiary. Many fine trees also remain though the elms were lost to disease in the 1970s. The effect continues eastward with wide verges and greenery along the main road.

Many of the fine older properties lie on the Saxon lanes. However the C17th and C18th coaching route and trade, with six inns in Bedfont alone, was the reason for the area's survival. To fund and maintain this through road a Turnpike toll gate was erected. Maxwell noted this lay between the Longford River and the village and that part of the toll-house still remained in 1935.

Industry came early through water power which was a strong feature of the area. Two artificial rivers or leats were cut from the River Colne, now known as the Duke of Northumberland and Longford Rivers, nearly combining at Two Bridges on the borough boundary. From 1630 sword-smithing took place utilising a mill on the Duke of Northumberland's River. The mill was later used for gunpowder manufacture which continued until 1926.



Feltham Sand and Gravel Company, mid 20th century

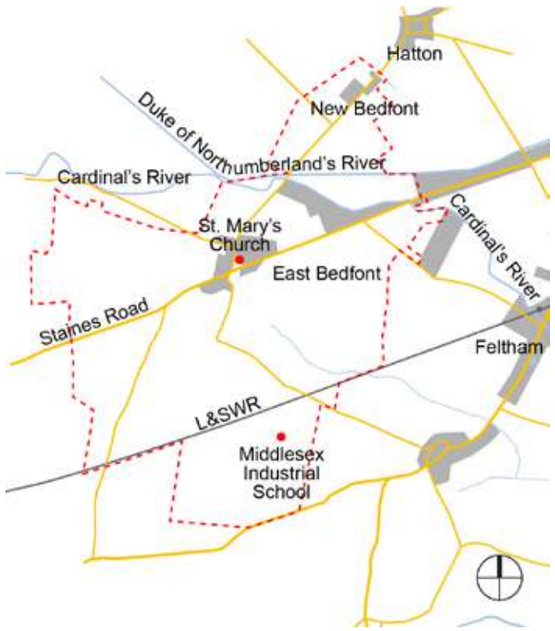


Rayners Stores, New Road off Staines Road, late 1950s

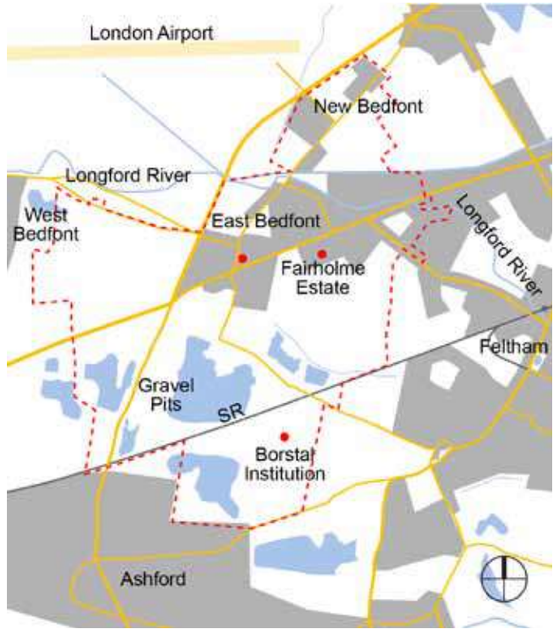
The road to St Dunstan's, turning sharply around field boundaries and crossing the railway line, gave access to the Middlesex Industrial School and chapel shown as the Boys Reformatory. In replacement buildings and on a much larger scale this has become the Young Offenders Institute.

In a similar manner to neighbouring Feltham, market gardens appeared in the C19th but were gradually replaced with gravel and aggregate extraction and new housing estates in the mid C20th. In 1946 London (later Heathrow) Airport opened, becoming a major employer in the area and further increasing local housing and hotel demand.

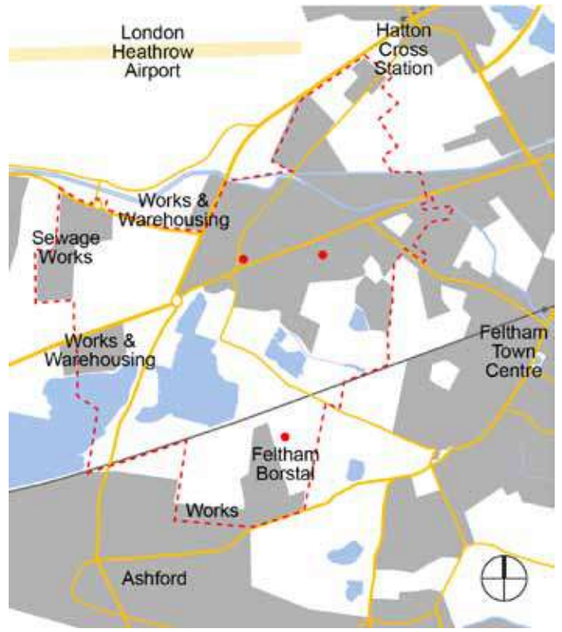
c1895



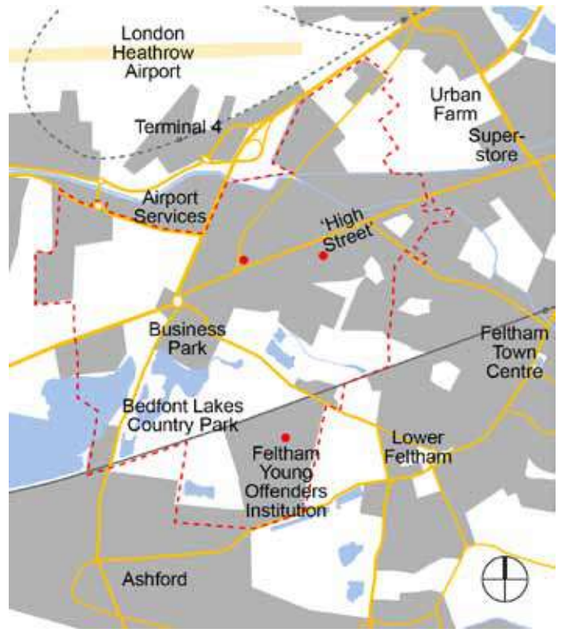
c1950



c1975

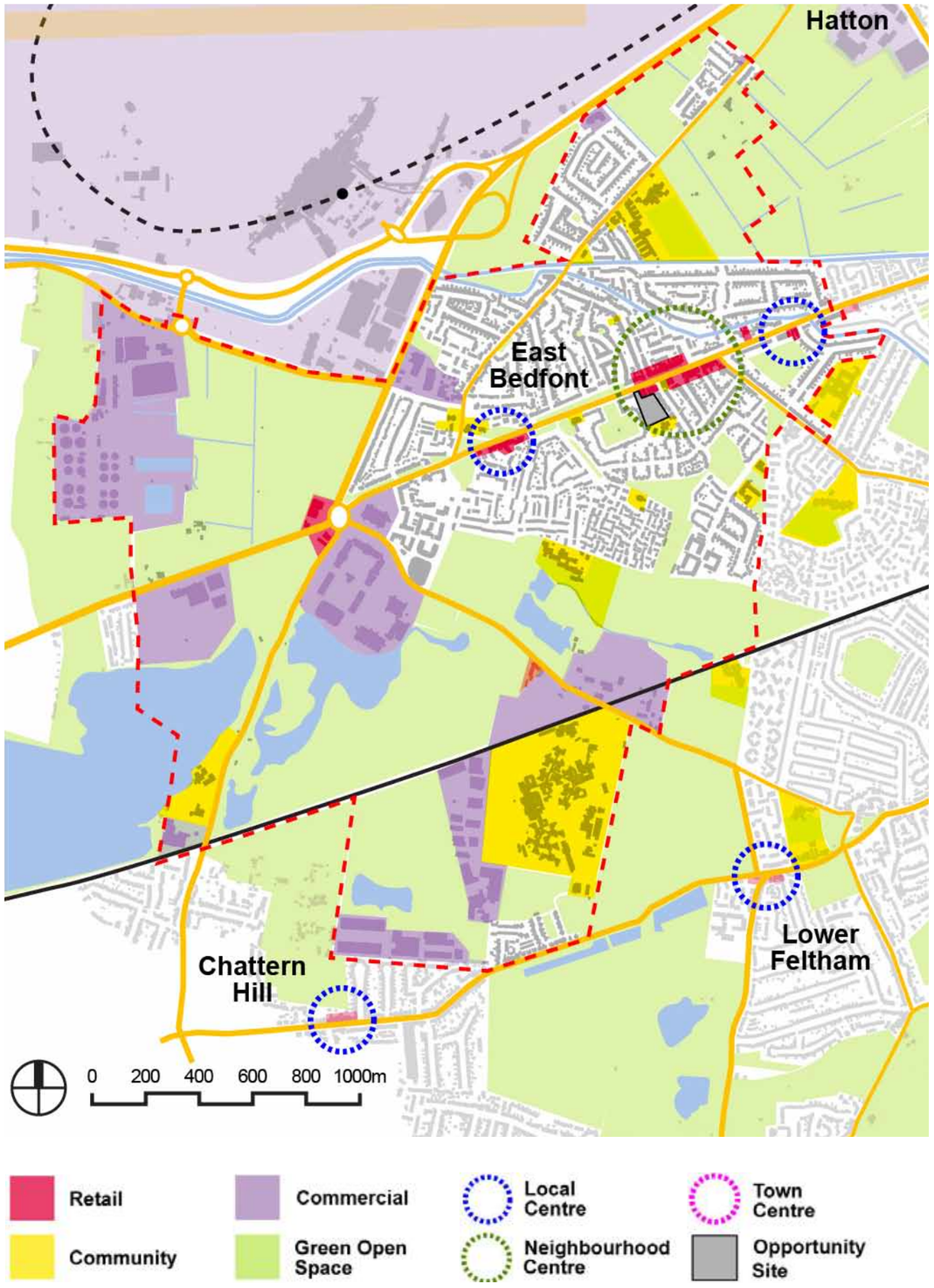


c2010



Bedfont

land and building use



The built-up part of the study area is predominantly residential and may be classified as postwar outer suburban. Though much of the plentiful open space is semi-rural, remaining from the area's predominantly agricultural origins, some areas are devoted to employment uses such as mineral works and water-related utilities. Other employment uses include trading estates and a business park. The main historic core lies to the west of the study area, focused on the parish church and the village green of East Bedfont (West Bedfont lying outside the borough). Short rows of late 19th century houses lie to the east along and off the two major routes to London via Hatton and Feltham, where the study area merges almost imperceptibly with its neighbour. Feltham provides the nearest town centre facilities as well as the nearest railway station.

Most of the residential areas are fairly homogeneous, consisting of mostly 2 storey postwar semis and short terraces. There are however small pockets of earlier houses and postwar infill and fringe developments of low rise flats. Late C20th and early C21st low rise developments (2 and 3-4 storeys respectively) have occurred on the southern urban fringes, with attempts to relate and connect with adjacent earlier developments. The most recent residential development comes in the form of the regeneration of a postwar housing estate at the centre of the area and close to the main retail strip. The urban environment is generally of good quality with an even distribution of open spaces, though some more recent developments are relatively isolated from local centres.

Retail within the area is concentrated along the de facto high street of Staines Road. There are no local centres within the residential hinterlands off the main route.

The most recent and significant commercial development is Bedfont Lakes Office Park at the southwest edge of the built-up area and overlooking Bedfont Country Park. This is a country park formed around former gravel pits as part of a successful and award winning but rather isolated business development.

The area's two main educational facilities are located at the fringes rather than centrally and occupy large areas of land. The largest institutional use is Feltham Young Offenders Institute located relatively remotely in the south.



Homes fit for Heroes - War Memorial in a Garden Suburb



Typical early postwar semi-detached suburban housing



A number of public houses line the Staines Road



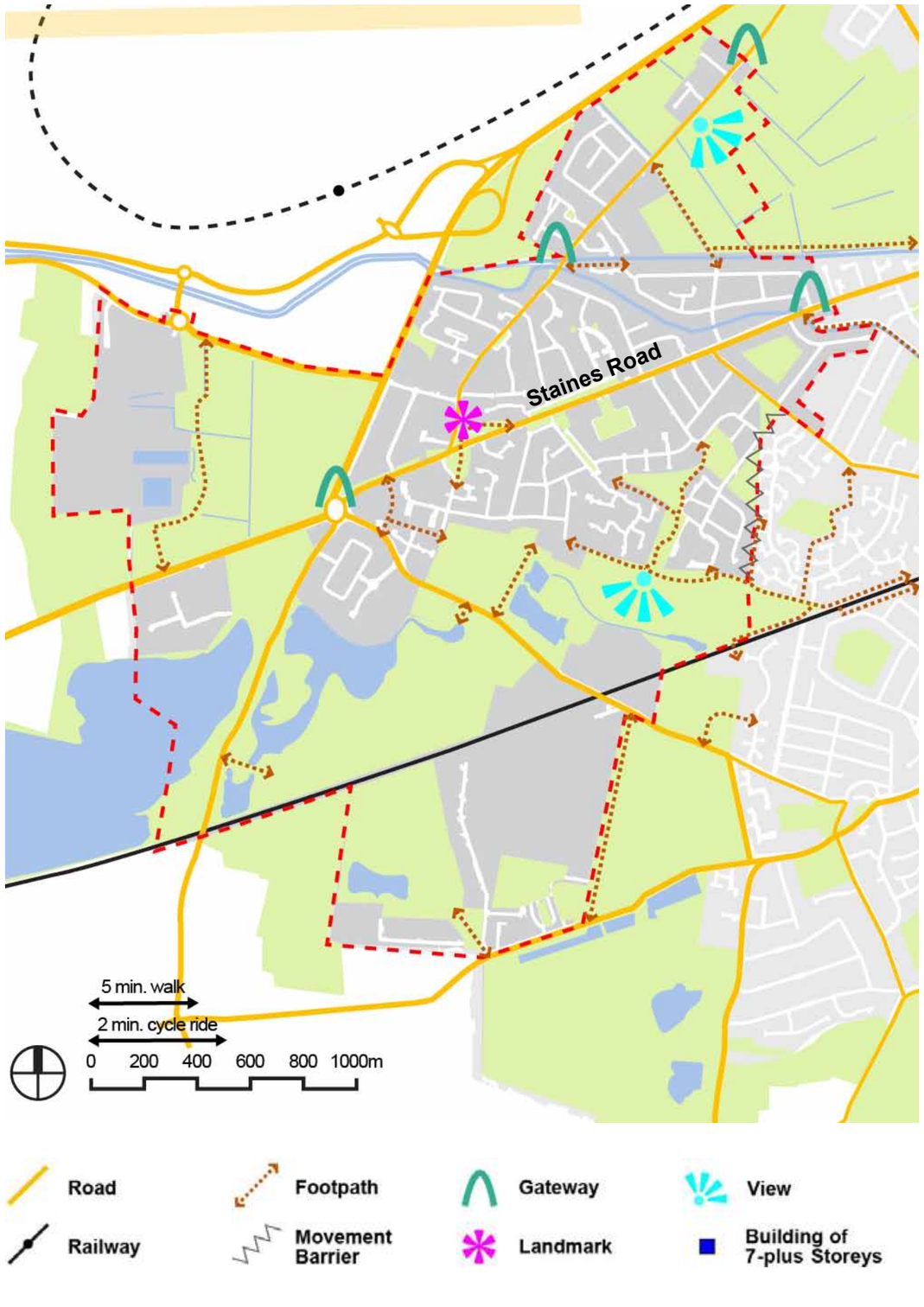
Retail is concentrated along the Staines Road



Trading estate on the southern fringe

Bedfont

movement and legibility



The overall movement structure is dominated by the roughly east-west road and rail routes. The study area can be accessed from the northeast and west from the Great South West Road. There are no major barriers to movement in terms of present-day needs. The Staines Road forms the central spine off which lesser, though occasionally busy, roads branch. From these hang for the most part highly permeable if irregular grids of streets, though there are instances of branching cul-de-sacs and minimal access 'pod' developments mostly on the southeast fringes. The latter however retain good pedestrian permeability, if not legibility, and contribute to the study area's relatively high degree of connectivity. There are no major barriers to movement.

Feltham to the east provides the nearest town centre facilities as well as the nearest railway station. The north of the area is conceivably accessible by underground at Heathrow Terminal 4. Buses serve only the main routes.

Pedestrian movement and way-finding through the area is on the whole comfortable and efficient, though better use could be made of the two waterways. Of particular note is the attractive and useful foot and cycleway which runs east-west along part of the southern urban edge and connects with Feltham town centre. In addition this route to some extent mitigates against the severance created along the study area's eastern boundary.

Though of historic significance and much-loved, St. Mary's Church by the village green can provide little more than an immediately local landmark. On an altogether different scale, the tall buildings of Feltham town centre may often be glimpsed at the ends of streets and across the larger open spaces in the north and east of the study area, giving some sense of urban focus. The panoramic view of countryside to the south is marred by mineral extraction-related earthworks.


St. Mary's Church with its signature topiary


Busy and wide Great South West Road forms the western urban edge

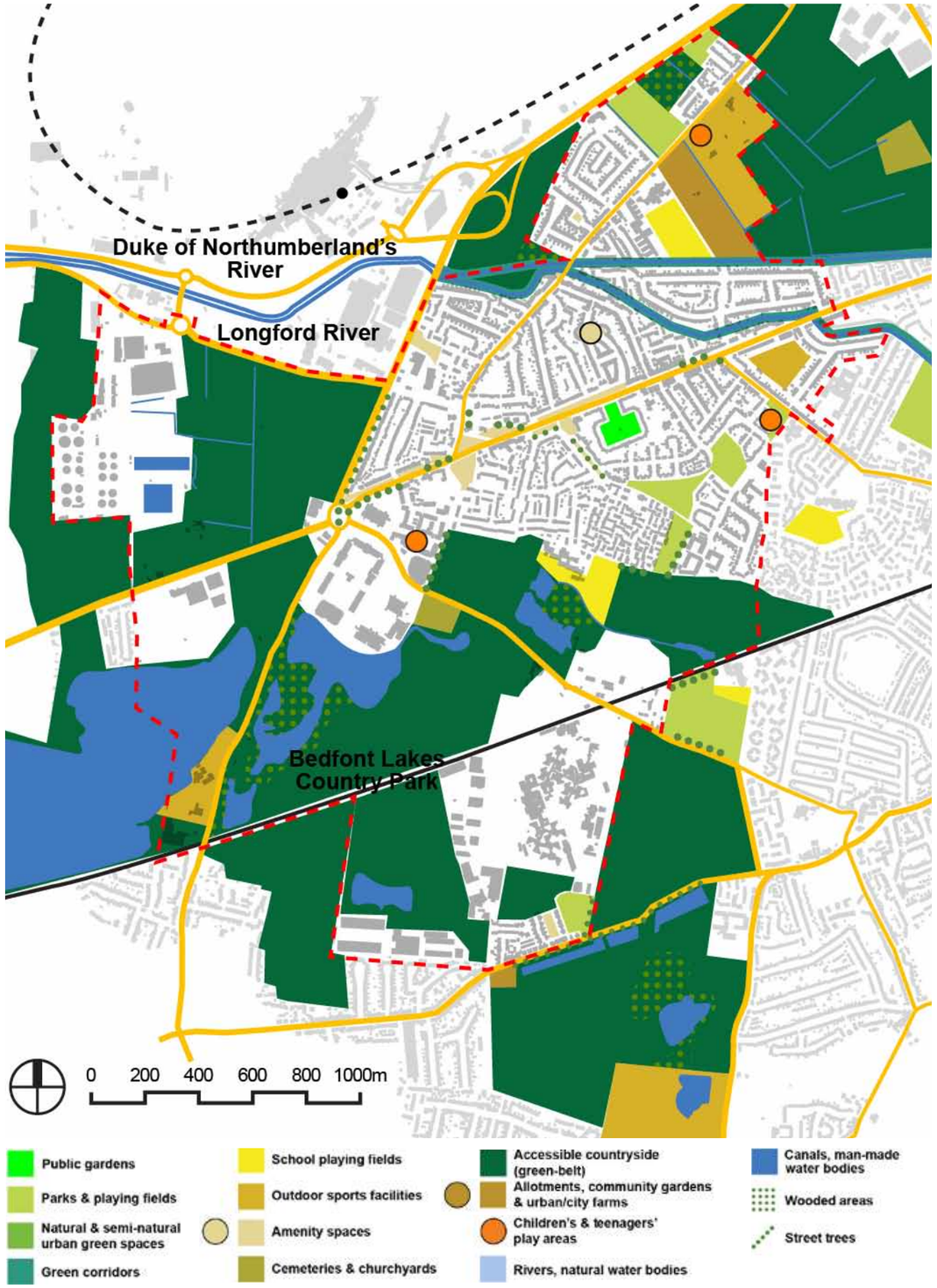

Well maintained and signed foot and cycleway, northern urban edge


Well-used foot and cycleway, southern urban edge


Seemingly pointless fence on southern edge

Bedfont

green and blue landscape



The provision, size, type and related uses of publicly accessible, or at least visible, green open space in the study area are typical for its location at the boundary of Greater London. Indeed around half of the study area is green open space. The study area is fringed to the north and southwest by Green Belt land in the form of open fields with some formal recreational uses and, in the south, by flooded former gravel pits, a number of which constitute Bedfont Lakes Country Park.

Within the developed areas of the study area the open spaces have a more immediately local focus. The western section of the Staines Road is flanked on the north side by a wide verge fronted by housing, which culminates in the historic village green on both sides of the road. The more formal central garden of the Fairholme estate is easily visible though publicly inaccessible. Of particular interest is the southward linear progression of two large residential greens into an extensive semi-natural area via a channel of hummocky, footpath-threaded, partly wooded parkland, a potential model for urban fringe landscaping.

Bedfont is crossed west-east by the Duke of Northumberland's River and the Longford River, both artificial waterways. They have very limited accessibility but are attractive visual and environmental assets.

With the possible exception of the Staines Road linear green space, Bedfont is not notable for its street trees, though the period of development (primarily early postwar) has left a legacy of grassed amenity spaces of a variety of styles, sizes and conditions. They tend to relate positively to the streets and buildings and take the form of grass verges, crescents and rectangles. Most are well-maintained and reflect the Garden Suburb ideal from which they were derived.



The village green on Staines Road



The Longford River, one of two artificial waterways in the area



Linear park leads through housing areas to countryside



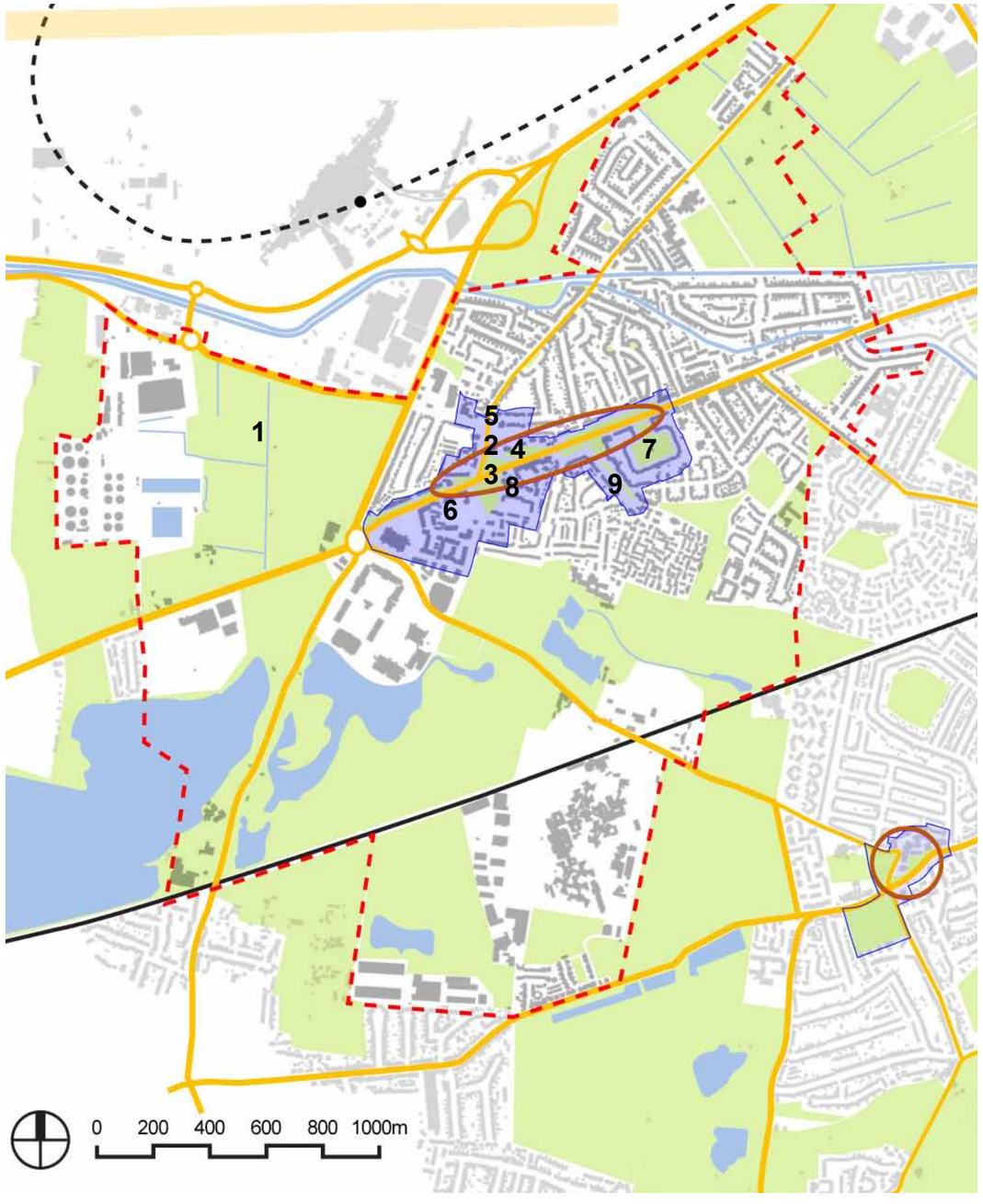
Bedfont Lakes Country Park



Neat amenity space in residential area

Bedfont

heritage assets



Bedfont is part of a wider region of very early settlement. Considerable archaeological remains were found in the 1950s, and more recently during excavations for Heathrow Airport Terminal 5. These include a Neolithic double ditch enclosure, Late Bronze Age enclosure and Roman farmstead, forming an extensive area of intensive prehistoric occupation, which incorporates two Scheduled Ancient Monuments [1].

The majority of the listed buildings lie within a conservation area. St. Mary's church [2], of Norman origin but heavily rebuilt is II* listed and has the Green [3] as its setting. Seven listed tombstones lie in its churchyard. The listed late C18th Burlington House [4] and its old boundary walls, alongside the church, adds to the aesthetic value of the Green itself, made more evocative as a group by the quality of the large trees. A poem by Thomas Hood in 1822 referred to the church's peacock topiary of 1704, whilst the rural village appearance of the Green, with its trees, pond and quaint church were noteworthy in the late C19th. To the north, on Hatton Road, listed Pates Manor [5] also reflects the high status of being near The Green, together with the endowment of an early part of Marjorie Kinnon School. The locally listed Bell on the Green echoes earlier hospitality.

The Green has been made smaller by incursions of housing on the north east and around it is the staggered junction of the potentially Saxon roads. To the west and south, fronting onto Staines Road, Bedfont House [6] (David Henry Waring) has a Victorian glazed porch linking onto the road edge and still has very large grounds. No 735 'The Farm' is also listed.

To the east, along a wide-verged length of the road, a considerable enclave was created in the 1930s Dutch-gabled ensemble 'Fairholme' [7], which surrounds a space continuously fronted by 72 carefully detailed brickwork dwellings which, with additional summerhouse and boundaries, amount to a group of 76 listings.

To the south is the exceptional if adapted (to the limit) timber framed relic of Fawns Manor [8], which appears to have been part of a much larger defined group in the mid C19th. This lies opposite and benefits from the setting of Bedfont House's surrounding land, having lost most of its own to enabling development of a reasonable quality.

The interwar housing estate south of Staines Road [9] features an extensive Garden City-style greensward with a war memorial and flanked by Arts and crafts-style housing.



St. Mary's Church in the historic village core



Bedfont House's glazed porch and conservatory



Fawns Manor, on the south side of the green



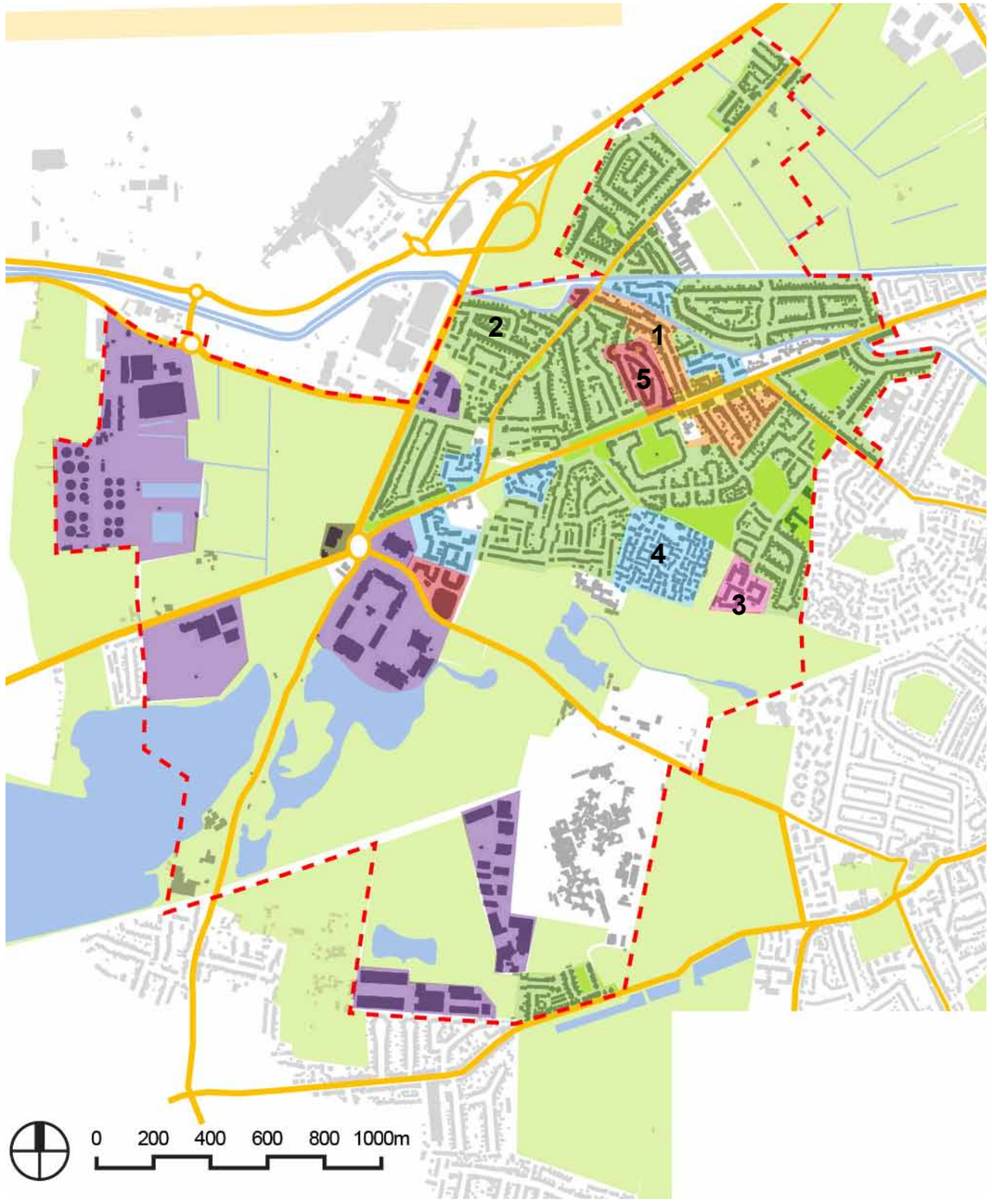
1930s Arts and Crafts 'Fairholme'



Late interwar Moderne housing

Bedfont

urban types



The most dominant residential urban types by area within the Bedfont study area are the inter- and early postwar loose grid (type 2), in a wide range of housing styles, followed closely by the courts and cul-de-sacs (type 4) of the later postwar years and the 1980s. There is only one slabs and towers-style (type 3) estate, typically badly located on the southern urban fringe, some distance from transport and services. There is a major urban renaisssance-style (type 5) development at the centre where services and public transport accessibility are at their best, but also one on the remote southwestern edge. The exclusively commercial big box (type 6) occupies areas of land to the southwest. Compact grid-style (type 1) development extends north and south from the urban centre (type 7).

Bedfont manifests typologically and morphologically as an extension of neighbouring Feltham to the southeast, though with a more significant historic urban centre than its counterpart, Hanworth.

The atypical Feltham Young Offenders Institute occupies a large area to the south.

For more information on general urban types found in the borough, including historical development, aspects of form and SWOT analyses, see Section 4: Urban Types.



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3



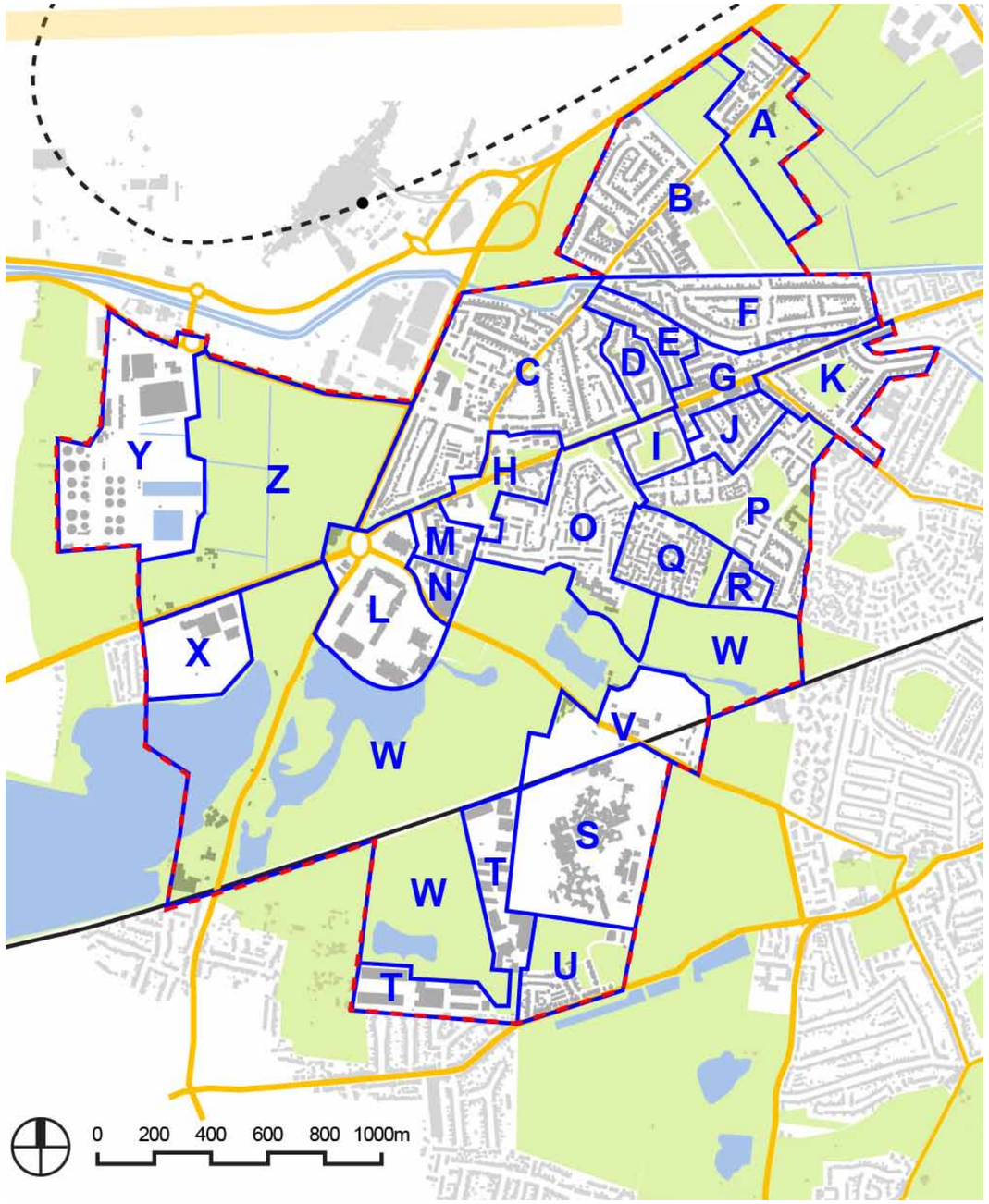
Type 4



Type 5

Bedfont

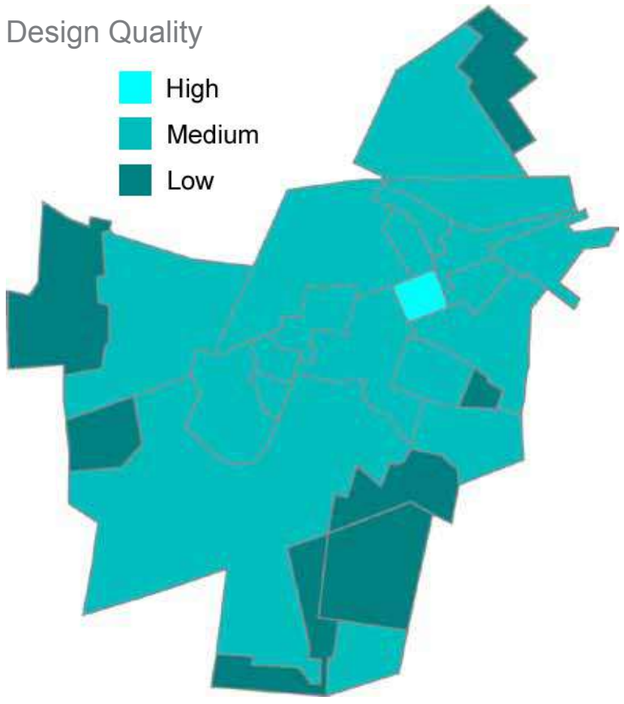
character areas and assessments



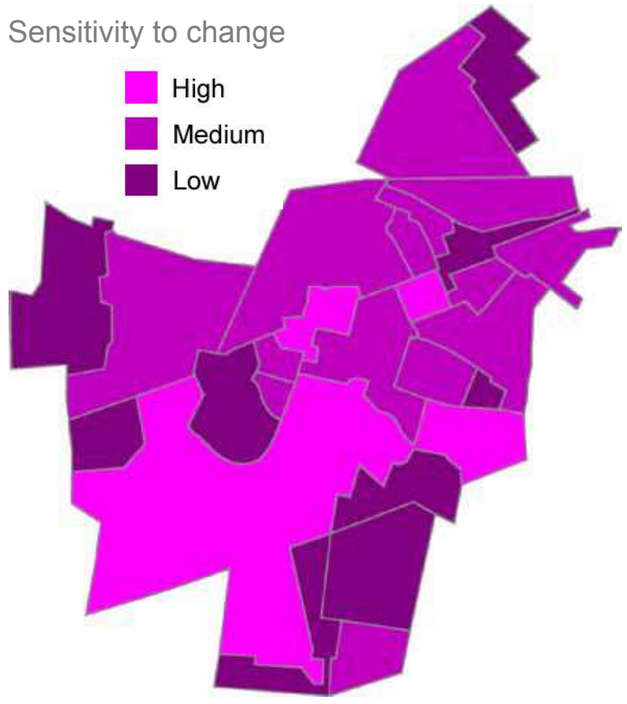
A Character Area

For more information on characterisation and assessment see Section 1: Introduction - Methodology

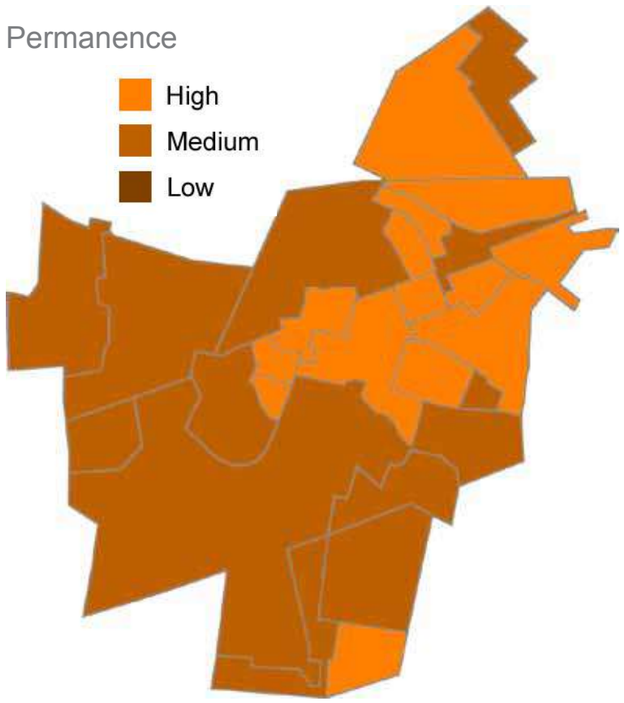
Design Quality



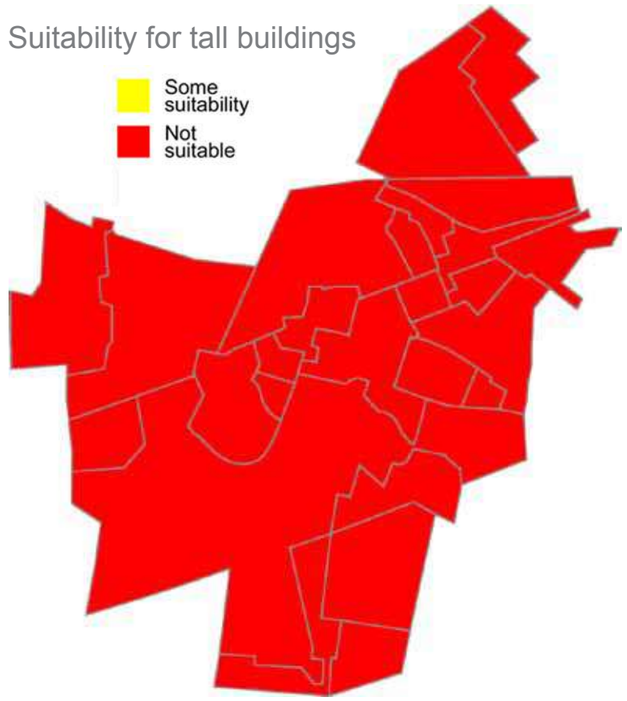
Sensitivity to change



Permanence



Suitability for tall buildings



Bedfont

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	ambience & assessment
A		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Urban type: Type 2	Primarily residential ribbon development between Hatton and Bedfont proper, surrounded by open space in various uses. Mix of interwar and postwar 2 storey short terraces with some semis and strip of bungalows on main road. Two small business sites and a public house though no shops, the nearest being on Staines Road some 20 minutes walk to south, via foot and cycleway link towards Feltham. Formal recreation and leisure uses (including Bedfont and Feltham football and social clubs) and children's play area to south.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
B		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Strong boundaries Urban type: Type 2	Primarily residential area on northeast outskirts of Bedfont with large schools to south. Strip of older buildings dating back to mid C19th along main road. Mostly postwar 2 storey semis with a few short terraces and bungalows. Slightly later development to west has triangular green amenity spaces. Community uses amongst older buildings along south side of main road, with cul-de-sacs of mixed period behind. No shops, the nearest being on Staines Road some 15 minutes walk to south, via foot and cycleway link towards Feltham.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
C		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2, 6 and 4	Large, primarily residential area forming northwest quarter of Bedfont, stretching back from Staines Road's de facto high street and the historic core. Mix of mostly postwar 2 storey semis with a few short terraces and some bungalows on northern fringe. Occasional pockets of Garden Suburb-style development though mostly long strips of speculative semis with characteristic rear access lanes. c2000 3 storey flats infill at northern gateway. Area of business use on western edge. Served by local and neighbourhood centres on Staines Road.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
D		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Contrast with surrounding area Urban type: Type 5	Exclusively residential award-winning c2010 regeneration of postwar housing estate. 2-4 storey terraces, flats and maisonettes with plentiful balconies. Notably features two crescents of 2 storey terraces with central grassed amenity space which suggest a Georgian/Garden Suburb hybrid. Two very long wide streets with tarmac footways, dominated by surface parking with regular though still immature trees. Tallest buildings are on main road. Located very close to neighbourhood centre.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Bedfont

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	ambience & assessment
E		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 1	Primarily residential, focused on single street dating from late C19th, linking two main routes which converge at historic core to west. Irregular mix of late Victorian/early Edwardian and prewar/early interwar 2 storey semis and short terraces, though some detached and some bungalows. Some postwar and late C20th infill of similar form with exception of long slab of 3 storey 1970s flats and maisonettes on west side of street at northern end. Some community uses along route. Well-served by neighbourhood centre to south.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
F		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Strong boundaries Urban type: Type 2 and 4	Exclusively residential ‘island’ bounded to both north and south by artificial rivers, with just two vehicular access points onto Staines Road. Late interwar/early postwar 2 storey semis with some short terraces, many in Moderne-style with signature suntrap windows. Some 1960s cul-de-sac infill of 2 storey terraces. Few street trees, with the exception of those in the two crescent-shaped grassed amenity spaces in the centre, which vaguely suggest a Garden Suburb-style focus. Reasonable access to services and open spaces.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
G		High Street/Neighbourhood Centre Function Linearity Urban type: Type 7 and 4	Eastern section of Staines Road, from edge of study area to neighbourhood centre. From east, a bewildering mix of residential and commercial uses, 1 and 2 storey semis and detached houses with irregular setbacks, in contrast to opposite side of road. Coherence increases westwards, culminating in main shopping centre with some uniform early and later postwar shopping parades and a 1970s 3 storey flats estate off the main street. Footway is mostly wide affording outdoor cafe seating and substantial tree-planting.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
H		Historic Core Focal/Nodal Feel and Function Urban type: Type 4 and 2 (parts atypical)	Area surrounding the original core of Bedfont, focused on St. Mary’s Church and the Green. The Green itself is formed of two attractively wooded, irregular spaces either side of Staines Road, the northern part essentially being a progressive widening of the linear green that stretches east-west along the main road. Features a cluster of historic buildings to southwest, a small shopping parade with an historic pub and a small early postwar, modestly Arts and Crafts-style 1-2 storey estate set around its own green spaces.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Bedfont

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	ambience & assessment
I		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Exclusively residential Fairholme Estate off south side of Staines Road just west of neighbourhood centre. 1930s Arts and Crafts Garden Suburb style development consisting of a formal layout around a large grassed and tree-planted quadrangle. 1-2 storey houses with an attractive variety of Dutch gables and tile-hung walls. The houses form a group and are linked with arches that form entrances to the rear gardens. A community hall is included. Limited public access within estate though highly visible from street.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
J		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 1	Primarily residential on regular grid of streets south of neighbourhood centre. Irregular mix of late Victorian/ early Edwardian and prewar/interwar 2 storey semis and short terraces, though some detached houses and some bungalows. No street trees or grass verges and parts of footway are dedicated to parking. Well-served by neighbourhood centre to north.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
K		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Primarily residential off east side of Bedfont Lane and south of Staines Road, surrounding large, private recreation ground. Mostly early postwar 2 storey semis and short terraces, though housing along Bedfont Lane is late interwar. Terraces confined to eastern edge, mostly on cul-de-sac. Generous grass verges with modest tree planting on main roads. Late C20th flats infill to northeast. Benefits from proximity to two centres.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
L		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Fringe location Urban type: Type 8	Exclusively employment in use, Bedfont Lakes Office Park is located on the southwest edge of the built-up area and overlooks Bedfont Country Park. An award winning but rather isolated business development, it comprises 9 buildings of varying footprints but uniform height (3-4 storeys) arranged orthogonally around three large squares with surface and underground parking. Area also includes large footprint mid-rise office building and retail uses to north. Poorly served by public transport, requiring private shuttle service.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Bedfont

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	ambience & assessment
M		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 4	Exclusively residential pod/enclave on the southwest edge of the built-up area, with only one vehicular access point. 1980s mix of 3-4 storey flats and maisonettes and 2 storey terraces on branching cul-de-sac with car parks and generous though ill-defined green spaces, with some trees, on mostly orthogonal layout. Backs onto main road. Pedestrian access to neighbouring areas, particularly to newer development to south and children's play area.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
N		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 5	Exclusively residential pod/enclave on the southwest edge of the built-up area, with only one vehicular access point. 2000s mix of 3-5 storey perimeter and horseshoe blocks of single aspect flats and maisonettes, and 3 storey townhouses on branching cul-de-sac with surface and undercroft car parking and peripheral green spaces on mostly orthogonal layout. Includes children's play area. Backs onto main road. Pedestrian access to neighbouring areas.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
O		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Primarily residential with large school on southern edge overlooking open space, and library on main road to north. Mix of early postwar 2 storey semis and short terraces laid out on reasonably permeable irregular street grid with some cul-de-sacs. Overall Garden Suburb feel. Architectural quality varies from plain toward the hinterland, to Arts and Crafts influenced toward the main road. Broadly focused on green space with war memorial just south of main road. Some generous grass squares and triangles though little regular tree-planting.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
P		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Primarily residential with community use on eastern edge. Mostly similar in built form, layout and period to adjacent Area O, with an overall Garden Suburb feel, but characterised by series of large open spaces running from Bedfont Lane southwards to urban edge via a channel of partly wooded parkland. Later 1960s development of similar form but including bungalows to southeast. Much of the area is rather remote from services. Pedestrian access to fringe open space and ultimately to Feltham town centre from southern edge.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Bedfont

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	ambience & assessment
Q 	Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 4	Exclusively residential pod/enclave on the south edge of the built-up area, with only one vehicular access point. Late 1980s fine-grained development of 2 storey terraces on intricately branching cul-de-sac with courtyards, footpaths, surface car parking and some green spaces on mostly orthogonal layout. Shares some open spaces with Areas P and R. Much of the area is rather remote from services. Pedestrian access to fringe open space and ultimately to Feltham town centre from southern edge.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
R 	General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 3	Exclusively residential pod/enclave on the south edge of the built-up area, with only one vehicular access point. 1970s development of 3 open perimeter blocks of mostly 3-4 storey flats and maisonettes but incorporating some 2 storey terrace houses. Internal though publicly accessible open spaces within each block with external surface parking. Shares some open spaces with Areas P and R. All of the area is remote from services. Pedestrian access to fringe open space and ultimately to Feltham town centre from southern edge.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
S 	Special use Isolation Fringe location Urban type: Atypical	H M Prison Feltham aka Feltham Young Offenders Institute. Large area of low rise institutional buildings set in parkland. Strongly bounded to north by railway line, to west and south by trading estate and to east by public open space. Severely restricted public access.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
T 	Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Fringe location Urban type: Type 6	Exclusively employment use. Occupied by extensive trading estate, with typical large footprint low rise supersheds. Two linear branches with single vehicle and pedestrian access point. Surrounds south part of Bedfont Lakes Country park on east and south sides and bounded by Feltham Young Offenders Institute to east.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Bedfont

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	ambience & assessment
U		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Fringe location Urban type: Type 2	Exclusively residential area south of and historically related to Feltham Young Offenders Institute. Better connected with Ashford, outside the borough, than with Bedfont or Feltham. Mix of mostly 2 storey late interwar and early postwar semis and short terraces. Greater mix of styles, types and periods on main road with 3 storey flats infill behind. Generous though underused green quadrangle. Nearest local centre lies to west, outside of borough. Poorly served by public transport. Recreation ground with club house to east.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
V		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Fringe location Urban type: Atypical	Almost exclusively employment use with some residential properties dating back to the late C19th at the eastern end. Mostly occupied by Bedfont Industrial Estate, uses include a timber yard, mineral works, lorry parking and a dog kennel and cattery. Bounded by the east-west railway to the south and by green open space on all other sides. Poorly served by public transport.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
W		Extreme uniformity of use Large publicly accessible green open space with water bodies Local Nature Reserve & Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Metropolitan) Green Belt Open Land Urban type: Atypical	The area is mostly occupied and characterised by Bedfont Lakes Country Park, with some open public space to the northeast and water sports facilities to the west. Lakes are flooded former mineral workings. The park itself is in two unequal parts, severed by the east-west railway line. It is made up of gently rolling hills, wildflower meadows, woodland and wetlands providing a picturesque country setting in what is an otherwise urban and industrial area. Its several habitat types support a wide variety of insects, mammals, amphibians, and fish. Poorly served by public transport.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
X		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Fringe location Urban type: Type 6	Exclusively employment use. Occupied by extensive trading estate on major A30 London Road, with some very large footprint low rise supersheds. Bounded by attractive former gravel pit lake to south, green open space to east and north and a cul-de-sac of late interwar housing to west (outside of the borough). Only part of the estate (Westgate) is accessed from the main road the rest being accessed via a purpose-built road from the southeast. The estate is in a constant state of flux with seemingly continuous demolition and construction work. Poorly served by public transport.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Bedfont

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	ambience & assessment
Y 	General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Fringe location Urban type: Type 6	Exclusively employment use. Aviation services estate of 2 storey offices and large footprint warehouses to the north; large fuel terminal to west and south; water treatment facility to extreme south. Accessed from main road to north and surrounded on east, south and west by green open space. Poorly served by public transport.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Z 	Extreme uniformity of use Agricultural land Green Belt Open Land Urban type: Atypical	Area consists almost exclusively of open fields in agricultural use with some peripheral residential and commercial buildings on the roads that bound it to the north, east and west. Crossed north-south by a foot and cycle path along western edge.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

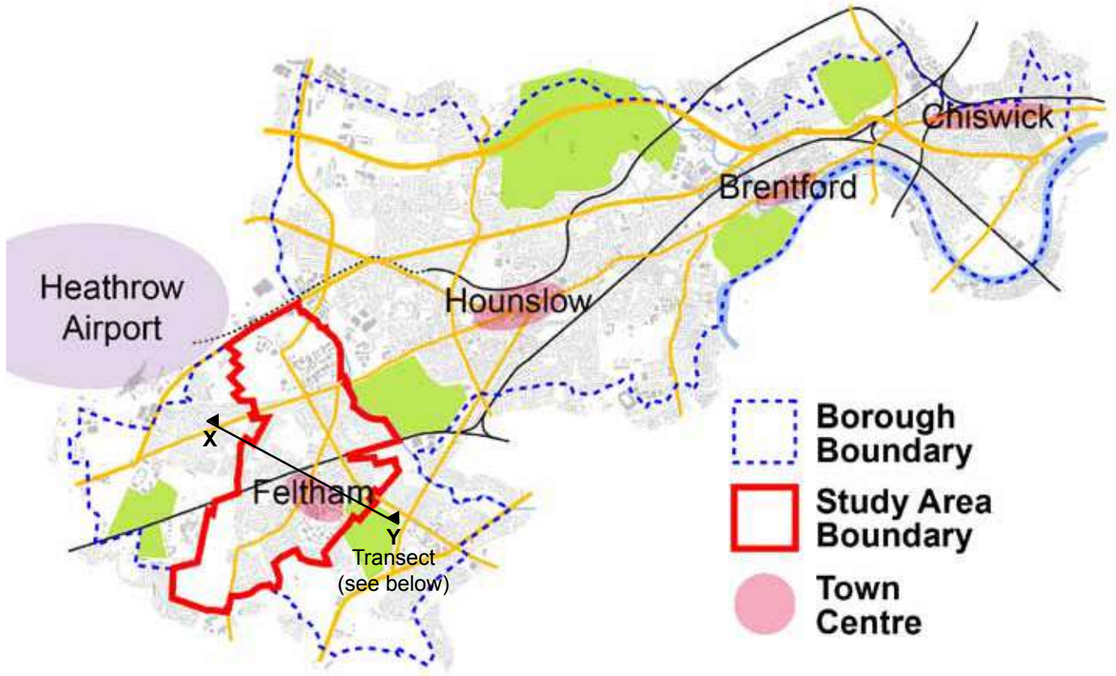


Feltham

3

Feltham

present-day context



The Feltham study area is located in the southwest of the borough on the edge of Greater London. It is crossed east-west by the South West Trains railway line from Central London via Hounslow town centre towards Reading and by the A315 Staines Road from Hounslow town centre and the east of the borough, and north-south by the A312.

Central Feltham is a designated borough Town Centre and a District Centre in the London Plan. The area is bounded to the west by the Bedfont study area and Green Belt land, to the south by the Hanworth study area and Green Belt land, to the east by the River Crane and Hounslow Heath and to the north by Heathrow Airport. Feltham and its satellites Bedfont and Hanworth are relatively cut off from the rest of the borough by open land and large trading estates. All three form the 'West Area' of the borough.

The study area is almost level with a slight upward slope to the north. Two artificial rivers cross the area and the River Crane, with its wooded banks, forms the eastern boundary beyond which lies Hounslow Heath. To the north and southwest lie large areas of semi-rural open space. The waterways and some of the spaces are designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

Feltham is today probably best known regionally and nationally as the location of the Young Offenders Institution that bears its name (see Bedfont). This is perhaps unfortunate since it is also a powerful regional magnet for employment, retail and leisure.

It is predominantly residential with large areas devoted to employment uses and may be classified as mostly postwar outer suburban. Feltham town centre saw comprehensive redevelopment in the mid-2000s and continues to be a major regional attractor. The area is served by train and underground from central London and by buses from the rest of the borough. The local bus service is adequate to good. There are no major barriers to movement, though both vehicle and pedestrian movement across the railway line in the town centre is awkward.

Feltham is one of the greenest areas in Greater London, with three rivers, access to Hounslow Heath, semi-rural land to the north and southwest, a lake-dotted country park to the west, historic Hanworth Park to the south as well as its own large recreation spaces.

Much of the area is both acoustically and economically dominated by Heathrow Airport. Feltham has many of the social and environmental issues typical of towns that developed in the postwar era. The area continues to be a major focus for regeneration both in the borough and in Greater London as a whole.

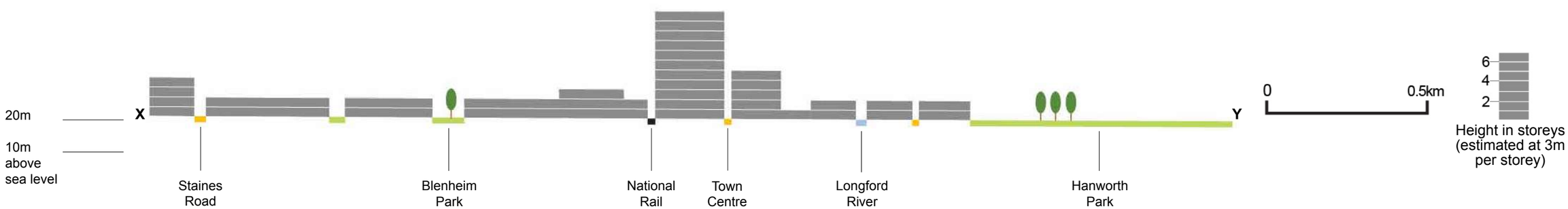


The regenerated mixed-use mid-to-high rise town centre



Spacious and tidy business parks attract multinational companies

Title page photo: The pond, gardens and war memorial of the Green face the town centre across Feltham High Street



Feltham

brief historic context

Feltham was documented as an established Parish in the Domesday Survey following the Norman Conquest, and would have been a Saxon settlement in woodlands south of the Roman road to Staines. It had arable land for crops and meadow land for pasture. It formed an ancient parish in the Spelthorne Hundred of Middlesex, centred on St Dunstan's Church. The area to the north of the Roman Road lay in the much larger Elthorne Hundred.

The study area's eastern boundary is the Crane, a natural river but also part of an area of reservoirs, cuts and sluices made to form an artificial water 'leat' to mills in Isleworth. Two further artificial courses affect the area, taken from the River Colne at Longford, west of the borough. The C16th Duke of Northumberland's River runs along the north of the Roman/Staines road which feeds into the Crane and under the road at Baber Bridge. The Longford River (or Queens or Cardinals River) was cut about a hundred years later in the1630s. The river enters the study area as it cuts southeast, through what became the town of Feltham and via Hanworth Park to Hampton Court.

The church is noted on a late C17th map of Middlesex identifying Feltham with a church tower symbol. The area is so flat that Feltham hill, a mild rise, to the south (now in Spelthorne), is pictured as a hill surmounted by a building, but this may have denoted an earlier protected or fortified area.

The manor house is shown on 1865-1934 mapping as being sited on the High Street at the corner of Manor Lane. Commentary also says it and adjacent buildings were destroyed by fire in 1632. However this seems to have been the site of early settlement and large houses grouped later near the pub and green opposite.

In 1800 an Act of Enclosure saw much of Hounslow Heath's common land privatised for agricultural use and some of this was added to Feltham. The incoming railway line of 1848 created an artificial hill to cross the Longford River, which is still owned by the Crown Estate, and encouraged the village to expand northwards, this length forming the High Street. Incoming Chapel Lane (Bedfont Road) ran directly between the station and Bedfont via a farm with a terrace of six cottages. Next to the station a chapel was built on one side and a hotel on the other. For the first time a High Street proper appeared, although a village pond north of the Red Lion was retained as a focal point. By 1865 also, tracks across the Heath are shown as direct roads, for example, from Staines Road after its crossing of the Crane at Baber Bridge.

By the late C19th the new land had been developed into large farms and market gardens. Dense perimeter shops between the pond and the railway lined the High Street on both sides. Terraced housing, a church and schools were established to the south east of the railway bridge near the Longford River. St Dunstan's however remained a central space with what became a road all round, but the church is side-lined.

In the early C20th the military took over a large area to the south east. It had its own incoming railway tracks, created a large depot and quarters, good looking ancillary accommodation and housing.

During the C20th the market gardens were gradually replaced with light industry (including tramcar and aircraft manufacture), gravel and aggregate extraction on the east side, and large new housing estates on the west. The High street lost its small scale shops, then its 1960s shopping centre, and gained a much larger scale of mixed development in the area near the station. Much of the area on the linking roads is infilled with housing.

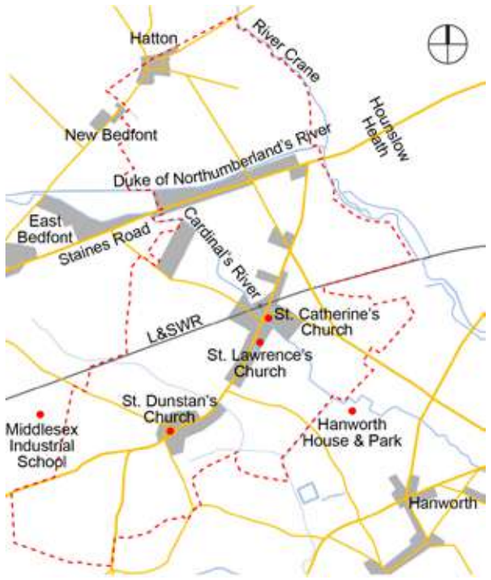


Feltham High Street from railway bridge, 1907

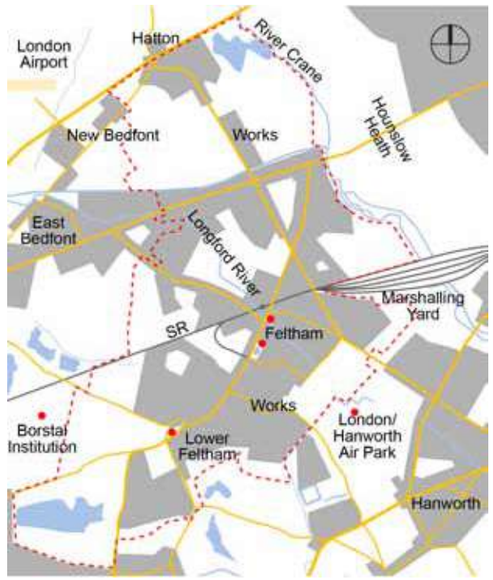


Frontage of new shopping precinct, Feltham High Street, 1960s

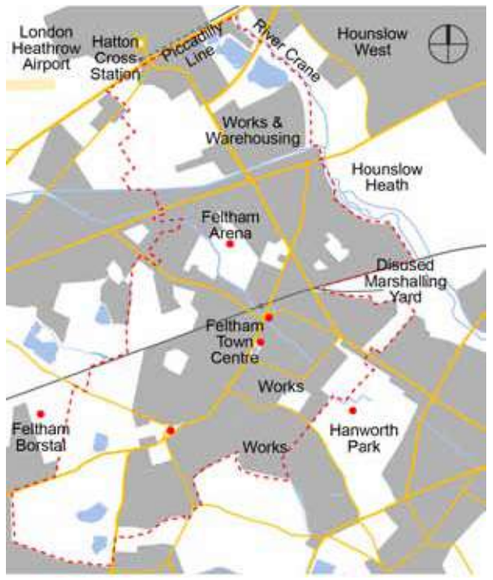
c1895



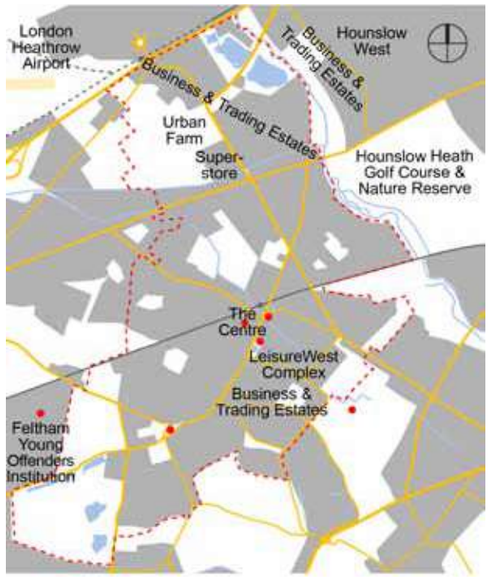
c1950



c1975

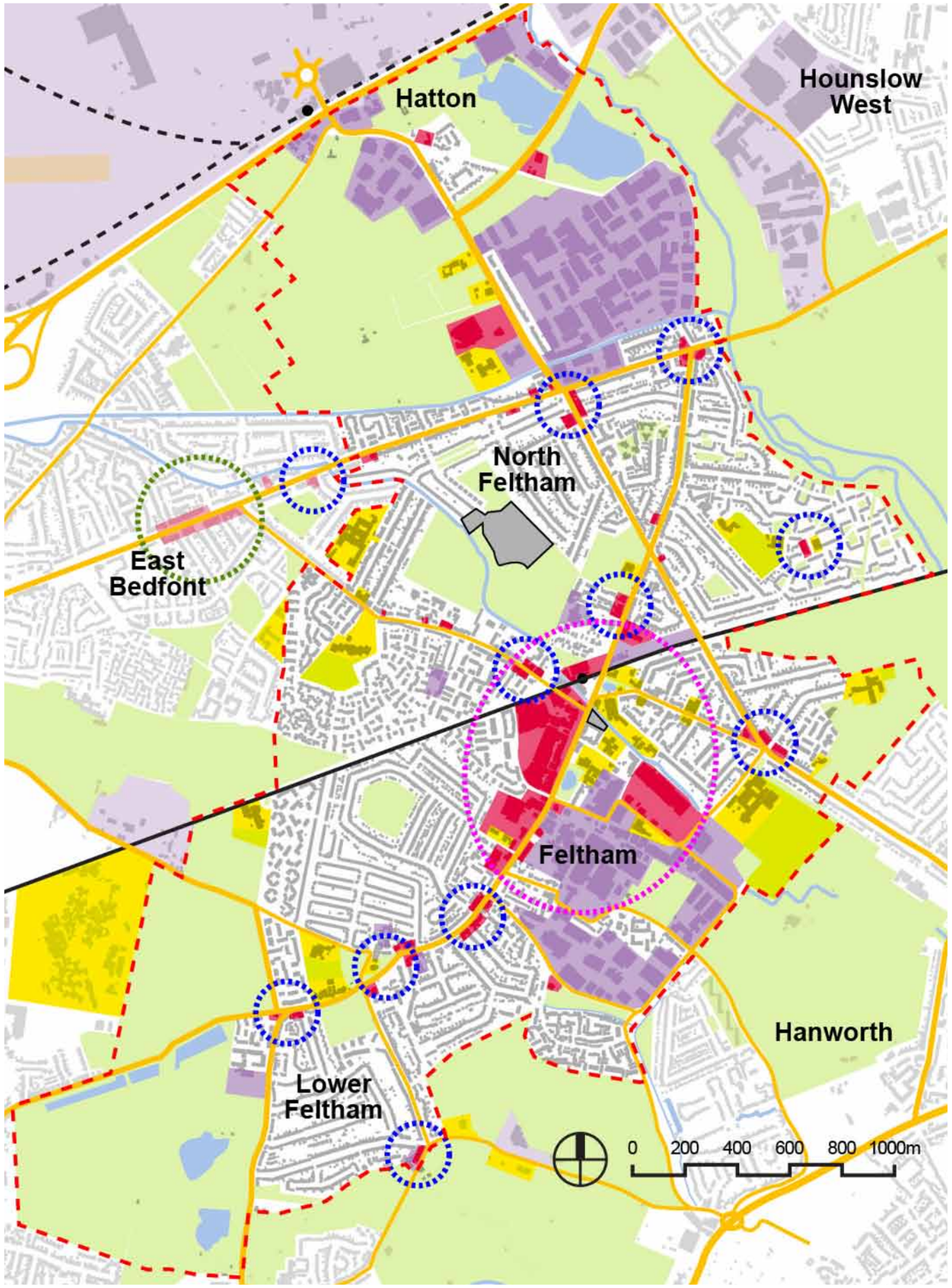


c2010



Feltham

land and building use



The study area is predominantly residential in use and may be classified as mostly postwar outer suburban. There are however large areas devoted to employment uses in the form of trading estates both centrally and on the fringes. There are two main historic cores, one in the southwest of the study area, focused on the parish church, and a later one which evolved around the railway station. Feltham town centre and its adjacent housing estate saw major regeneration in the mid-2000s and though it has its detractors it is considered by many to be a great improvement on its previous incarnation. Along with a big box-style leisure complex to the immediate east, the town centre is a major regional attractor.

Most of the residential areas are fairly homogeneous, consisting of late interwar, trans-war and (mostly) 2 storey postwar semis and short terraces. There are however small pockets of earlier (c1900) developments and postwar infill and finger developments of mid-to-high rise flats. Late C20th low rise (2-3 storeys) developments have occurred on the western and southern urban fringes, often with no relationship or connection with adjacent earlier developments. The most recent housing comes in the form of mid-to-high rise (up to 10 storey) apartments above the large retail units of the town centre. The urban environment is generally of fair to good quality with an even distribution of open spaces, though some more recent developments are relatively isolated from local centres.

Retail is concentrated in the town centre and in its north and south fringes in large floorspace structures. There is also a large out-of-town superstore to the north which gives rise to feelings of oversupply and duplication. Small shopping parades serve local areas with varying degrees of quality and adequacy.

The area's many educational facilities are evenly distributed within the residential areas and occupy large areas of land.



The High Street and town centre



Typical local shopping parade



The most common housing type: 2 storey postwar semis and short terraces



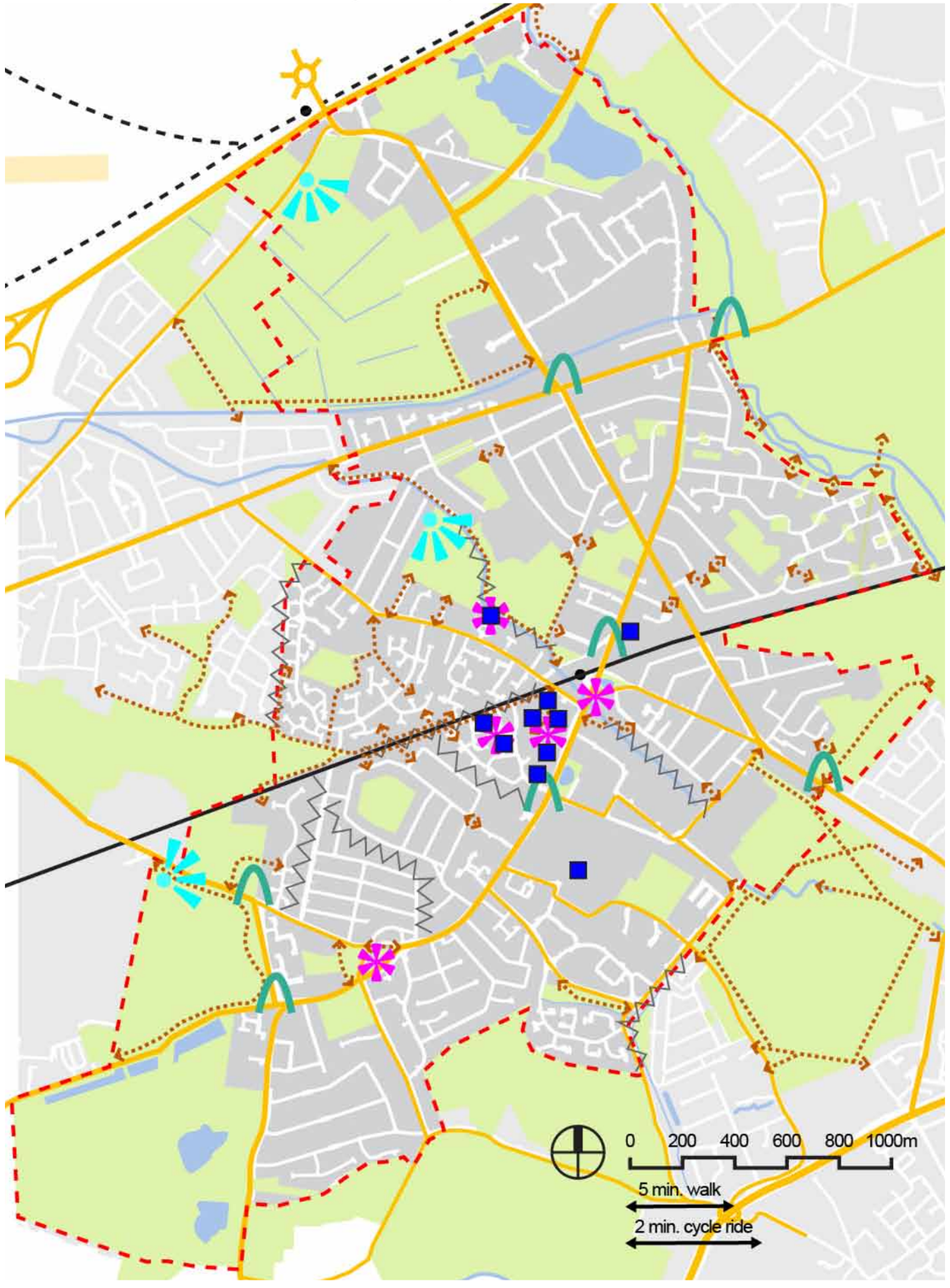
Incongruous lone tower block in otherwise low rise neighbourhood



2000s-style estate regeneration, town centre

Feltham

movement and legibility



The overall movement structure is dominated by the east-west road and rail routes and to a lesser extent by a north-south road which forms part of an Outer London quasi-orbital route. The northern part of the study area can be accessed from the Great South West Road at Hatton Cross. Apart from one short section of railway line, none present major barriers to movement. To the east the area feels poorly connected to the rest of the borough due to the extensive open spaces, including Hounslow Heath, along the River Crane and the large trading estates along its edge. Lesser though often busy roads criss-cross the area on an irregular and sometimes character area-defining grid. From these hang for the most part highly permeable and often quite regular grids of streets though there are several instances of branching cul-de-sacs and limited access 'pod' developments mostly on the fringes. Apart from the latter, on a local level the route network offers a relatively high degree of connectivity.

The area is served by train from central London and the rest of the borough at Feltham Station in the town centre from which there is a bus link to Heathrow Airport. The north of the area can be accessed by underground at Hatton Cross. Most buses follow the main routes, though the suburban hinterlands receive some degree of service.

Pedestrian movement and way-finding through the area is on the whole comfortable and efficient with some notable exceptions: the redeveloped town centre is car-biased with narrow and/or cluttered footways, and relates poorly to the historic green and pond; the north and south sides of the overall town centre/high street area are poorly connected by a single narrow footway (an awkwardly negotiated footbridge or a long wait at a level crossing being the only alternatives); and in some developments uncomfortable-feeling and badly maintained back footpaths offer the only convenient trans-neighbourhood connections.

Landmark buildings both new and old are concentrated in the centre of the area and may often be glimpsed at the ends of streets and across the larger open spaces giving some sense of urban focus.



Parking dominates the new town centre; footways are tight



Narrow, cluttered and unattractive footway, High Street

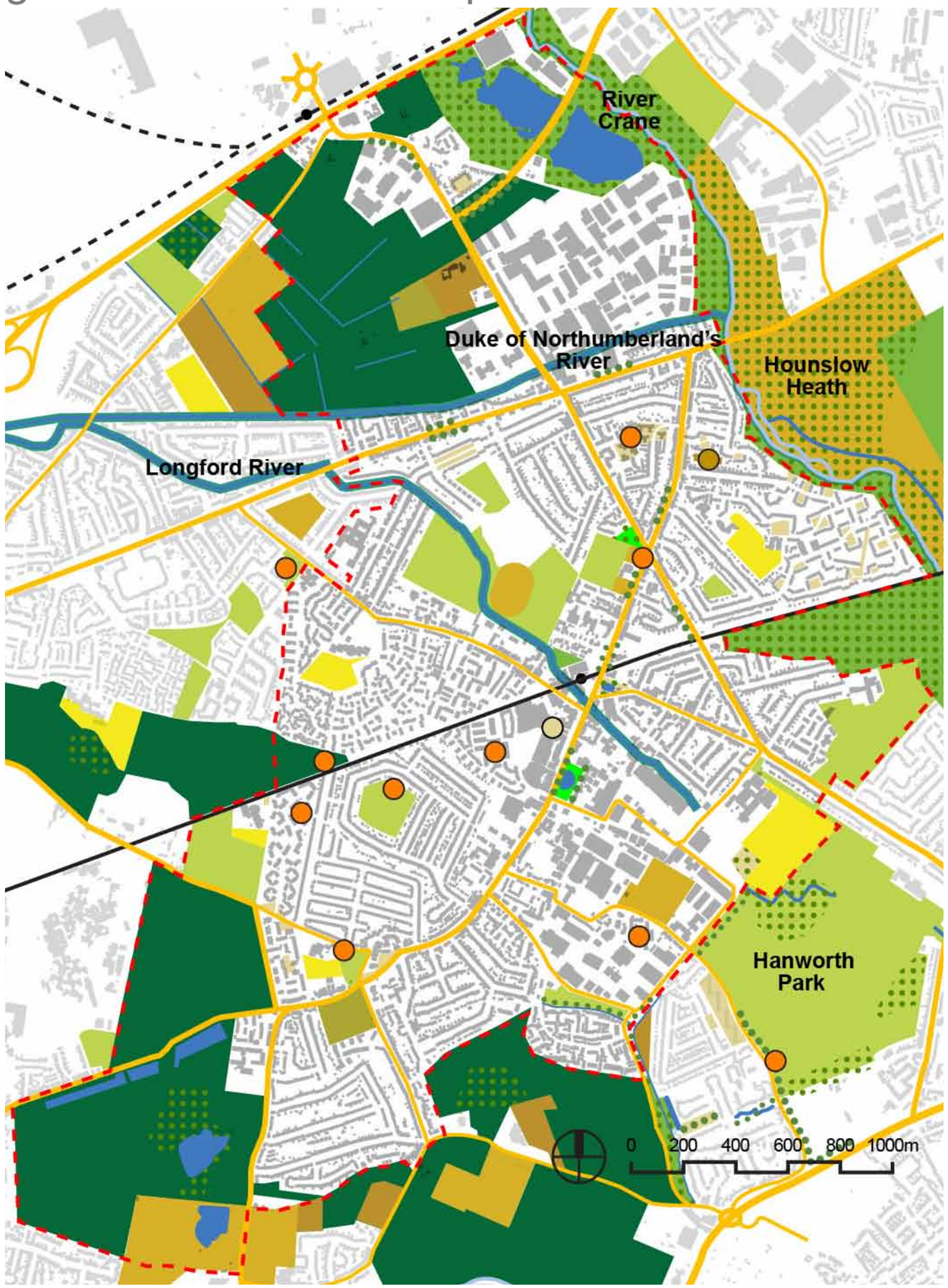

Extremely narrow footway on only one side of street links north and south of centre


Uneasy back path by railway is, for some, only direct pedestrian access to town centre


Crossing over main north-south route

Feltham

green and blue landscape



The provision, size, type and related uses of publicly accessible, or at least visible, green open space in the study area are typical for its location at the boundary of Greater London. The River Crane, with its associated woodland and access to Hounslow Heath, forms the eastern boundary of the area and, to the northeast, provides a green and blue buffer zone between two large commercial zones. To the south the adjacent former rail marshalling yards constitute recovering scrubland and remain inaccessible to the public. Extensive Hanworth Park, with its playing fields, is easily accessible from the south. The study area is fringed to the northwest and southwest by Green Belt land in the form of open fields with some formal recreational uses, allotments and flooded former gravel pits. Hounslow Urban Farm, a rare breeds centre and London's largest community farm, is located in the north.

Within the study area are numerous open spaces with a range of sizes and uses. These include parks with playing fields, some with a local and some with a town-wide focus, large school playing fields, more formal recreation spaces and an attractive cemetery. In three cases the more locally focused parks are set within residential estates and at least partly surrounded by the backs of houses, a typical design feature of the interwar and early postwar eras. The town centre features a more formal garden with a central pond.

Along with the River Crane, Feltham is crossed west-east by the Duke of Northumberland's River and northwest-southeast by the Longford River, both artificial waterways. The former is inaccessible and mostly backed onto by residential and business uses. The latter may be followed by foot and cycleway through the large park in the northern half of the study area as far as the edge of the town centre. Within the centre it is an attractive visual and environmental asset. Southwards from there on it is only partly accessible. The south is threaded with minor artificial waterways, one of which, with its adjacent small informal parkland, forms an attractive edge to a late C20th housing development.

Feltham is not notable for its street trees, though the period of development has left a legacy of grassed amenity spaces of a variety of styles, sizes and conditions. Those associated with the earlier (late interwar and early postwar) residential areas tend to relate more positively to the streets and buildings and take the form of grass verges, crescents and (in some cases quite large) squares. Most are well-maintained. Later postwar large infill developments, typified by residential buildings standing alone in open space and undefined by street patterns, sometimes result in lifeless, un/underused green areas.

- Public gardens
- Parks & playing fields
- Natural & semi-natural urban green spaces
- Green corridors
- School playing fields
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Amenity spaces
- Cemeteries & churchyards
- Accessible countryside (green-belt)
- Allotments, community gardens & urban/city farms
- Children's & teenagers' play areas
- Rivers, natural water bodies
- Canals, man-made water bodies
- Wooded areas
- Street trees



The old village green and pond



The Longford River and Blenheim park looking towards town centre



The Longford River passes through town centre



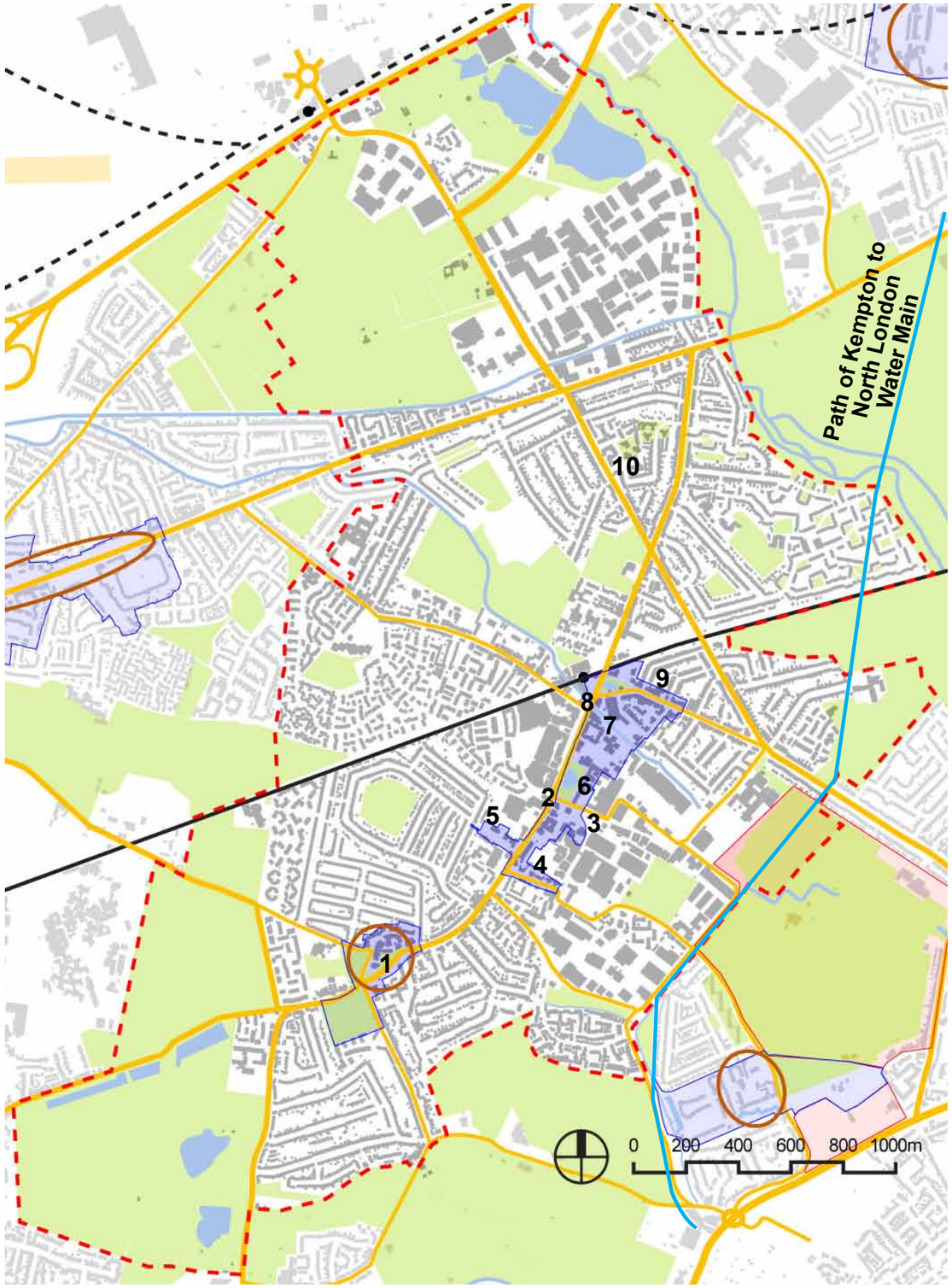
Generous grass verges are common though condition can be poor



SLOAP - Space Left Over After Planning

Feltham

heritage assets



The founding church was the early medieval St Dunstan's [1], believed to be C14th, and is the likely site of the Saxon and medieval village of Feltham, mentioned in the Domesday Book. The Church itself, Grade II* listed although rebuilt in a medieval style in 1802, appears remarkably evocative. Its vicarage alongside is also listed, as are six of the tombs in the churchyard. As an enclave with its green, cemetery and low density ribbon development of varying styles it has been bypassed on the east side and remains almost rural in the south view. To try to keep the development around the edge of the circular road appropriate in appearance and scale it was recently designated a conservation area.

The late C17th Red Lion public house [2] in the present-day town centre marks the southeast corner of a lane leading to the northern boundaries of Feltham House [3]. Both are listed buildings. Feltham House, a formerly outlying elegant house from mid C18th, is in Ministry of Defence use, and the MOD estate (in the C20th access to much of the area around was restricted) includes well-grouped later housing adjacent to some good quality robust military buildings. Elmwood Avenue [4] has good late Victorian villas, one being locally listed. The locally listed (heavily reconstructed) Manor House [5] represents former large buildings of the area. Opposite on the east side is a village green [6] with the war memorial and pond, where later Victorian houses, 1930s replacement of an earlier Roman Catholic Church and adjacent school buildings in a vernacular style add an attractive further backdrop. All of these are in the conservation area based on Feltham.

Only one small building of town centre frontage and scale remains, next to the Arts and Crafts reconstruction in the 1930s of the former Railway Hotel [7], which arrived soon after the railway in 1848. The railway station building is of an attractive 1850 origin, on the local list, which also includes some of the late Victorian buildings. This north eastern end of the High Street is also in the conservation area and includes a secondary pond (perhaps a former gravel pit) and a naturalistic length of the Longford River. The group is marked by former St Catherine's church [8] of 1880, with listed landmark tower and lofty steeple added in 1898. East of this area, Florence Villas [9] began the Victorian street layout and the area has been influenced by the Victorian style even when built somewhat later.

In former fields on the lane linking Bath Road to Hampton a disappeared manor house has been survived by an elegant classical stable block and yard [10], listed, next to its former lodge, which was much expanded between 1865 and 1894 and is now locally listed. They form a recognisable group on Harlington Road West.

The path of the early C20th Kempton to North London water main appears as a disjointed series of sometimes fenced linear open spaces and occasional utility structures.



St Dunstan's Church at the original medieval village



The Red Lion pub in the town centre opposite the Green



The Manor House, now in NHS use



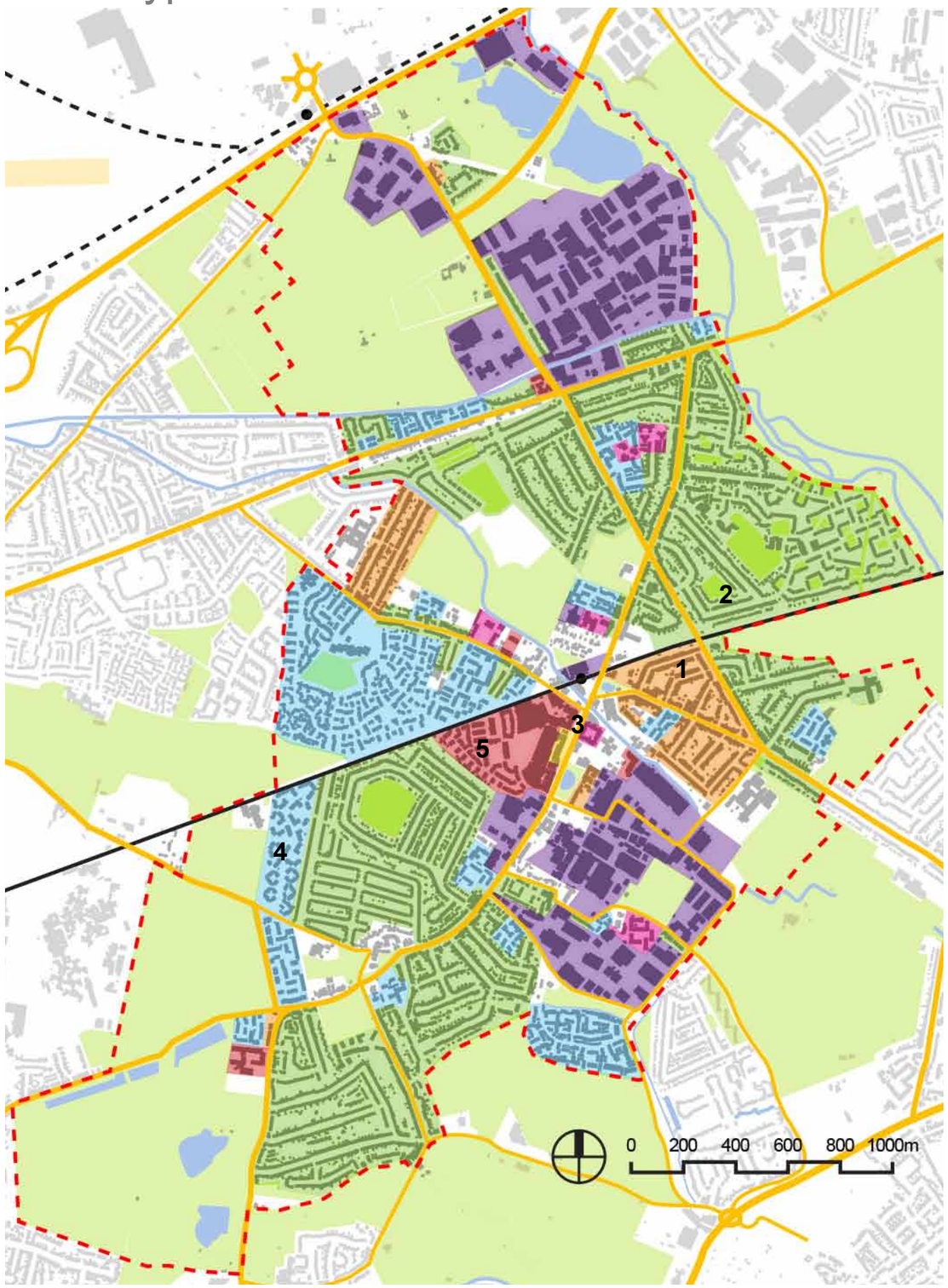
Victorian housing on regular street grid east of town centre



The Magistrate's Court east of town centre

Feltham

urban types



The most dominant residential urban types by area within the Feltham study area are the inter- and early postwar loose grid (type 2) followed closely by the courts and cul-de-sacs (type 4) of the later postwar years and the 1980s. A few pockets of slabs and towers (type 3) appear, unusually for the borough and their period, relatively near to the town centre, indeed one typical estate has been regenerated as part of an urban renaisssance-style (type 5) development associated with the town centre. The exclusively commercial/ retail big box (type 6) occupies large areas of land to the north of the area and to the immediate south of the town centre, engulfing some incongruous enclaves of residential use (types 2, 3 & 4). Along with the town centre mixed-use regeneration, pockets of higher density urban renaissance (type 5) have appeared more recently, mostly on the edges of the original historic urban centre (type 7), little of which now remains. The compact grid (type 1) is represented just east of the town centre and by an originally more remote development to the west.

Unlike in the older parts of the borough to the east the urban types are more radially than concentrically arranged around the urban centre, with sporadic patches of infill and fringe development.

For more information on general urban types found in the borough, including historical development, aspects of form and SWOT analyses, see Section 4: Urban Types.

- Urban type 1 - compact grid
- Urban type 2 - loose grid
- Urban type 3 - slabs and towers
- Urban type 4 - courts and cul-de-sacs
- Urban type 5 - urban renaissance
- Urban type 6 - big box
- Urban type 7 - urban centre
- Atypical (not representative of an above type)



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3



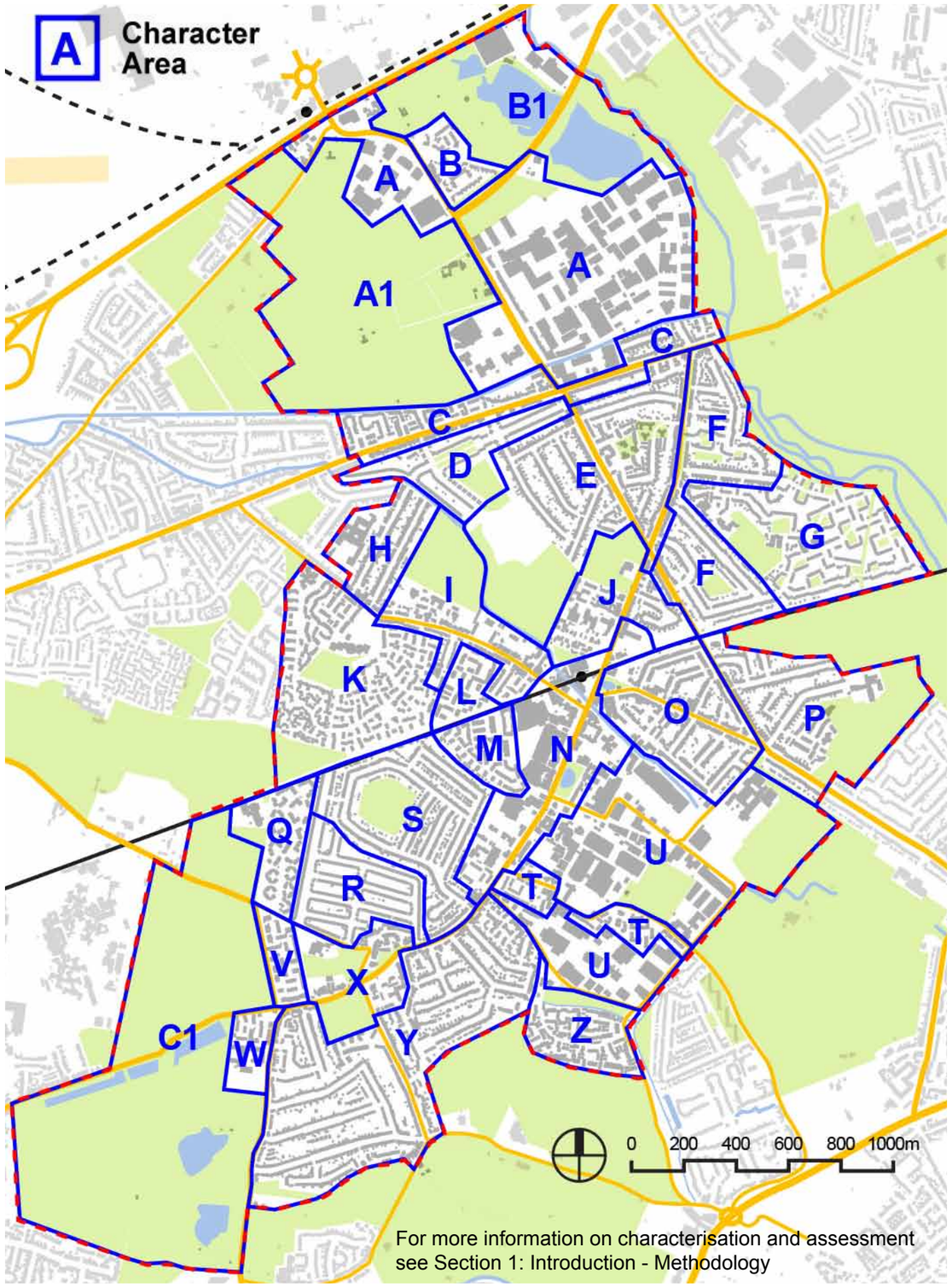
Type 4



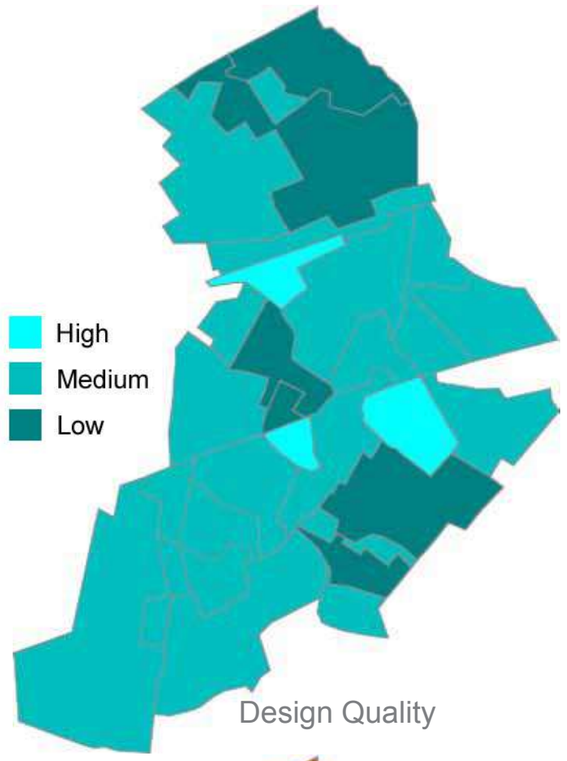
Type 5

Feltham

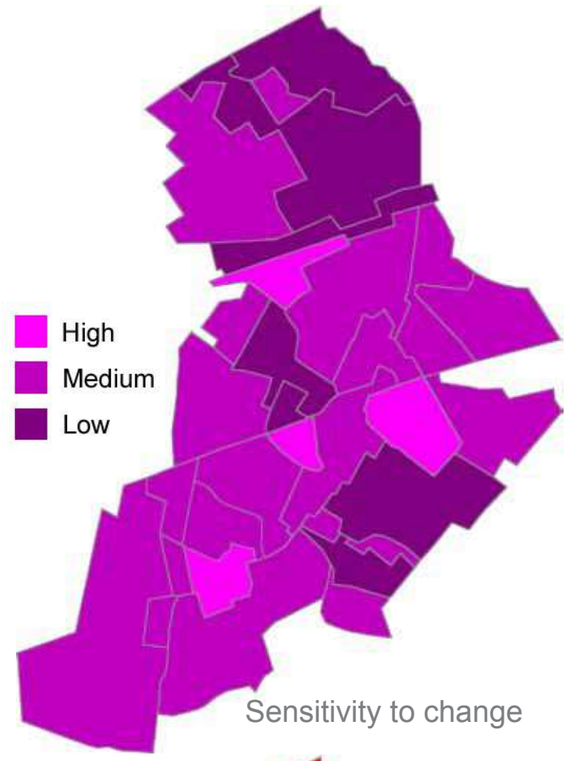
character areas and assessments



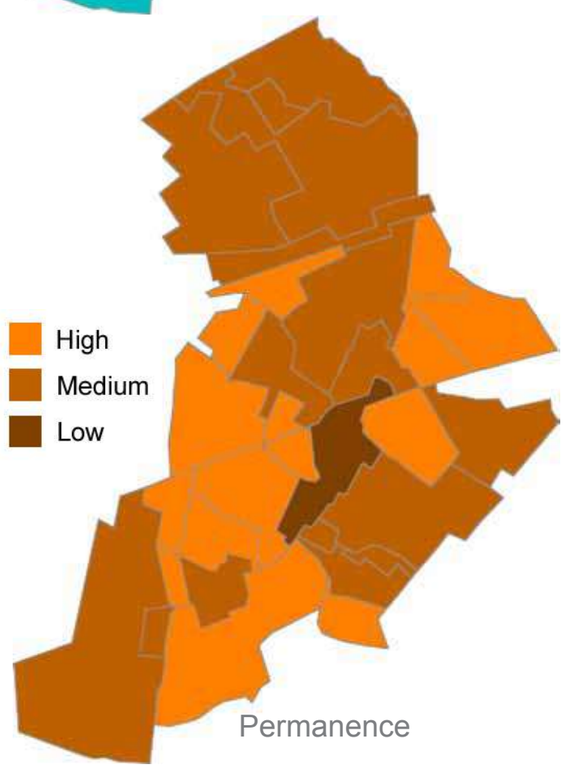
For more information on characterisation and assessment see Section 1: Introduction - Methodology



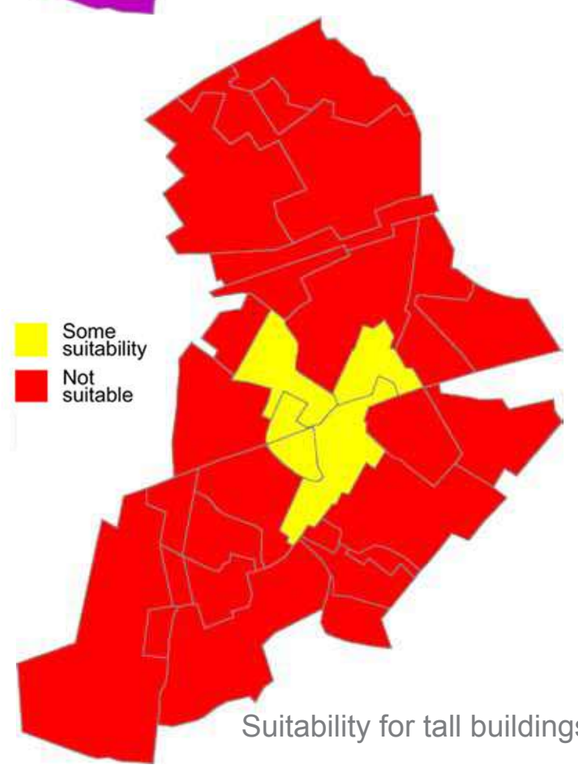
Design Quality



Sensitivity to change



Permanence



Suitability for tall buildings

Feltham

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
A		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Urban type: Type 6 and 2	Area mostly occupied by extensive trading estate/ business park, with typical large footprint low rise supersheds. Backs onto Staines Road and extends via Hatton village to southeast edge of Heathrow Airport. Superstore and government offices to southwest. More airport-related uses to north. Strip of postwar 2 storey residential along busy Faggs Road. Bounded east and west by open space, including cemetery and urban farm.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
B		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Isolation Urban type: Type 2	Hatton village. Mostly trans-war 2 storey semis, short terraces and maisonettes in Arts and Crafts-influenced Garden Suburb style. Generous and well-kept amenity spaces. Strip of late C19th houses along Faggs Road. Focused on old village green with large and popular public house. Nearest retail uses are convenience store at Hatton Cross station and superstore to south.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
C		Moderate uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Location along main road Urban type: Type 2, 4, 5 and 6	Ribbon of mostly residential uses along Staines Road, Strong boundaries to north by Duke of Northumberland's River. Mostly 2 storey houses, some from late C19th though mostly late interwar. Considerable amount of 2-3 storey postwar infill particularly in cul-de-sacs on northwest side of road. Generous though inconsistent grass verges with some tree-planting along much of route. Well-served by shopping parades in middle and at either end of area.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
D		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Exclusively residential and one of the earliest of Feltham's planned developments. Early 1930s Garden Suburb-style 2 storey semis and some short terraces. Based along and around strong east-west axis, which widens into a rectangular grassed amenity space. Houses face onto Longford River to west, on two long cul-de-sac branches off main axis, which crosses river to merge smoothly into earlier street. Well-served by shopping parades at either end of area.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Feltham

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
E		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2, 3 and 4	Primarily residential with large area of park and formal recreation land, including arena site, to southwest. Trans-war (mid 1930s to late 1940s) 2 storey semis (west side) and short terraces (east side), which developed northwards from earlier core to south. West side is more uniform; east side contains considerable amount of later postwar infill in the form of two small groups of mid-rise flat blocks and two terraced cul-de-sacs. Comprehensive local centre to north.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
F		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Primarily residential in two linked sections off east side of Hounslow Road, with small internal park to south. Mostly postwar 2 storey semis and short terraces. Particularly notable are the 4-unit twin gambrel-fronted terraces in the south section. Generous grass verges with modest tree planting on main road. Slightly later garden suburb-style infill in centre, similar to neighbouring Area G. Somewhat run-down shopping parade to north.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
G		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Primarily residential off east side of Hounslow Road extending to far eastern edge of study area, where it is bounded by and has access to River Crane and Hounslow Heath. Envelopes school and its grounds to south. Almost exclusively plain postwar 2 storey short terraces with smattering of semis. Characterised by large, regularly occurring, grassed amenity spaces with parking spaces and no trees. North-south greenway. Small 1970s cul-de-sac of similar form to west. Unappealing central shopping parade.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
H		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 1	Primarily residential with access to large school and its grounds to west. Irregular mix of late Victorian/ early Edwardian and prewar/interwar 2 storey semis and short terraces, though some detached and some bungalows. Links well to main axis of later interwar garden suburb development (Area D) across Longford River to northwest. Some small community uses to south though not close to local centres.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Feltham

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
I		Mix of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Location along and behind Bedfont Lane Urban type: Type 2, 4, 3 and 5	Bewildering mix of old and new stretching along and behind Bedfont Lane from edge of Feltham town centre to western edge of study area and the start of greater coherence in urban form. Covers a century of development and redevelopment, the oldest mostly being along the road with the more recent in the hinterlands, though there are exceptions. Most prominent feature is the incongruous single 12 storey tower block set back from the road in its own green and parking space. Some shopping parades and access to Blenheim Park.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Some
J		Mix of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Location along and behind Hounslow Road Urban type: Type 7, 2, 4, 6 and 3	Extensive transitional zone from town centre to more coherent and primarily resdidential areas to north, along and branching off Hounslow Road. Includes a traveller's site, a low-rise large footprint commercial use building and residential use. The latter range in form from late Victorian-prewar 2 storey houses on main road through early postwar semis to free-standing 1960s 3 storey flats and late C20th 2-3 storey courtyard flats. Community centre and park with formal recreation facilities, children's play area and garden to north.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Some
K		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Strong Boundaries Urban type: Type 4	Primarily residential surrounding large school and grounds in pod/enclave with just two vehicular access points, off Bedfont Lane. 1980s/90s mix of 2-3 storey flats, maisonettes, town houses, terraces, semis and detached houses built in discrete parcels and phases with slight variations in some aspects of form. Some intriguing architecture but also some poor street frontages. Essentially planned around and off a long crescent road. Pedestrian access to open space and ultimately to Feltham town centre from southern edge.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
L		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 4	Exclusively residential pod/enclave with only one vehicular access point, off Bedfont Lane. 1980s mix of 2-3 storey flats, maisonettes and terraces on branching cul-de-sac with car parks and green spaces on strict orthogonal layout. Gated, time-restricted pedestrian access to neighbouring areas and, ultimately, to open space and Feltham town centre, from southern edge.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Some

Feltham

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
M 	Uniformity of layout, use and period. Urban type: Type 5	2000s residential estate regeneration and redevelopment in tandem with that of adjacent town centre. Involved retention, renovation and relandscaping of two 13 storey slab towers and six 3 storey terraces of 1970s origin; recontextualisation of later western perimeter band of 2 storey houses; and construction of new 2-3 storey terraces in traditional perimeter block layout on previously un/underused amenity space.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Some
N  	Moderate uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, use and period. Town Centre/High Street function Urban type: Type 7 and 3	Feltham town centre. Primary retail area saw 2000s regeneration and redevelopment as a mixed use development including residential up to 11 storeys, a hotel, new shops, new library, medical centre, and new superstore. Modest degree of public realm with large area devoted to surface parking. Across the busy High Street is a traditional green with a pond, edged by a strip of older buildings, including a church and a pub. The east side also includes office buildings, particularly to the south, and a notable 1970s 4-5 storey residential perimeter block with internal square. The area extends north, via poor pedestrian links over railway, to include large footprint retail box and high rise office-conversion hotel. To the south are more large footprint retail boxes, a health centre in a listed building, a more locally oriented shopping parade and a low-rise 1970s housing estate. The Longford River crosses the area and, though access is limited, is an attractive visual and environmental asset.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Some
O 	Moderate uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 1 and 4	Wedge-shaped area, spreading east from town centre along historic route and strongly bounded to north by railway, to east by main road and to south by river. Mostly residential use but with important and long-standing community/institutional/civic uses towards core. Rich variety of 2 storey late C19th and early C20th houses including detached, semis, short terraces and some distinctive earlier large villas. Some postwar 3 storey flats infill. Other uses include c1900 school, police station and magistrates court. East end served by shopping parade.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Feltham

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
P 	General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2 and 4	Primarily residential off east side of A312 on two unconnected branching cul-de-sacs, bounded by private former railway land to north with education use and large park to southeast. Mostly postwar 2 storey semis and some short terraces. Includes distinctive gambrel-fronted 4-unit terraces and semis. Poorly related single access road infill of 1980s 2 storey houses and 3 storey flats on southeast edge. Served by extensive shopping parade on main road which is itself crossed by footbridge as well as surface crossing.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Q 	General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Strong boundaries Isolation Urban type: Type 4	Primarily residential with large school and grounds in pod/enclave with just one vehicular access point, off Bedfont Road. 1980s/90s mix of 2-3 storey flats, maisonettes and terraces. Arranged in orthogonal groups around shared surface parking courts and neatly planted green amenity spaces, on long cul-de-sac. Pedestrian access to open space to west, and across railway and ultimately to Feltham town centre, the quickest but not the most comfortable route. Far from local centres of any real use.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
R 	Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Strong boundaries Urban type: Type 2	Exclusively residential and one of the earliest of Feltham's planned developments. Early 1930s 2 storey semis laid out on mostly long regular perimeter blocks with characteristic splayed/bevelled corners. Notable for lack of street trees and grassed amenity spaces/ verges, but close to parks and children's play areas to north and south and to shopping parade to southeast.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
S 	Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Strong boundaries Urban type: Type 2	Exclusively residential area entirely surrounding large park, in pod/enclave off west side of High Street with just two vehicular access points. Postwar 2 storey gable-fronted short terraces with some semis and a few bungalows. Few street trees and no grassed amenity spaces/verges (bar one scruffy triangle), but has 'own' central park with children's play area and sports facilities. Backed by network of connected but poor quality, uncomfortable, often fly-tipped access ways, one of which offers direct route to town centre, parallel to railway. Shopping parade to southeast.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Feltham

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
T		Uniformity of use. Linearity Contrast with surrounding areas Urban type: Type 2	Exclusively residential piecemeal ribbon development along Elmwood Avenue, starting at High Street and leading southeast to edge of study area and Hanworth Park. Flanked either side by big box trading estates and other large footprint non-residential uses. From west to east: two 2 storey late C19th houses within small, early postwar Garden Suburb estate; 2000s 3 storey townhouses and 4 storey flats; early interwar Garden Suburb estate; 1990s 2 storey infill; 1970s 3-4 storey flats and maisonettes slab estate; early postwar semis.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
U		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 6 and 5	Area mostly occupied by extensive trading estates/ business parks, with typical large footprint low rise supersheds. Includes similar form institutional and leisure uses and school/college with associated open space. Vehicular links to High Street, though associated pedestrian ways can be awkward and uncomfortable to use. Leisure uses are close to but not directly connected to town centre. Some attempts at imaginative landscaping and planting. Split by ribbon of piecemeal residential development.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
V		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Strong boundaries Urban type: Type 4	Exclusively residential on urban edge. 1990s mix of 2-3 storey flats, maisonettes and terraces on legible and pedestrian-permeable orthogonal grid. Features shared surface/home zone movement regime, with courtyard parking and planted areas. Modest shopping parade to south.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
W		General uniformity of use. Relative isolation Fringe location Urban type: Type 4 and 5	Almost exclusively residential on urban edge in two main parts. To south, two 2000s horseshoe blocks of 2-3 storey flats and maisonettes around shared surface parking courts and neatly planted green amenity spaces. To north, 1990s small estate of 2 storey terraces with some earlier flats on branching cul-de-sac. Area is bounded to the south by a small commercial site and to the east by three terraces of mid-late C19th origin. Modest shopping parade to east.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Feltham

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
X 	Historic Core Focal/Nodal Feel and Function Urban type: Type 2 and 4	Area surrounding the original, i.e. pre-railways, core of Feltham, focussed on St. Dunstan's Church. Mix of uses including: residential, dating from mid-late C19th cottages to postwar 4 storey flats; small commercial; religious; two schools; two public houses; and a local shopping parade. Open spaces include a park with children's play area, a cemetery and the village green. Community, leisure and recreation uses help to maintain the area's focal function.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Y 	General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2 and 4	Exclusively residential area roughly stretching from south end of High Street to urban edge, on reasonably permeable broken street grid. Mostly postwar 2 storey short terraces and semis with some bungalows. Some small Garden Suburb-style estates and strips, which characteristically feature more grassed amenity spaces with trees, particularly along western edge. Pockets of infill flat developments towards High Street. Choice of shopping parade to south and along High Street. Focus on St Dunstan's historic core. Poorly served by parks.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Z 	General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Strong boundaries Isolation Urban type: Type 4	Exclusively residential pod/enclave, with just two vehicular access points, on south urban edge of study area, bounded to north by stream and strip of parkland, providing buffer from major road and trading estate. 1980s/90s mix of 2-3 storey flats, maisonettes, terraces and semis. Laid out along crescent road (split into two cul-de-sacs) off which hang short cul-de-sacs, parking courts and footpaths (some quasi-Radburn). Some street trees. Rather remote from local centres.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
A1 	General uniformity of use Isolation Agricultural land Green Belt Open Land Urban type: Atypical	Consists almost entirely of green belt semi-rural land in agricultural use. Other uses include a cemetery and the borough's perhaps inaccurately named urban farm. The community farm is one of London's largest and is an important resource offering urban residents an opportunity for close contact and interaction with a variety of animals in a safe environment. The area is laced with drainage ditches and its flatness allows for views of Feltham town centre from the northern edge. Bounded to the south by Duke of Northumberland's River, west by more formal open space uses, north by the airport perimeter and east by trading estates/business parks.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

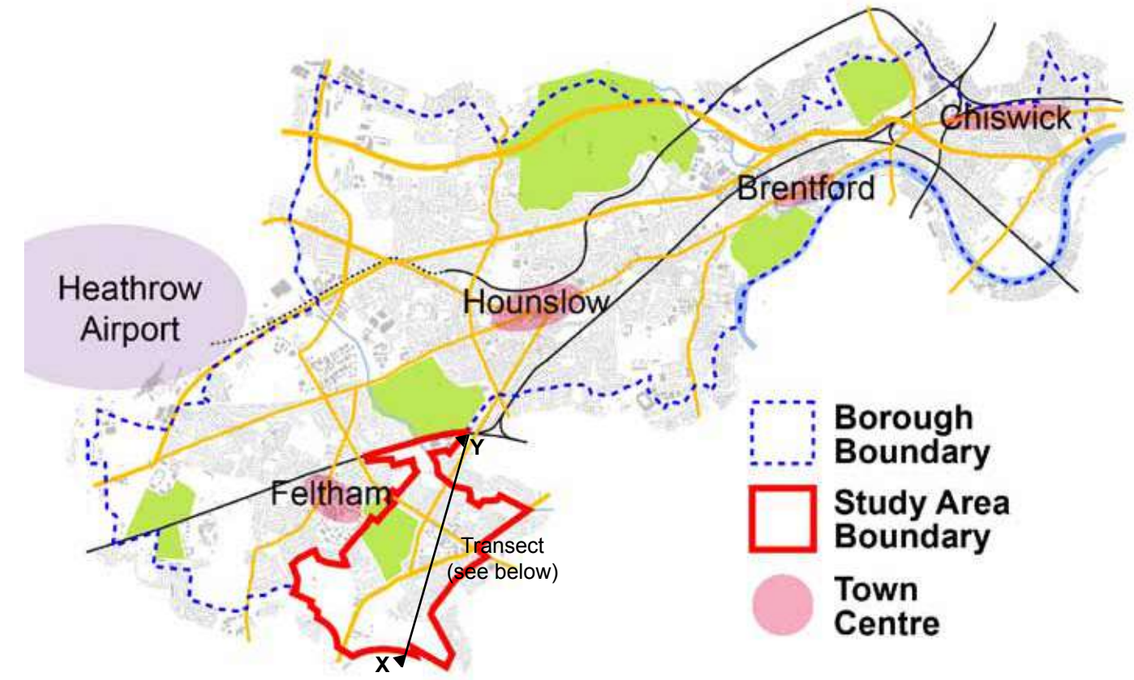
Feltham

character area	defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
B1 	General uniformity of use Isolation Natural/semi-natural green space Green Belt Open Land Urban type: Atypical	Consists almost entirely of green belt natural/semi-natural heavily wooded space with two artificial lakes formed from flooded former mineral workings. Bisected by quasi-orbital road. Large footprint low-rise employment use to north. Bounded to the west by Hatton village, south by trading estates, east by River Crane and north by the airport perimeter.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
C1 	General uniformity of use Publicly accessible green open space Agricultural land Green Belt Open Land Urban type: Atypical	Consists almost entirely of green belt semi-rural land in with artificial lakes formed from flooded former mineral workings. The northern half is publicly accessible park and heath land and the southern half is agricultural (grazing) with formal outdoor sports use at the extreme southeast. Views towards Feltham town centre from the northwestern edge. Bounded to the south and east by extensive housing, west by Feltham Young Offenders Institution and north by the railway. Poorly served by public transport.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hanworth

Hanworth

present-day context



The Hanworth study area is located in the southwest of the borough on the edge of Greater London. It is pierced northeast-southwest by the A316 Chertsey Road from the east of the borough and Central London to feed the M3. It is also accessible via the A314 from Hounslow town centre. It is not directly served by railway.

The area is bounded to the south by the town of Sunbury, to the east by the borough of Richmond-upon-Thames and to the northwest by the Feltham study area. Hanworth and its neighbours Bedfont and Feltham are relatively cut off from the rest of the borough by open land and large trading estates. All three form the 'West Area' of the borough.The southern part of Hanworth relates more closely to neighbouring parts of Richmond-upon-Thames than to Hounslow.

The area is almost level with a slight upward slope to the north. The River Crane with its wooded banks forms the northeastern boundary and the artificial Longford River crosses the area northwest-southeast through Hanworth Park. To the southwest lie large areas of semi-rural open space with some woodland and reservoirs. Both waterways are designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The Kempton Park Reservoirs to the south form part of the South-West London Waterbodies Special Protection Area (SPA), one of only two in Greater London.

The area is predominantly residential and may be classified as postwar outer suburban. There are some large areas devoted to employment uses in the form of trading estates and utilities both centrally and on the fringes. Most of the residential areas are fairly homogeneous though there are small pockets of diversity of character.

The main historic core is focused on the parish church and the site of the manor at the south end of the very substantial Hanworth Park. Short rows of late 19th century houses lie elsewhere within the area. To the northeast the area feels poorly connected to the rest of the borough due to the extensive open space buffer along the River Crane and a large trading estate.

There are very large areas of open space, much of it natural or semi-natural, reflecting the area's Greater London fringe location and former agricultural uses. The urban environment is generally of fair to good quality with an even distribution of open spaces and local centres. Feltham to the northwest provides the nearest town centre facilities as well as the nearest railway station. Most buses follow the main routes, though the suburban hinterlands receive some degree of service. The greatest barrier to movement is the A316 Chertsey Road with its infrequent crossing opportunities.

Areas adjacent to the A316 experience high levels of traffic noise.

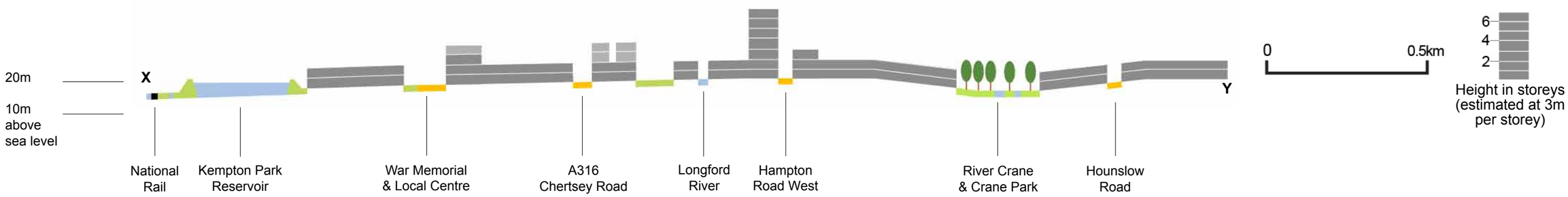


Typical early postwar housing with generous open space



The postwar Butts Farm housing estate adjoins the attractively revamped Crane Park

Title page photo: The rebuilt Tudor manor buildings at the historic core



Hanworth

brief historic context

The manor of Hanworth in the C8th was part of the estate of King Offa of Mercia. Settlements were small clusters within an expanse which remained very open or very wooded for a long time. The Forest of Middlesex once extended over much of this area and later became popular with Henry VIII who used the manor house building as a lodge or base for hunting on the then adjacent Hounslow Heath. It remained in royal ownership until 1627 and has been called since a Palace and, by 1865, a Castle. Large tracts of the area were fields well into the C20th.

Along the northeast study area boundary the River Crane mingled and diverged with reservoirs, mill races and sluices created in the C15th and C16th. Later these mills provided work to the Hanworth area in the dangerous occupation of gun-powder manufacture.

Much of Hanworth's earlier history revolves around the park and its manor house, forest for hunting and open land for agriculture. Water has been plentiful in the area, managed by many ditches and streams such as the Portlane Brook to the west of the Tudor moat. North of the park water was diverted around an early moated site and joined the Longford River. The Longford (New, Queen's or Cardinal's) River traverses the length of the park on its way southeast to supply gunpowder mills and Hampton Court fountains, although now much has been culverted. The park, with lines of trees, is shown to the north and east of the manor buildings and Church on C17th maps.

The actual village of Hanworth evolved at and along the roads to a large crossroads to the southeast of what is now the park, although it was formerly longer and wider.

Nurseries, market gardens and farms developed throughout the C19th, the largest of which, Butt's Farm, was developed as housing in the 1950s, although some cottages remain. Extensive agricultural estates were established next to the Crane by Whiteley for supplying his London shops in the later C19th. Water treatment and pumping utilities and reservoirs appeared to the south in the late C19th.

The original Hanworth Park House began as a royal hunting lodge. Henry VII used the manor house as a hunting lodge whilst hunting on Hounslow Heath. On his death in 1509, the Manor passed to his son Henry VIII and became known as The Royal Manor of Hanworth, and the house as the Palace of Hanworth.

On March 26th 1797, disaster stuck Hanworth Palace, when a fire destroyed most of the buildings. The palace was totally destroyed by the fire. The rebuilding of Hanworth Palace as Hanworth Park House, on a new site, commenced in 1798 and was completed in 1802.

It became a country house after extensions throughout 1828. Now known as Hanworth Park House, it still stands today, with a west wing and clock tower added circa 1860. Since then the House has changed hands several times.

It was used as a military hospital during WWI and later as a country club and hotel for members of Aircraft Exchange and Mart who now owned the park which had been converted into an airfield.

Hanworth Park was the site of an aerodrome in the first half of the C20th which led to the culverting and loss of avenues of trees, except for around Hanworth Park House and the former Rectory. Avenues have become built-up roads alongside the park, although there is still considerable open space on the west side. The construction of the M3 feeder road in the 1970s flew over and divided Hanworth village. As an area it has considerable historic character and remains surprisingly rural, in spite of the noise of passing cars.

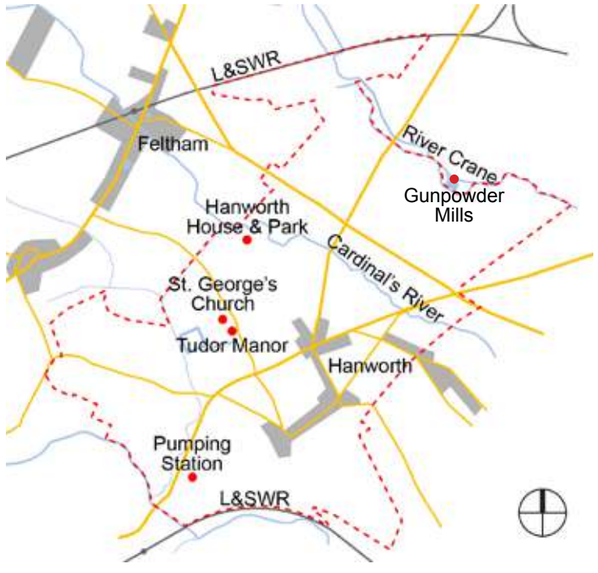


Hanworth Park House, mid 20th century

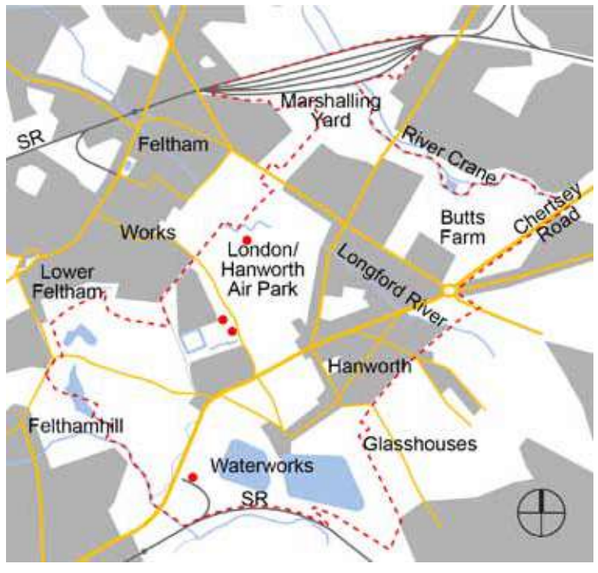


Shops on site of recently demolished Hanworth Library, 1968

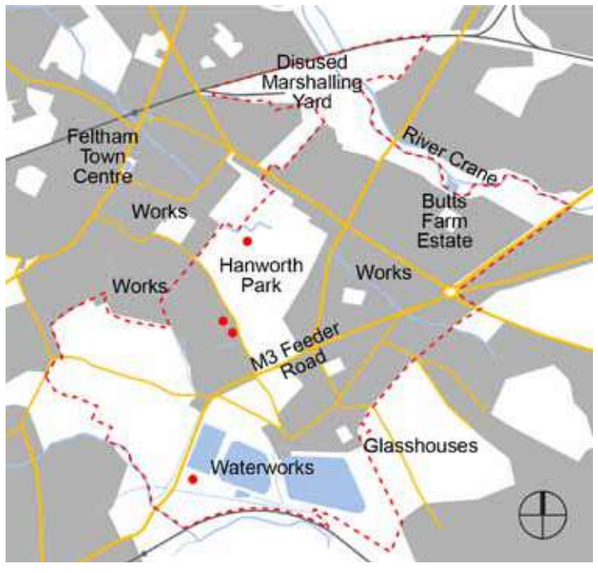
c1895



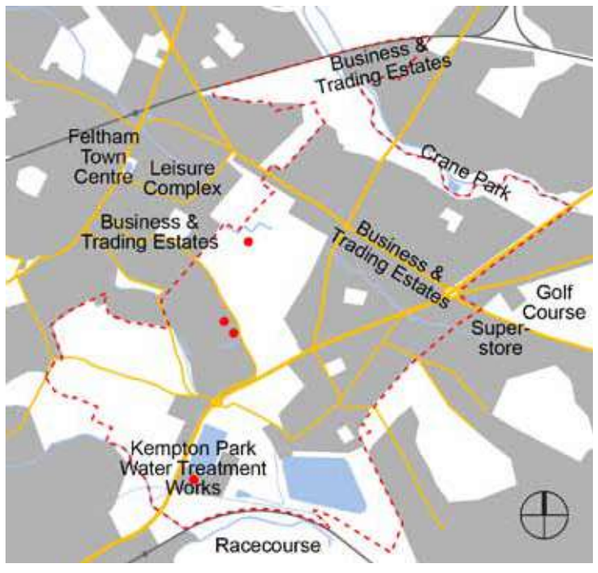
c1950



c1975

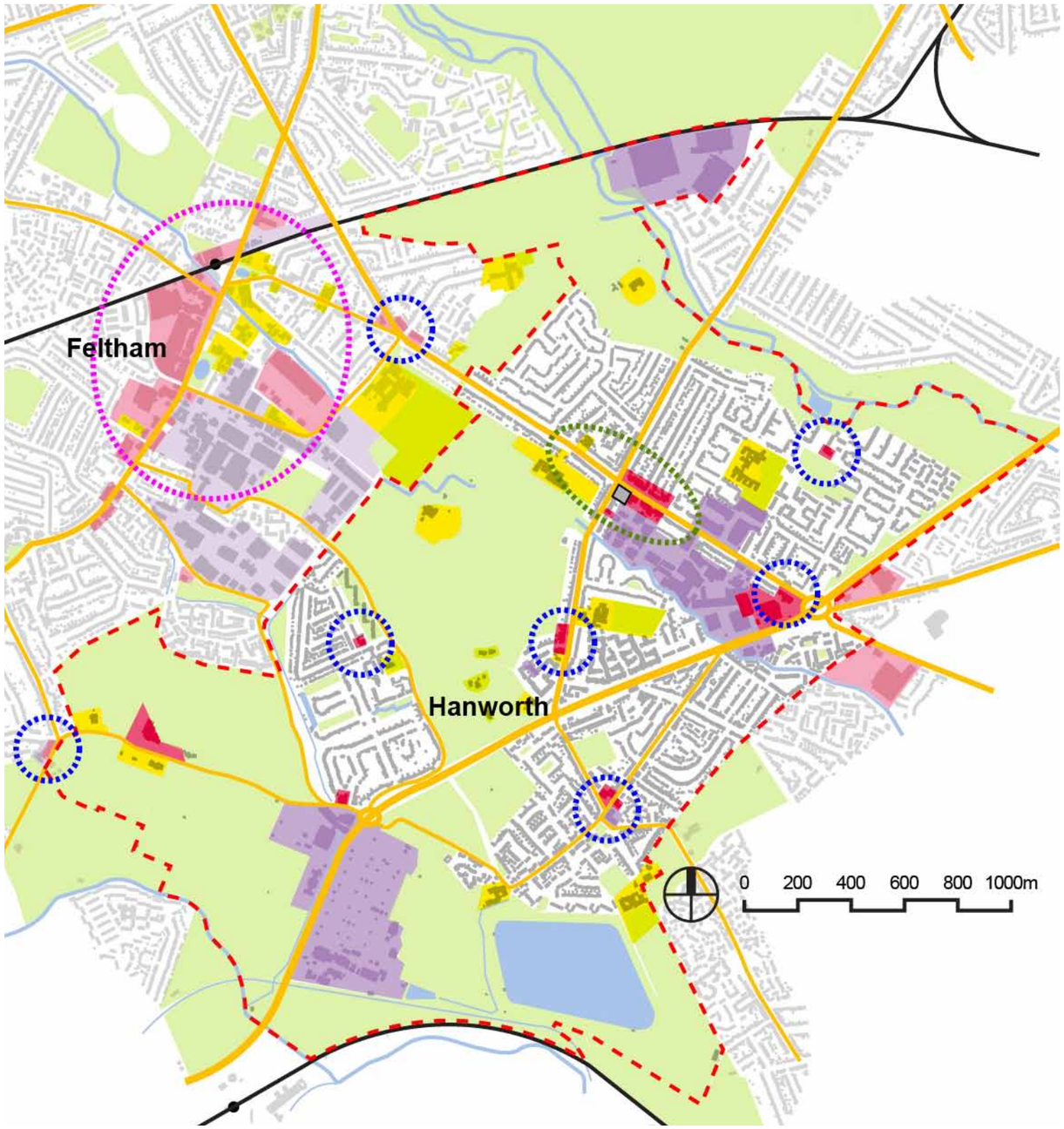


c2010



Hanworth

land and building use



The built-up part of the study area is predominantly residential and may be classified as mostly postwar outer suburban. Though much of the plentiful open space is semi-rural, some areas are devoted to employment uses (water-related utilities). Other employment uses include large trading estates located both centrally and on the northern fringes. A handful of glasshouse nurseries survive in the centre. The main historic core is focused on the parish church and the site of the manor at the southwest side of Hanworth Park. However the historic village of Hanworth lies to the southeast near the crossroads with the A316 Chertsey Road motorway feeder where a street of late C19th houses survives. Short rows of such houses lie elsewhere within the area. Feltham to the northwest provides the nearest town centre facilities as well as the nearest railway station and there is a large out-of-town superstore to the east, outside the borough.

Most of the residential areas are fairly homogeneous though in some there are small pockets of diversity of character to be found. The most common types are the 2 storey postwar semi and short terrace. There are however surviving earlier houses and postwar infill and fringe developments of low rise (up to 4 storey) flats. The biggest exception to the traditional suburban 2 storey rule is the 1950s Butts Farm estate of 2-4 storey houses and flat blocks in a setting of large, often characterless green spaces. The urban environment is generally of fair to good quality with an even distribution of open spaces and local centres.

Retail within the area is concentrated along the de facto high street of the heavily trafficked Hampton Road West. Apart from in the south of the area, local centres within the residential hinterlands off the main route are perfunctory and take the form of small shopping parades offering varying degrees of quality and adequacy.

The area's three main educational facilities are evenly distributed within the residential areas, with the exception of the area west of Hanworth Park. A leisure centre and library are located on the eastern edge of the park, a questionable siting wwith regard to accessibility from the south.


War Memorial, south area local centre


Early postwar suburban housing

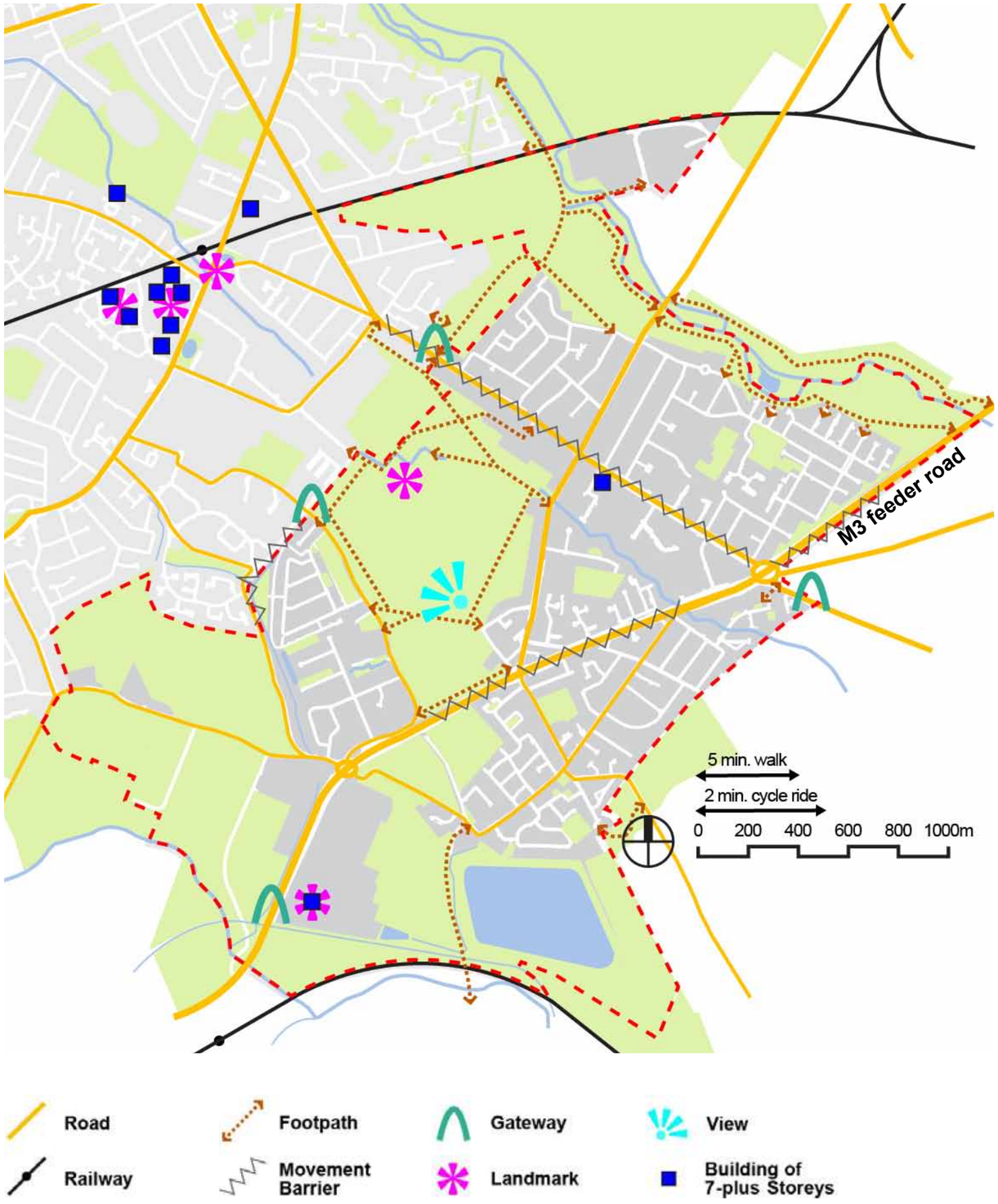

Most retail is concentrated on busy Hampton Road West, not a place to linger.


Local shopping parade with residential above


Centrally located trading estate

Hanworth

movement & legibility



The overall movement structure is dominated by the northeast-southwest Chertsey Road M3 feeder, a northwest-southeast road which forms part of an Outer London quasi-orbital route, and the main road from Hounslow town centre to the northeast. The east-west railway line to the north has only an indirect influence on movement. The aforementioned Chertsey Road presents a major constraint and barrier to north-south movement and effectively cuts Hanworth into two unequal parts. From the northeast the area is linked to the centre and east of the borough along Hanworth Road to Hounslow town centre via the western part of Whitton, in the neighbouring borough of Richmond-upon-Thames. However the open spaces along the River Crane act as a strong natural boundary.

None of the major roads can be said to function as a central spine with the possible exception of the busy and unappealing Hampton Road West (part of the quasi-orbital route), not a place to linger. Within the broad network of major roads lie broken grids of streets many of which are short cul-de-sacs. Apart from one instance of an extensive branching cul-de-sac development, on a local level the route network offers a relatively high degree of connectivity.

Feltham to the northwest provides the nearest town centre facilities as well as the nearest railway station. Most buses follow the main routes, though the suburban hinterlands receive some degree of service.

Pedestrian movement and way-finding through the area is on the whole comfortable and efficient with the notable exception of the barrier caused by the Chertsey Road: crossing opportunities are infrequent, uncomfortable and awkward, and parallel foot and cycleways are noisy and visually unappealing. On a more positive note the internal and surrounding open spaces are for the most part easily accessed and traversed by foot and cycleways. Of these the most attractive are the recently improved routes through Crane Park along either side the river. with access from the Butts Farm housing estate. There remains potential for improved connections via Pevensey Road Open Space and DeBrome Fields to Hanworth Park and through the former Marshalling Yards along the River Crane to Feltham and Hounslow Heath.

Though of historic significance, the house in Hanworth Park can provide little more than an immediately local landmark. On an altogether different scale, the tall buildings of Feltham town centre may be seen from the park, giving some sense of urban focus. The tower of the Hampton waterworks may be glimpsed from the residential areas to the south and west.



Segregated foot and cycleway through Hanworth Park



Footpaths and bridleways link to surrounding countryside



Unappealing footway parallel to Chertsey Road



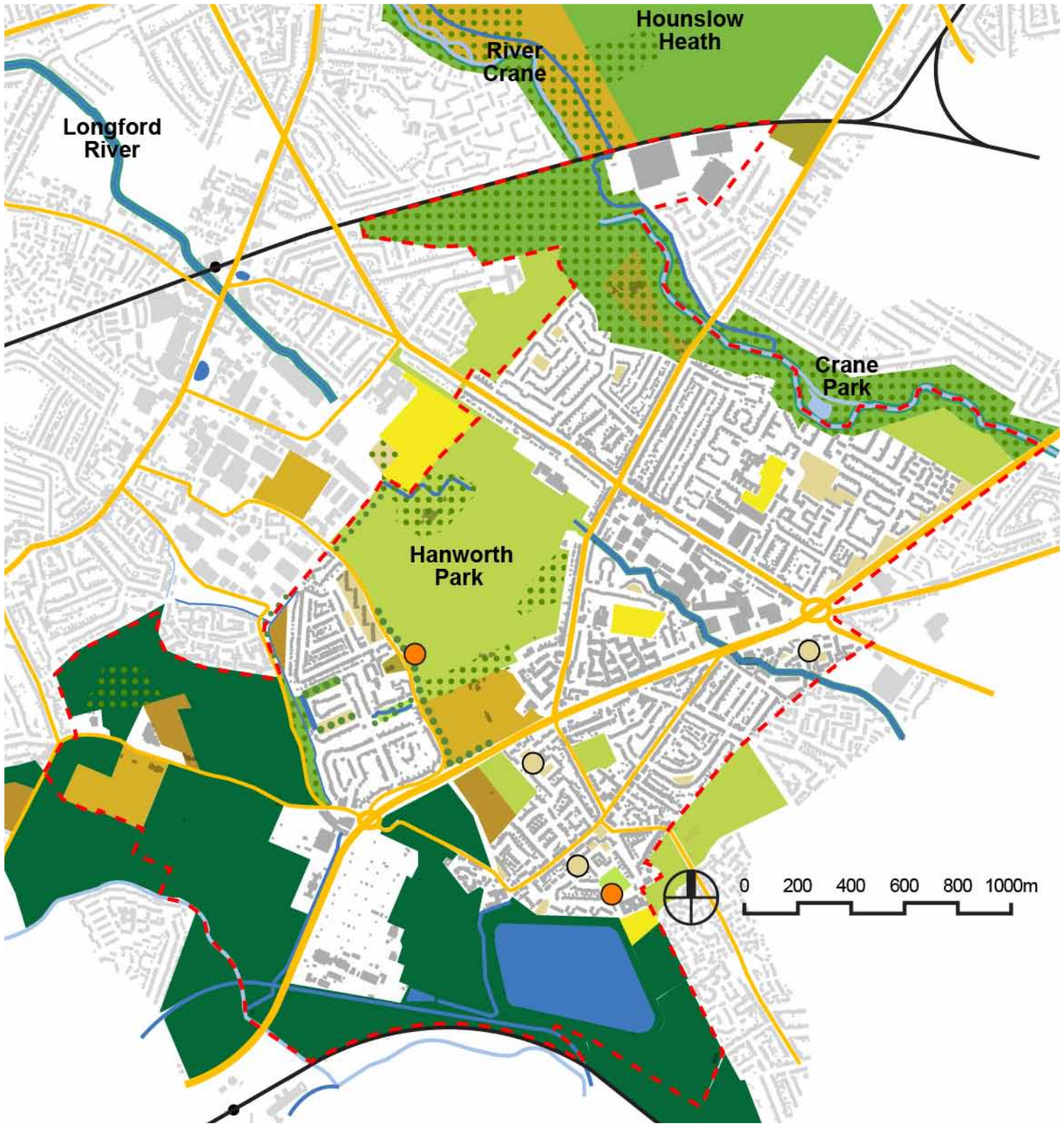
Footbridge over Chertsey Road



Hostile pedestrian environment, underpass

Hanworth

green and blue landscape



The provision, size, type and related uses of publicly accessible, or at least visible, green open space in the study area are typical for its location at the boundary of Greater London. The River Crane, with its wooded and recently landscaped linear park and nature reserve, forms the northeastern boundary of the area and provides an accessible green and blue buffer zone between two built-up residential areas. This band of open space also includes a cemetery and two playing fields which relate to the residential areas. Hanworth Park (one of London's first airfields) with its playing fields, is centrally located within the built-up areas but is too extensive to feel contained. Its large expanses of grass can feel bleak and featureless. Adjacent are more formal recreational facilities and a large school playing field. To the south are smaller local parks with playing fields and there are two allotments on the south and west urban edges. The study area is fringed to the southwest by Green Belt land in the form of open fields with some formal recreational uses and a large reservoir at Kempton Park, identified as being of international importance for rare and vulnerable species of birds found within the European Union.

Along with the River Crane, Hanworth is crossed northwest-southeast by the artificial Longford River. However, unlike the Crane, little is made of this often attractive waterway, which is mostly backed onto by residential and business uses and, apart from in the immediate grounds of the House, is culverted through Hanworth Park. The southwest is threaded with minor artificial waterways and there are remnants of the Manor House moat, though access is limited.

Hanworth is not notable for its street trees, though the period of development has left a legacy of grassed amenity spaces of a variety of styles, sizes and conditions. Those associated with the earlier (late interwar and early postwar) residential areas tend to relate more positively to the streets and buildings and take the form of grass verges, crescents and (in some cases quite large) squares. Most are well-maintained. Later postwar large infill and peripheral developments, typified by residential buildings standing alone in open space and undefined by street patterns, often result in poorly overlooked, lifeless, un/underused green areas and routes which sometimes require artificial surveillance.


Extensive open space of Hanworth Park


Riverside path, recently re-landscaped Crane Park

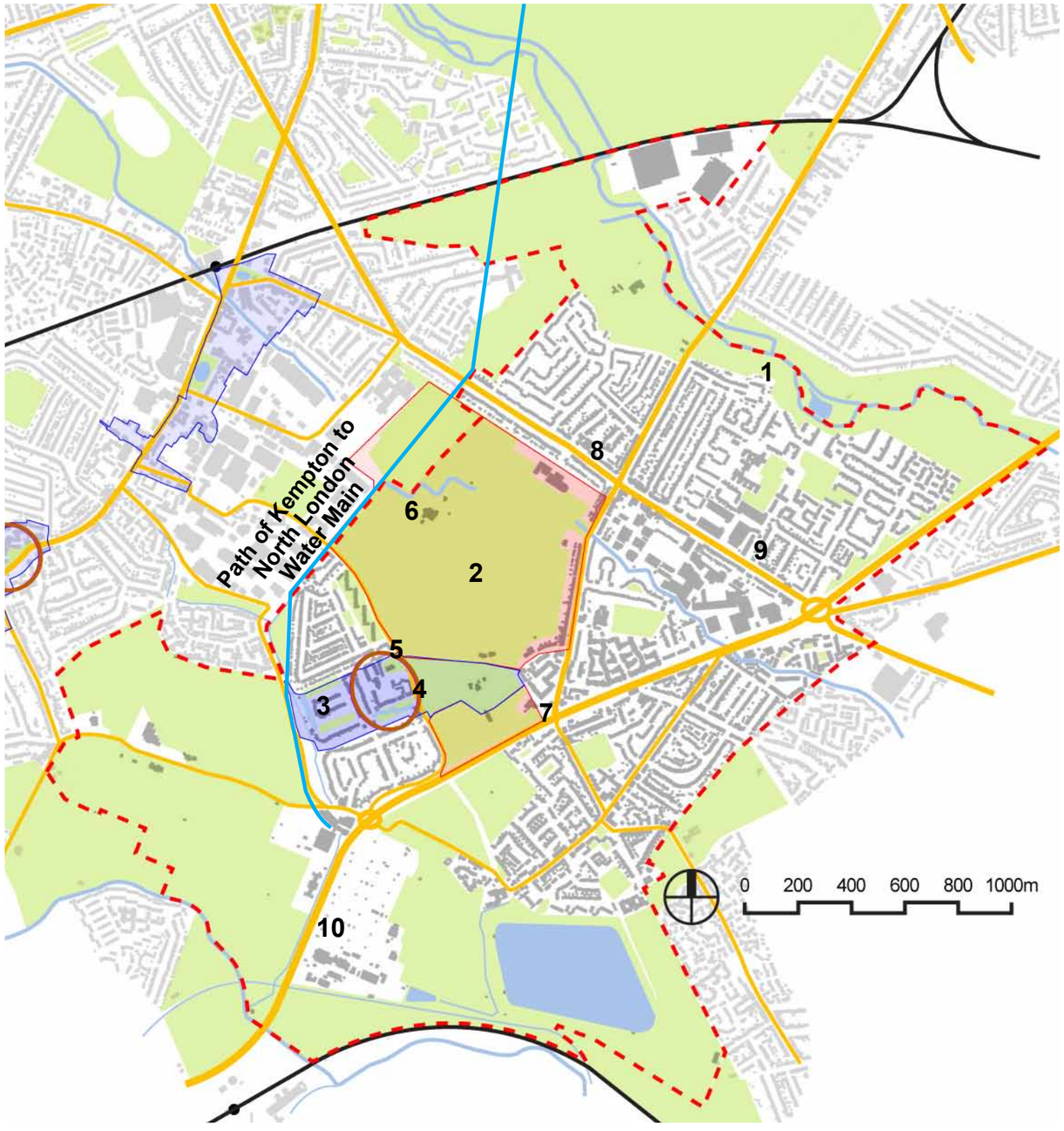

Large rectangular green associated with early postwar housing


Amenity green space, early postwar residential area


Amenity green space, later residential area

Hanworth

heritage assets



The northeastern strip of the study area, on the western side of the Crane River Park [1], has had little development and forms part of a remote, wider defensive-landscape, linking real and artificial watercourses for mills, remnants of which still exist. Old routes taken by cavalry between the barracks and the heath lie nearby.

Listed buildings are found around Hanworth Park [2] itself, some of which is a conservation area. Relic areas of construction from the Tudor period remain between the estate and church, including a scheduled ancient monument. One side of the moat [3] remains, with two other sides left as open space, some areas of water and a boundary wall incorporated strategically in a suburban development.

A deliberately picturesque stable block edging Castle Way [4] had been built mid C18th, including re-used Tudor brick, and survived a fire at the end of the century which mostly destroyed the remaining Tudor structures including Hanworth House itself, except for huge boundary walls and ancient yew trees to the west. The House was rebuilt as Tudor House in 1875 and the stable building converted into flats with a communal garden in the 1920s as Tudor Court.

St George's Church [5] is of early origin. It contains medieval remnants, although it was considerably rebuilt 1808-1815, and has a good lych gate. The former rectory of around 1808 (Fortescue House) is also listed, built in but closer to the eastern side of the park, with church land to the east.

In the north of the park Hanworth Park House [6] (Grade II) was rebuilt in 1828, then extended, and has elegantly railed balconies with vistas from upper levels over formal gardens, now enclosed by mature trees. The Longford river runs around it, but a moated island site to the north and the route south east across the Park have now been buried.

A lane provides an east-west route across the park between the church, the spire making a good vista, via the rectory, now a school, to the Hanworth hamlet [7] on the east side of the park. This contains cottages dating from mid C19th, although most other aspects have been redeveloped. In Uxbridge Road, nearby, the 1950s Church of All Saints by Cachemaille-Day [8] has been listed for its architectural quality. A terrace of C19th cottages [9] survives further southeast at Butt's Farm.

To the south is the Kempton Park Water Treatment Works [10], which features a number of historic buildings (1897 to 1928) including two landmark towers. The path of the early C20th Kempton to North London water main appears as a disjointed series of sometimes fenced linear open spaces and occasional utility structures.


St. George's Church in the medieval core


Rebuilt Tudor manor buildings at the historic core


Victorian houses at the historic core


Isolated terrace of c1900 houses off Hampton Road West


1950s Church of All Saints, Uxbridge Road

Hanworth

urban types



The most dominant residential urban types by area within the Hanworth study area are the inter- and early postwar loose grid (type 2), in a wide range of housing styles, followed closely by the courts and cul-de-sacs (type 4) of the later postwar years. A significant number of estates of slabs and towers (type 3) appear mostly on the urban fringes. There are no urban renaisssance-style (type 5) developments, perhaps justifiably given the area's lack of a significant centre and its low public transport accessibility. The exclusively commercial big box (type 6) occupies areas of land to the north, south and, inappropriately, centre of the area. There are only remnants of development associated with the compact grid (type 1).

Hanworth manifests typologically and morphologically as an extension of neighbouring Feltham to the northwest.

For more information on general urban types found in the borough, including historical development, aspects of form and SWOT analyses, see Section 4: Urban Types.



Type 1



Type 2



Type 2



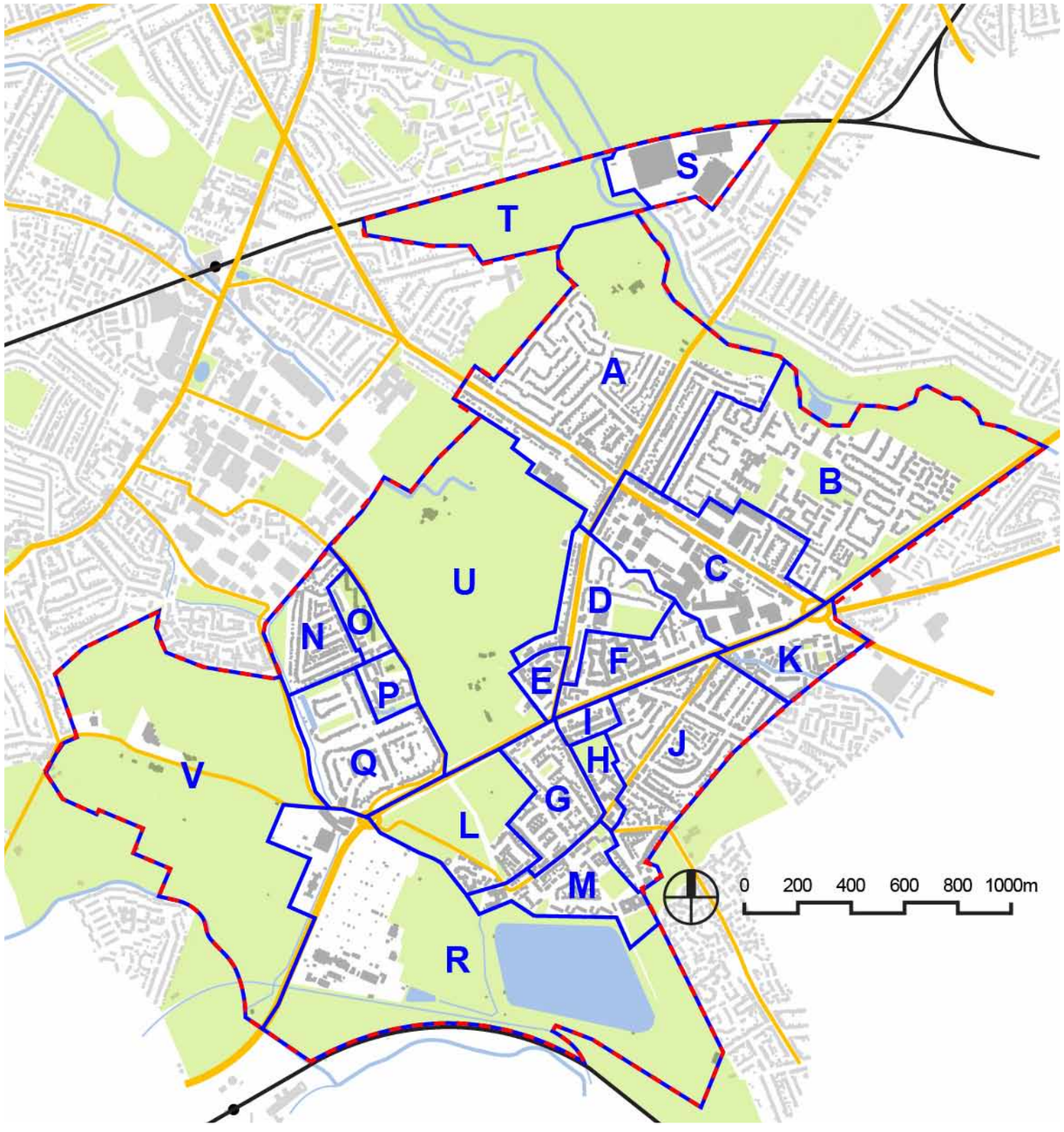
Type 3

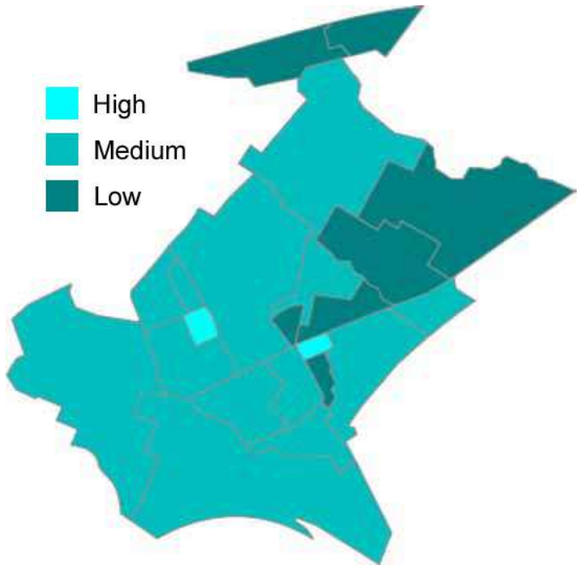


Type 4

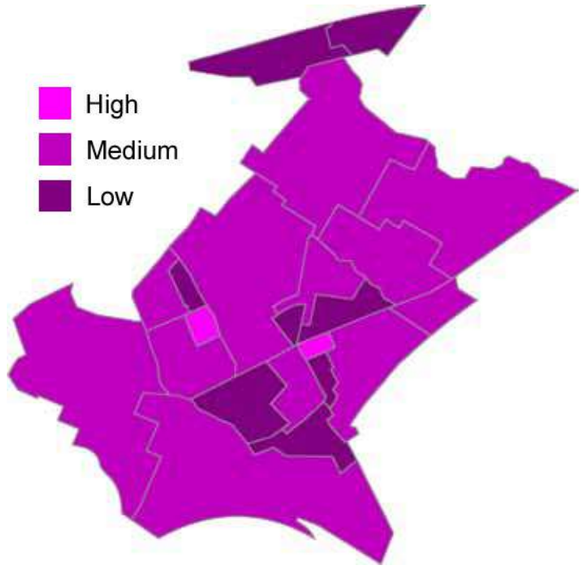
Hanworth

character areas and assessments

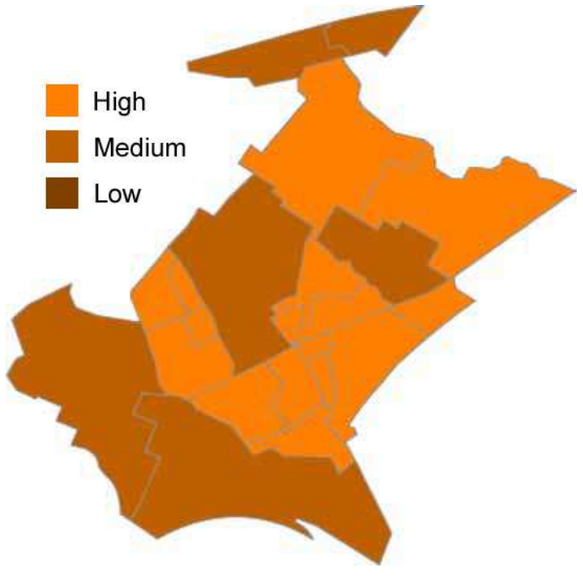




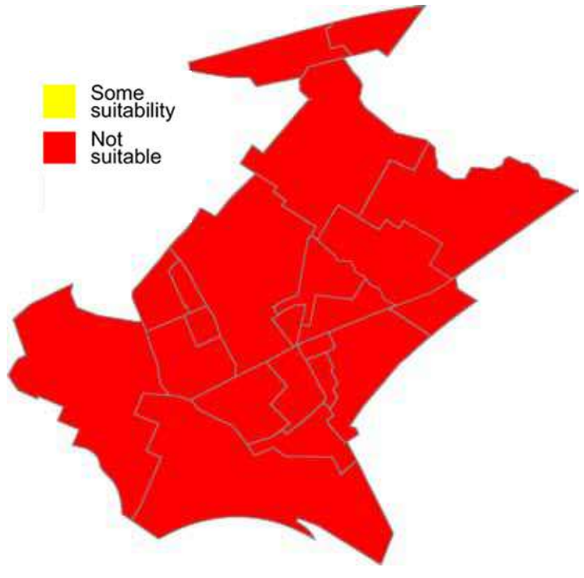
Design Quality



Sensitivity to change



Permanence



Suitability for tall buildings

A Character Area

For more information on characterisation and assessment see Section 1: Introduction - Methodology

Hanworth

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
A		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2 and 6	Almost exclusively residential, along and northeast of A312 with leisure and recreation use to south. Late interwar and early postwar 2 storey semis and short terraces. Earlier, long ribbon-style development close to main roads, gives way to later, more Garden Suburb-style layout in hinterland, with associated large grassed amenity spaces. Served by extensive shopping parades on main road at neighbourhood centre to south. Bounded north and west by open space, though access is limited.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
B		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 4, 2 and 3	Almost exclusively residential, stretching northeast from A312 to River Crane and Crane Park, with extensive school and grounds at centre. Postwar mix of mostly 2 storey terraces, with some 4 storey blocks of flats and maisonettes at urban edge, on orthogonal though broken grid layout with many cul-de-sacs. Characterised by large, plain grassed open spaces. Served primarily by extensive shopping parades on main road at neighbourhood centre to southwest. Limited access to Crane Park. Strongly bounded to southeast by major road.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
C	 	Moderate uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Neighbourhood Centre Function Location along main road Urban type: Type 6, 2, 3 and 1	By area, mostly employment use. A ribbon of residential along main road, the de facto high street, is book-ended by shopping parades, the westernmost functioning as a neighbourhood centre. Residential is mostly early postwar semis and short terraces, though there are later 3 storey blocks of flats and a 7 storey block of retail, office and residential. Employment is in the form of trading estates with large footprint low rise supersheds, largely hidden behind main road and backing onto the Longford River. The area is most notable for an incongruous though attractive row of late Victorian houses off the main road. Known as Butts Farm Cottages, they are all that remain of a once extensive complex of buildings.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Low Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hanworth

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
D		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Almost exclusively residential, along Hounslow Road, west side backing onto Hanworth Park, with extensive school and grounds to east. Mostly interwar 2 storey semis with a few short terraces, along main road and on branching cul-de-sac. Large Garden Suburb-style crescent-shaped grassed open space on cul-de-sac. Served primarily by extensive shopping parades at neighbourhood centre to north, though there is a short parade of shops to the south. Access to Hanworth Park. Unconnected with more recent development to southeast.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
E		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 3	Primarily residential with some employment, retail and community uses, on triangular site to south of Hanworth Park, near junction of Hounslow Road and M3 feeder road. Dominated by 3-4 storey 1970s snake blocks of flats and maisonettes, with small group of 2 storey terraces facing earlier semis (Area D). Green spaces within and around blocks. Earlier buildings on both sides of western perimeter road, including Hanworth Village Hall. Access to Hanworth Park and formal recreation spaces of Rectory Meadow to west.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
F		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 4, 2 and 3	Exclusively residential pod/enclave on long, branching cul-de-sac, parallel to M3 feeder road, with only one vehicular access point. 1970s 2 storey terraced houses linked with 3-4 storey flats and maisonettes at west end, and earlier postwar 2 storey short terraces with separate 4 storey flat blocks to east. Small community resource centre. 1970s estate characterised by staggered building line, irregular roof line, scattered parking areas and green spaces. Connected to south of study area by subway and footbridge.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
G		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Exclusively residential, south of M3 feeder road. Almost entirely 2 storey semis with some short terraces to south, a scattering of bungalows and 3-4 storey flat blocks to north. Broadly two parts: later plain, gable-ended semis focused on large grassed quadrangle, to east; earlier semis of more varied roof and facade treatments to west. Laid out on fairly regular street grid. Served by local centre to southeast.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hanworth

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
H		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 3 and 2	Residential with retail and employment uses, forming central focus for southern half of study area. Residential consists of small estate of 1970s 3-4 storey flat and maisonette blocks arranged within green space and car parks, with staggered row of 2 storey short terraces of similar materials and design fronting street to west. L-shaped shopping parade with planted square and residential above, public house and 2 storey office building, to south. Residential opens straight onto playing fields with children's play area, to north.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
I		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Contrast with surrounding area Urban type: Type 1	Exclusively residential, mostly on single street off main road, running parallel and south of M3 feeder road. Along with some buildings on main road, forms remnant of historic Hanworth village. Mix of late Victorian/early Edwardian 2 storey semis, detached and terraced houses. Minimal infill of similar form. Street doubles back along rear of houses to form grass verged, tree-planted avenue, buffering the busy feeder road.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
J		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Almost exclusively residential, forming large part of southern half of study area. Mostly late interwar and early postwar 2 storey semis and short terraces in a variety of styles associated with period. Two significant rows of late Victorian/early Edwardian 2 storey houses, and some scattered late C20th infill 2-3 storey flats. Some Garden Suburb-style large grassed amenity spaces. Served by local centre at western end. Church and community centre at southern tip, where there is access to a small park and to open space beyond.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
K		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 4 and 3	Almost exclusively residential pod/enclave on branching cul-de-sac, with only one vehicular access point. 1970s 2 storey terraced houses and 4 storey flat and maisonette blocks, the latter in two distinct architectural styles. Some Garden Suburb-style grassed amenity spaces, though less well-defined. Traversed by inaccessible Longford River. Access to glasshouse nursery compound. Area includes same period semis and terraces on western edge and unconnected group of 4 storey flats to east. Served by local centre to north .	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hanworth

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
L		Moderate uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Relative isolation Fringe location Urban type: Type 4, 3 and 1	Exclusively residential area on southwest urban edge of study area. Two small estates: to east, 1960s 2 storey semis with unbounded deep front gardens, on looped cul-de-sac with some very generous tree-planted grass verges; to west, 1980s 2 storey terraces and 3 storey flats, tightly packed with gable fronts creating serrated roof line effect, on cul-de-sac with car parking courts and some modest planting. Also row of late Victorian 2 storey semis on main road. Allotments to north. Access via foot and cycle/bridleway to open space to south.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
M		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2 and 3	Primarily residential, on south urban edge of study area, with schools to east and west. 1960s-1970s 2-4 storey blocks of flat and 2 storey semis with some terraces. The flat blocks are arranged within generous though tree-less green spaces, some Garden Suburb-style, though less well-defined. Park with children's play area to southeast. Served by local centre just beyond the northern corner, which features an open space with war memorial.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
N		Extreme uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Exclusively residential, on northwest edge of study area. Late interwar 2 storey 4 unit terraces, all with twin gable-topped bays. Only exceptions are a handful of plain-fronted 2 storey flat roofed terraces and a row of semi-detached bungalows, both types on the eastern edge of the area. Poorly served by small shopping parade in adjacent Area O. Area includes short cul-de-sac of later 2 storey semis and 3 storey flat blocks. Allotment accessed from west.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
O		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 3	Almost exclusively residential, on northwest edge of study area. Strip of four staggered 1960s 4 storey blocks of flats set in green space with some trees, and on-street car parking. Flanked to west by two linear rows of 1 storey terraces either side of a large grassed quadrangle. Less coherent group of 1 and 2 story blocks to south. Short parade of shops with 2 floors of residential above. Overlooks Hanworth Park to east. Relates well to earlier development to west.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hanworth

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
P		Historic Core Urban type: Atypical and 4	Small area with mix of residential and community uses, providing historic focal point for Hanworth as a whole. Composed primarily of St. George's Church and churchyard and the rebuilt manor buildings, now residential. Also some 1960s 3 storey flat blocks, 1970s 3 storey terraces, and flats in mid C18th Tudor House. Remnants of original moat to south.	Design Quality - High Sensitivity to change - High Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
Q		General uniformity of scale, density, layout, building type, urban type, use and period. Urban type: Type 2	Almost exclusively residential, north of M3 feeder road and partly surrounding historic core to northeast. Early interwar 2 storey semis and short terraces along inner edge of perimeter road and extending inward. Postwar semis and some detached houses continue development northwestward. Large central tree-planted green space. Bounded to west by artificial waterway and road. Nearest local centre lies indirectly to north.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - High Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
R		Extreme uniformity of use. Isolation Urban type: Atypical	Employment use, Kempton Park Water Treatment Works. Features a number of historic buildings including two landmark towers.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
S		Extreme uniformity of use. Isolation Urban type: Type 6	Employment use, Heathrow Gateway Trading Estate. Group of large footprint mid-rise supersheds, south of railway line and east of open space.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable

Hanworth

character area		defining characteristics & types	description	assessment
T		Extreme uniformity of use. Isolation Green open space Urban type: Atypical	Site of former Feltham Marshalling Yards. Private land owned by Network Rail, though informally accessible to public from eastern side. Used for illegal motorcycling. Extensive herb-rich grassland and tree/shrub areas support a large variety of invertebrates, birdlife and notable plant species.	Design Quality - Low Sensitivity to change - Low Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
U		General uniformity of use. Large publicly accessible green open space Nature conservation area Urban type: Atypical	Hanworth Park. One of the borough's Historic Parks and Gardens, formerly a Royal Park and Palace used by King Henry VIII. Includes the grounds of Hanworth Park House, an 1802 rebuild of Hanworth Palace. Site of former Hanworth Aerodrome/London Air Park, 1917-1949, a centre for private flying, society events and aircraft manufacture. Use is mostly informal recreation with more formal sports facilities to the south. Designated as a Site of Local Nature Conservation of Borough Importance (Grade II), together with the Longford River that flows through part of the park.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable
V		General uniformity of use. Isolation Green Belt Open Land Urban type: Type 6	Large area of green open space traversed by a road linking residential areas. Most prominent uses other than agricultural are recreational (Staines Rugby Club) and retail (garden centre). Includes extensive allotment gardens. Bounded by housing to the north, northwest and northeast and by Felthamhill Brook to the south.	Design Quality - Medium Sensitivity to change - Medium Permanence - Medium Suitability for tall buildings - Unsuitable



Great West Road

3

Great West Road

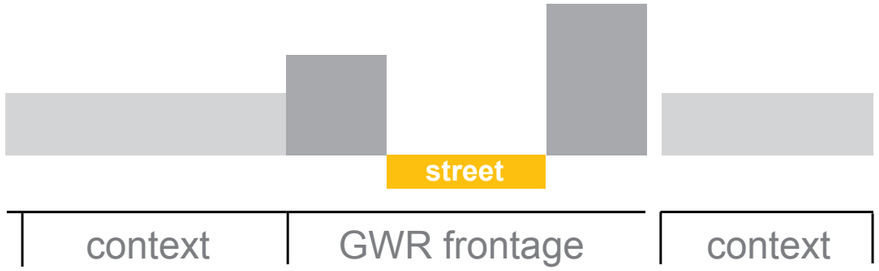
present day context

The Great West Road (part of the A4) enters the borough in the east, 1km from the Hammersmith flyover. It continues 11km westwards, through Chiswick, Brentford, Osterley and Heston until the Bath Road (Henlys) roundabout. The Great South West Road continues the route past Hatton Cross and south of Heathrow Airport. East of Hammersmith, the A4 passes through up-market Kensington, Knightsbridge and Mayfair before reaching Piccadilly Circus. The width of the highway ranges from between 30m to 70m. The height of buildings that line the road range from between 2 to 25 storeys, with 2 to 3 storeys being the most common. Many of the taller buildings do not enhance their immediate environment and compromise the quality of their widersurroundings. The elevated section of the M4 motorway begins just east of the Chiswick Roundabout and shadows the GWR as far as Boston Manor Park, where it veers northwest.

Along the GWR there is a variety of land uses, with residential and business being predominant. There are small pockets of retail, commerce, restaurants and hotels but on the whole these are scattered and few. Most of the town centres (Chiswick, Brentford and Hounslow) lie on the older, historic thoroughfare of London Road which runs almost parallel to the south of the GWR and is crossed by it at Chiswick and Clockhouse Roundabouts. The GWR has come to function as a by-pass for the town centres of the entire borough, diverting traffic away from these economic centres.

Historically known as the Golden Mile, the Brentford stretches of the GWR have been and remain home to a number of major national and international companies which provide employment for many people living inside and outside the area. However, by the late 1980s traffic congestion, relatively poor public transport accessibility and more restrictive parking standards limited the appeal of the Golden Mile for further office based employment, resulting in a number of large former employment sites becoming vacant. This situation persisted until the commercial and mixed-use renaissance of recent years.

GWR and its wider context



The GWR has varying character along its length (seven reaches in total), arising from when and how it was built (see history pages). Its character also changes greatly from its frontage to its context. The study concentrates on the character along the GWRs frontage, comprising the space and buildings that enclose and frame the road. But we also must take into account the wider context either side of the GWR. Sometimes this context is in contrast to the GWR, other times it matches.


Crown copyright. All rights reserved. London Borough of Hounslow 100019263 2014

character reach A 2.7km

Borough Boundary to Chiswick Roundabout

This reach, built in the 1950s, cut through the existing urban fabric and continues to limit north-south pedestrian movement. Notable historic buildings and townscape lie adjacent to this stretch including Hogarth's House and Chiswick House and Gardens.

character reach B 1.6km

Golden Mile - Chiswick Roundabout to Ealing Road

This reach, built in the 1920s, is bounded by Gunnersbury Park to the north and cuts through Carville Hall Park. The elevated M4 and taller office buildings line this reach giving it a markedly different character from A.

character reach C 0.7km

Golden Mile - Ealing Road to Boston Manor Road

The late Victorian fabric which stretched from Brentford northwards to Ealing was severed by the GWR. The elevated M4 continues along this stretch until it diverts northwest through Boston Manor and Osterley Parks. This primarily low-rise reach is book-ended by clusters of tall buildings and the overall space of the highway is still roughly defined by its fairly constant width, the scale of its original buildings and the height of the now mature trees in the open areas.

character reach D 1.1km

Golden Mile - Boston Manor Road to Gillette Corner

Announced by the large GlaxoSmithKline complex, this reach crosses the important, historic landscape of the River Brent/Grand Union Canal and continues past some notable Art Deco buildings as far as Gillette House, where the GWR crosses the historic Syon Lane. The overall space of the highway is still roughly defined by its fairly constant width, the scale of its original buildings and the height of the now mature trees in the open areas.

character reach E 2.7km

Gillette Corner to Lampton Road

A long residential reach lined by interwar semis, Osterley Station with its landmark Art Deco tower and some grander, older properties in the Spring Grove area to the south.

character reach F 2.2km

Lampton Road to Henlys Roundabout

Mostly interwar semis along this reach with a few mansion blocks with ground floor retail. Includes Lampton Park which can be accessed from the GWR via a footpath.

character reach G 5km

Henlys Roundabout to Clockhouse Roundabout

The longest reach which passes and accesses Heathrow Airport. Mixed and disjointed in character and form, this reach is fronted by large commercial units, low-rise residential, the River Crane, Duke of Northumberland River and large tracts of open space and fields.

Great West Road

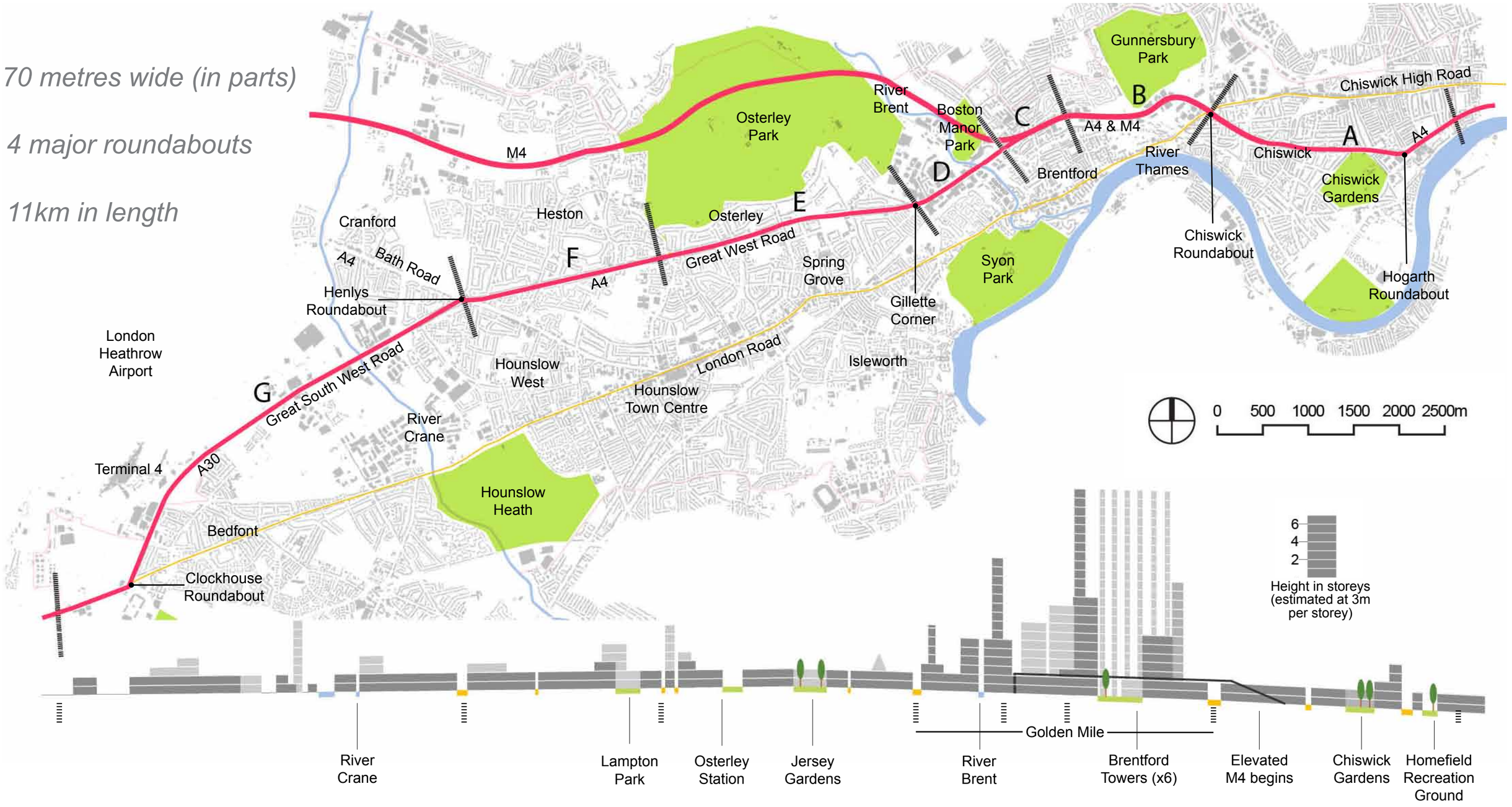
character reaches

Seven character reaches have been identified along the length of the Great West Road and its east and west extensions (Chiswick by-pass and Great South West Road) to distinguish and describe the different characteristics that exist along its length. The reaches have been formed from an understanding of historical development, spatial layout, land use distribution, movement and the types and pattern of buildings.

70 metres wide (in parts)

4 major roundabouts

11km in length



Great West Road

historic context

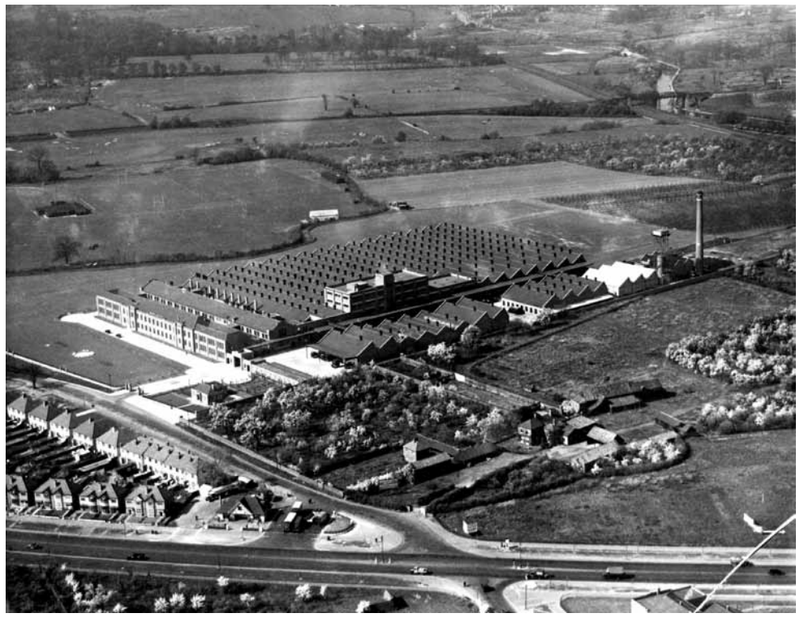
The Great West Road (GWR) was long-promised as a bypass for Brentford's ancient main road but is a relatively newly constructed route through the borough. This route also by-passes Hounslow town, and so eases congestion from the historic London Road through both town centres. Its earliest section was not completed until 1925 with planned extensions and additions waiting until after WWII.

The idea that a bypass was cheaper and easier than widening the choked Brentford High Street was published in 1807; there were opposing locally commercial fears too, later stoked by the effects of the railway. Eventually the more extensive potential of a new bypass road saw the light of day in 1910 with land being acquired shortly after, though WWI delayed its construction. It was not until the Great Depression of the early 1920s that funding was put in place to begin clearing, levelling and constructing the GWR through mainly agricultural land and small settlements, as national and local government tried to stimulate the economy and reduce the high levels of unemployment with investment in capital projects. The Bath Road to Chiswick Roundabout part of the GWR was completed and ready for its grand opening by King George V on 30th May 1925.

Large multi-national companies such Beechams, Gillette, Firestone, Simmonds Aerocessories, Pyrene and Coty took advantage of the strategic location of the GWR and began locating their headquarters there, beginning a new era of modern offices and factories, technology, research and development.

After the Second World War, between 1955 and 1957 the road was extended to Kensington through Chiswick and Hammersmith where much greater impact on residential areas was imposed. Much argument occurred with local people as it resulted in widespread property clearances, and the severance of urban fabric which can be seen today. In 1959, Chiswick Roundabout flyover was constructed, and two years after that work began on the elevated M4 that passes through Brentford and out of London towards South Wales. This was at a time when there were a number of elevated road building projects being constructed, planned or mooted in London, much to the objection and dismay of local residents. The construction of the M4 drastically changed the land use and built form along its length, as businesses took advantage of open fields and the improved accessibility of Heathrow and the West.

Some of the best architecture, often Art Deco in style, is protected now as worthy of conservation and re-use, whilst GlaxoSmithKline, Sky, Audi, Mercedes and Porsche are amongst those that have constructed anew. Traffic congestion, poor access and low PTALs have discouraged office developments. There is current pressure to improve public transport and to increase the attractiveness of the route, although noise and poor air quality still affect its suitability for outdoor amenity. The GWR is a visible and busy route and needs to revitalise its important secondary role of providing status to the borough.



Factory of MacFarlane Lang Co Ltd off Syon Lane just to north of the GWR with future Gillette factory site in foreground



View from Gillette's clock tower looking west towards Osterley and St Mary's church spire with St Francis' church in the middle distance



Firestone factory in the 1930s, opened in 1928 and the first on the GWR, demolished over the August bank holiday weekend of 1980 before a preservation order could come into force on the following Tuesday



M4 Junction 2 with the A4 GWR looking west at Brentford,1982

All images from:
James Marshall, The History of the Great West Road

Great West Road

1913

The GWR as we know it did not exist at this time. However the map to the right shows the modern day location of the GWR (red dotted line). Much discussion had taken place throughout the 19th century about the need for a bypass for Brentford, yet work did not start until the early 1920s.

Chiswick and Brentford were well established neighbourhoods with busy and thriving high streets along Chiswick High Road / London Road. Spring Grove is a smaller settlement situated between the London Road and Osterley Station to the north.

1934

The first section of the GWR was completed by 1925 and took travellers from Chiswick High Road westwards avoiding the busy, congested Brentford High Street.

Rapid growth and development occurred along the GWR between its completion in the mid 1920s and the mid 1930s. Factories and offices located along the eastern section, many in an Art Deco style which gave this section a distinctive character and led to its being dubbed the Golden Mile.

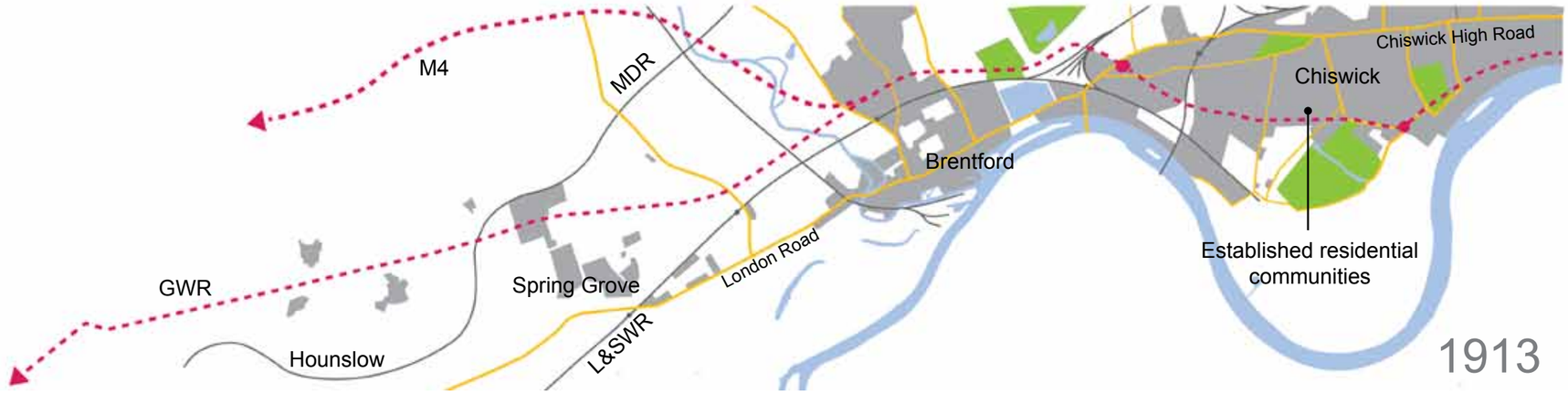
Suburban housing sprang up further along the GWR to the west with shopping parades forming at crossroads. Ribbons of quite large semi-detached houses, with large front and rear gardens, became desirable places to settle, with the ease of commuting into central London.

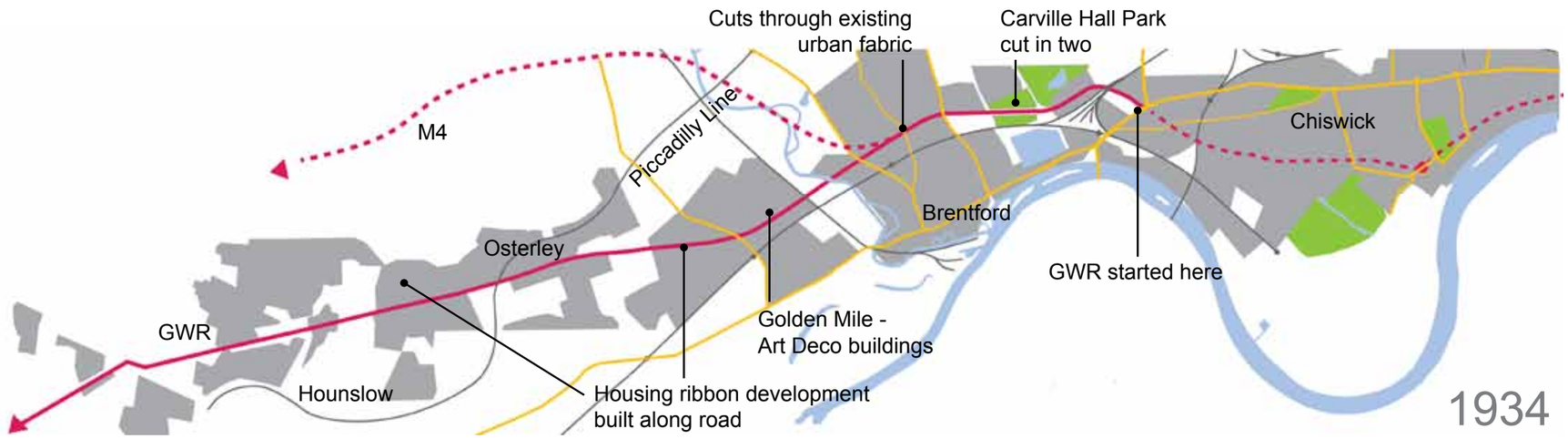
1966

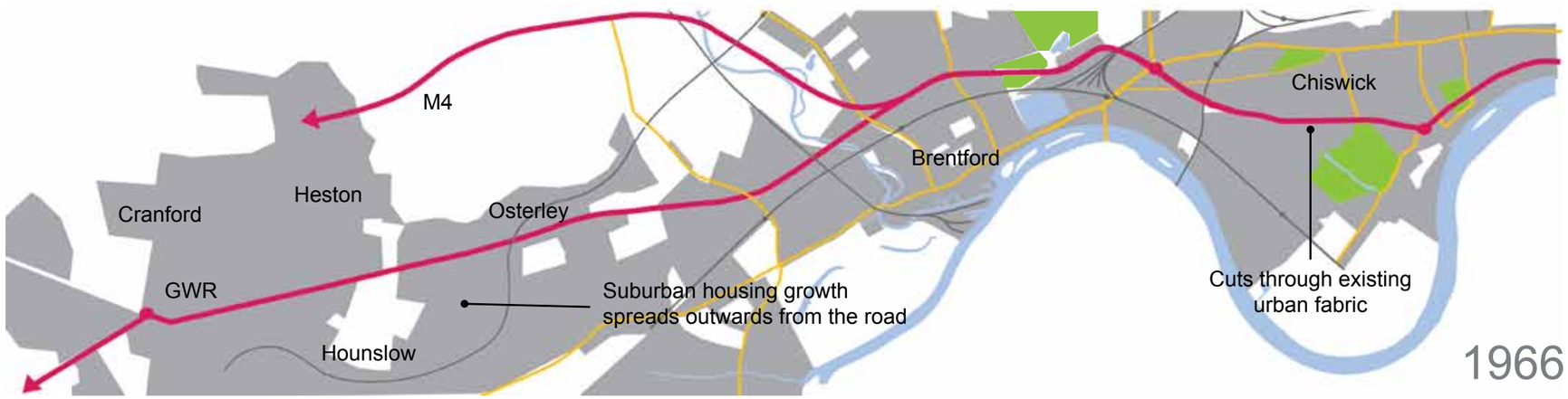
By 1966 all the GWR had been completed, including the extension to Hammersmith through Chiswick, catering for the increase in car ownership and commuting. This section cut through well-established neighbourhoods and involved reshaping blocks and demolishing houses. The M4 had also been constructed as a bypass to the original GWR, allowing through-motorists to drive quickly out of London westwards towards Reading, Bristol and South Wales.

A good deal more housing had been built since 1934 along the western end of the GWR, popular suburban housing estates continued to grow. New modern housing estates such as the Beavers Estate and Heston Farm were yet to be built, with the land undeveloped at this time.

Please note: The dotted red line shows where the GWR and M4 would be built and the solid red line shows the actual GWR and M4 as they were built.







Great West Road character reach A

land and building use



i - Children's play area below flyover ramp, in Harvard Hill Recreation Ground



ii - Prewar houses face directly onto A4 with only parked cars acting as a buffer



iii - Interwar Moderne-style houses face onto road with more generous front spaces and verge

Having been constructed in the 1950's this reach cuts through existing residential communities, cutting previously uninterrupted blocks and streets into two parts. Each side of the road is still largely residential with predominantly late Victorian and Edwardian housing, either terraces, semis or town houses. Older townscape exists along the River Thames, with some notable Georgian houses and early 19th century buildings. There are also a few postwar housing estates, notably along Devonshire Road which consist of 3-4 storey L-shaped apartment blocks irregularly laid out in green space. Not much recent development has occurred along this stretch, except for a 1980s housing estate consisting of red brick apartment blocks located in the far west by the elevated M4 section.

To the east there is a cluster of industrial uses, in and around the busy Hogarth Roundabout. Breweries have been in this area for hundreds of years, a tradition which continues to this day in the form of the large Fullers Brewery. There is little to no retail along the road apart from two car showrooms and the occasional public house. The scale and height of buildings along this stretch is predominantly low and medium rise, with mainly compact, small-scale terraced houses. The density is medium to high reflected by the tight, compact urban grain. With a high barrier down the middle of the dual carriageway, there is very little activity along the road apart from traffic travelling at high speeds. What little pedestrian activity that does exist, is mostly using the subways to cross to the other side, going to and from the bustling Chiswick High Road that runs almost parallel to the north.



Borough Boundary to Chiswick Roundabout

There are a number of green spaces that front onto, border or are severed by the GWR, including Homefield and Harvard Hill Recreation Grounds and Chiswick Gardens. It is particularly apparent how Homefield Recreation Ground and the neighbouring terraces were cut in two by the construction of the GWR. The northern edge of Chiswick Gardens was cut back for the GWR and although now well-landscaped has heavy traffic severing it from the former avenue leading to Chiswick High Road, still with its impressive street trees. Harvard Hill Recreation Ground to the west lies below the road where it rises to the flyover and has a children's play area and an uninviting entrance located by the entrance to the subway crossing.

The microclimate along this stretch is generally unpleasant with high noise levels and uninterrupted volumes of traffic, fumes and pollution. There are street trees along large sections, which create a pleasant visual buffer to neighbouring buildings, as do grass verges which line long sections of the road. They are however ineffective in shielding the pedestrians and residents from the noise and fumes of the traffic. The topography is relatively flat with a gradual south-westerly downward slope, hardly noticeable when walking.

The GWR has severed access to the River Thames frontage on both the east and west ends. This is particularly true to the east, where the GWR makes it difficult and unpleasant for pedestrians to reach Chiswick Mall, where splendid examples of Georgian architecture front the river. The Hogarth Roundabout also truncated and diminished the historic village of Chiswick, although the listed pubs remain.





iv - Remnants of a late Victorian estate lie to the east of Chiswick Gardens



v - Office building at Hogarth roundabout in cluster of commercial uses



vi - Homefield Recreation Ground is literally cut in two by the A4 GWR

Great West Road character reach A

movement and legibility



i - Foot- and cycleway at Chiswick flyover and roundabout



iii - Severance created by elevated A4/M4

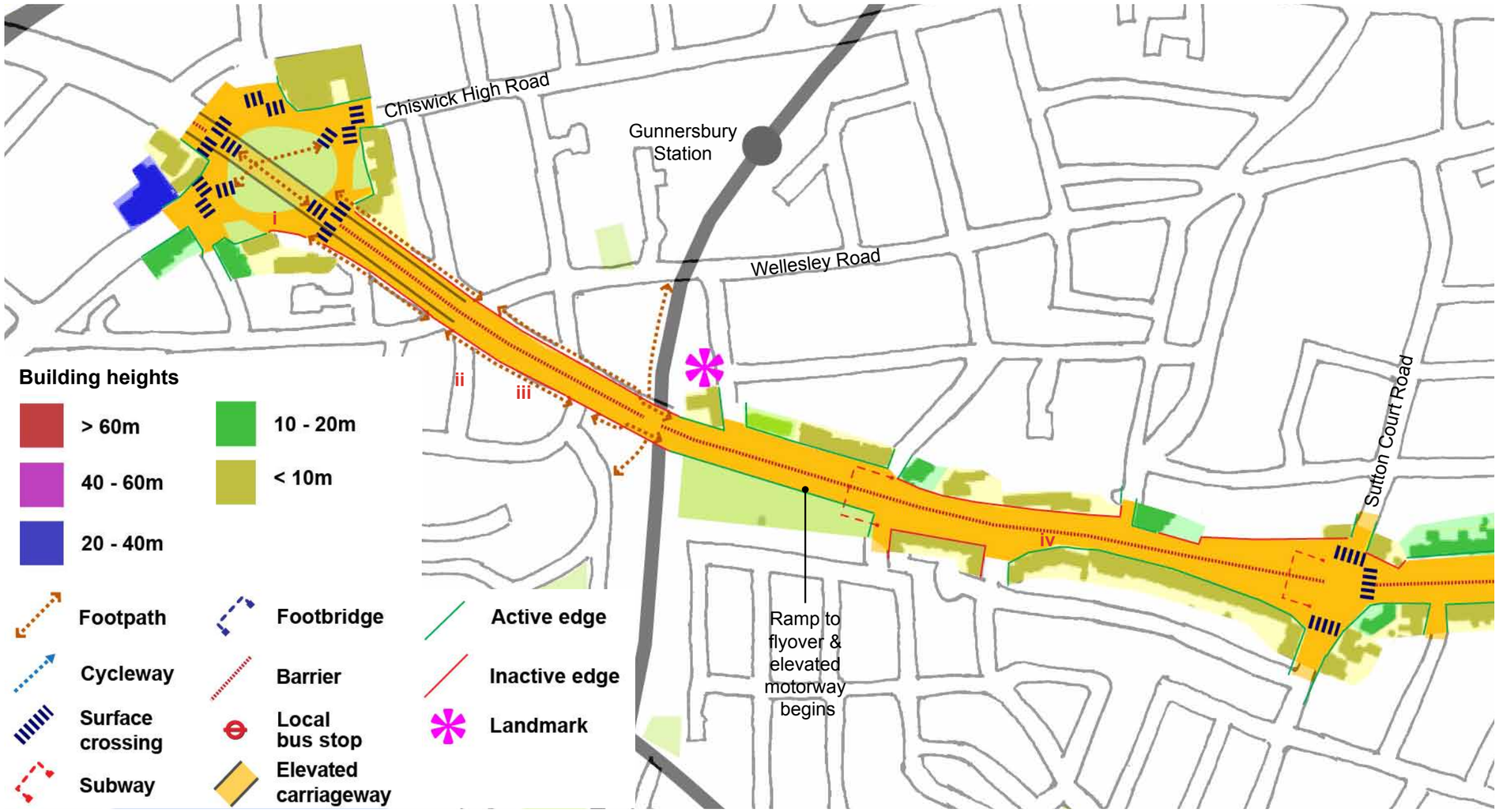


ii - Hostile pedestrian environment alongside elevated A4/M4

The GWR was designed for and is dominated by heavy, fast-flowing vehicular traffic and the corridor is designed to ensure this traffic is prioritised, making it an unpleasant movement environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

The distance from building to building across the GWR is wide, with an average street enclosure of between 50-60m. The carriageway is also wide at around 20-22m (6 lanes) with a 1.5m high metal fence running down the centre of the road. The nearest stations are Gunnersbury underground and overground, Chiswick Park, Turnham Green and Stamford Brook underground, and Chiswick and Kew Bridge mainline, all of which are between 300m and 900m distant. No buses travel along the GWR, but a number cross it in a north-south direction, including the 190 and E3 and serve Turnham Green, Hammersmith and Richmond.

Four pedestrian subways are located along this reach at Homefield Park, Hogarth Roundabout, Chiswick Gardens and Sutton Court Road. There is one at-grade crossing, centrally located at Sutton Court Road. The crossings are spaced approximately 400-500m apart with no other crossing opportunities resulting in very poor pedestrian permeability, and a central fence preventing any informal crossing opportunities.



Borough Boundary to Chiswick Roundabout

Walking along this stretch of the GWR is an unpleasant experience, which means there is little pedestrian activity and street life. This situation improves along certain stretches where houses front onto the road and provide some animation and scale to the street. The continuity of frontage can vary greatly, but on the whole it is poorly enclosed with long runs of high brick walls, along with sides and backs of buildings abutting onto the public space.

Building heights are predominantly 2-3 storeys, rising to 4-6 with some of the larger apartment buildings and mansion blocks. Heights and scale tend to increase at the roundabouts. Differences in scale and massing are more noticeable along this stretch of the GWR than height, with buildings like the 1998 gold and blue-domed Russian Orthodox Church, IMC building, and Fullers Brewery particularly standing out in the streetscape. The Russian Orthodox Church marks the end of the M4 for travellers iinto Central London.





iv - Generous grass verge separates footway from carriageway along parts of the route



v - Oddly-placed bench and leftover green space, Hogarth roundabout



vi - One of the five pedestrian and cycle subway crossings

Great West Road character reach A

history and heritage assets



i - The 1998 gold and blue-domed Russian Orthodox Church



ii - Elegant c1900 red brick villa with crow stepped Dutch gables on Sutton Court Road



iii - Particularly well-preserved facade in linear group of Moderne-style semi-detached houses

There are some fine and high quality stretches of Edwardian and interwar semis and terraces that front onto the GWR. Unfortunately, as they existed before the GWR was built, these houses have little in the way of a physical buffer between them and the six lanes of heavy traffic that pass them.

Three conservation areas run adjacent to or overlap this stretch of the GWR, recognising the historic Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian urban fabric in this area. The dashed line shows the block and street pattern before the GWR was constructed through the area.

There a number of listed buildings that either face onto the road or are located just a few streets off. These



include the large Georgian townhouses along the Mall, the C18th Hogarth House that sits behind a high garden wall, Chiswick House, which is set back within the gardens and St Michael's Church which stands proudly on Sutton Lane South.

Other notable historic features of the area include the Fuller's Griffin Brewery, a linear group of Moderne-style semi-detached houses, elegant prewar and early interwar houses and the more recent Russian Orthodox Church.There are many local names given to the GWR along this reach, including Hogarth Lane, Ellesmere Road and Cedars Road, reflecting the historic streets the GWR replaced.





iv - Semi-detached houses of late prewar/early interwar vintage



v - Entrance to Chiswick House and Gardens

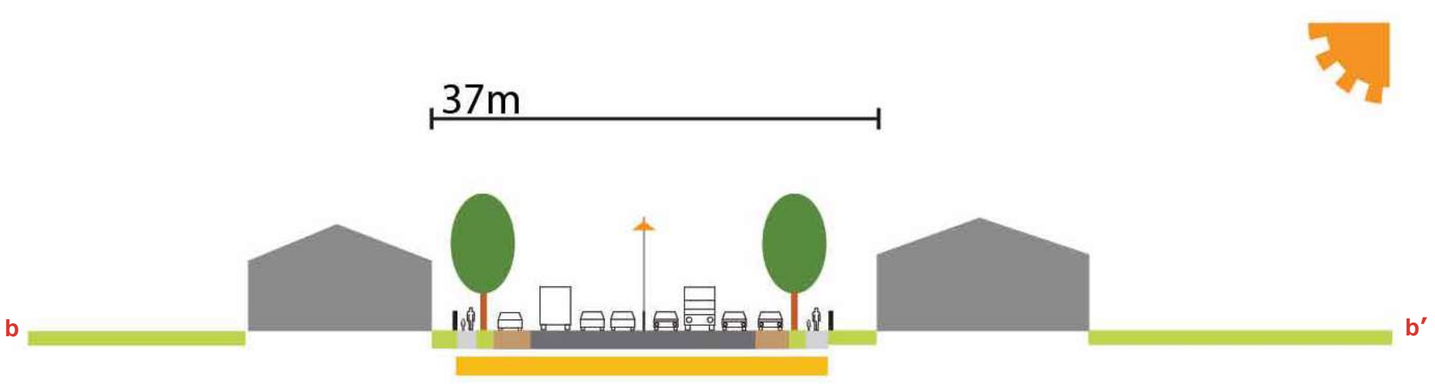


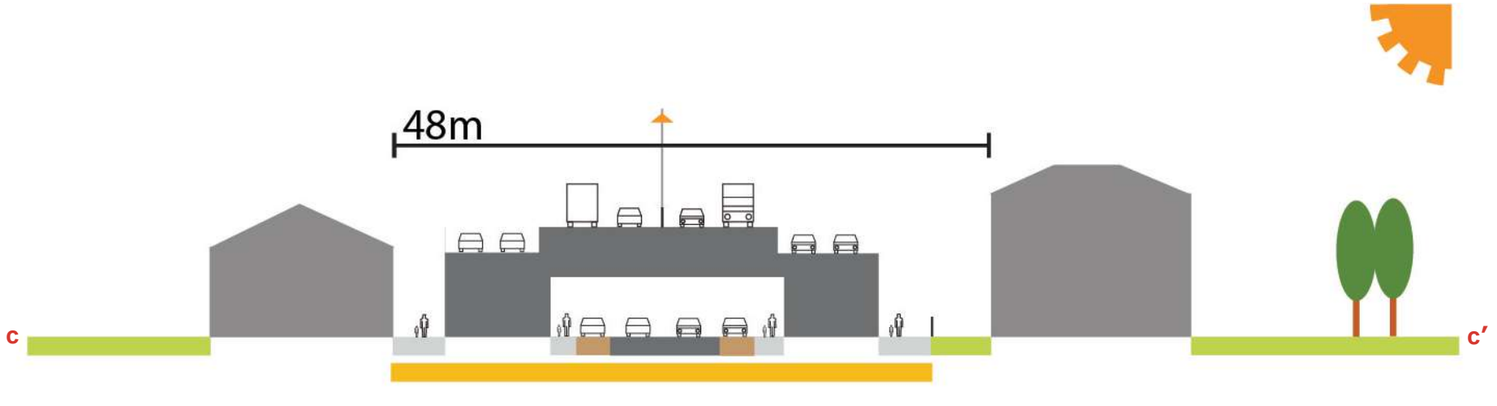
vi - Group of three listed buildings at the Fuller's Griffin Brewery

Great West Road character reach A

streetscape







Because of the road having been imposed later upon existing urban fabric, the levels of enclosure vary along this reach. In places there is a clear active edge with two storey houses fronting onto the street and other places, where building frontages are not present, there are often high boundary walls which clearly contain and define the space.

No stretches of this road have a degree of enclosure that you would associate with a street this prominent, wide and busy. Most buildings are 2-3 storeys high with the occasional 4-5 storey apartment block. However, the heights are consistent, resulting in some quite pleasant facades and streetscapes along certain sections.

Public highway

0 5 10 15 20 25m

Borough Boundary to Chiswick Roundabout

visual experience





i - Subway at night under Hogarth roundabout



ii - The impressive and imposing Victorian architecture of St Mary's RC Primary School



iii - Traffic dominated GWR with barrier fences creating a long barrier to pedestrian movement



iv - The GWR elevates into the M4 as pedestrians are forced down a side footpath



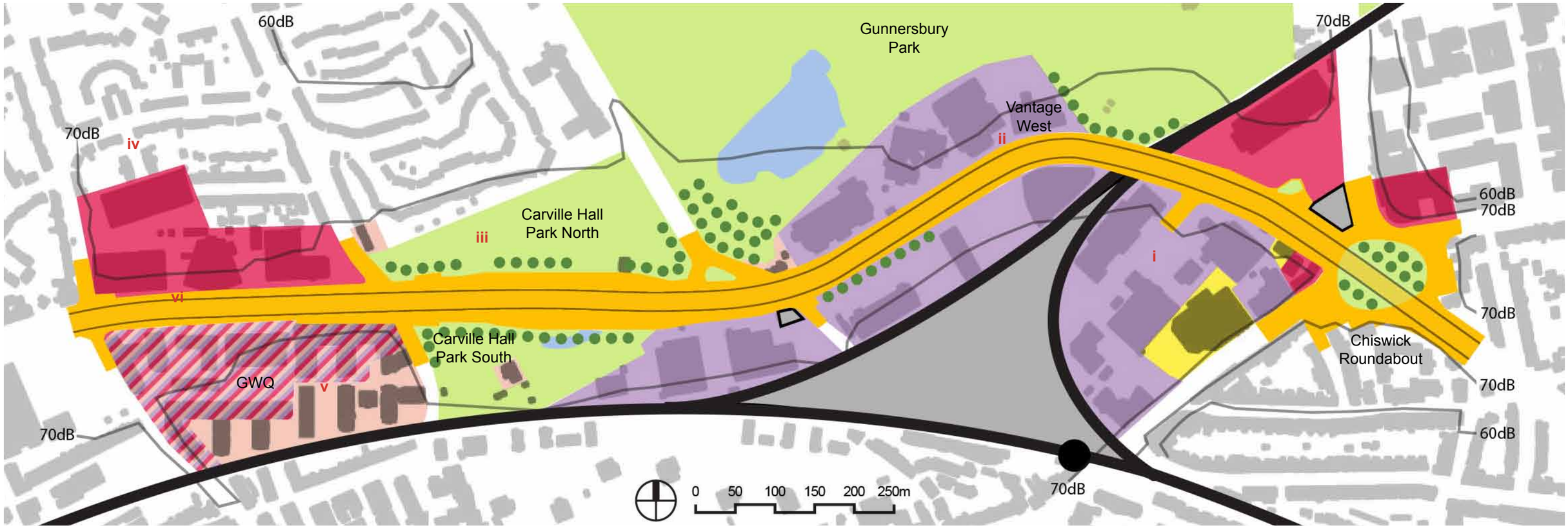
v - Richly detailed Edwardian houses in dire need of repair

vi - Street elevation showing central barrier fence with semi-detached interwar houses behind, some in Moderne style



Great West Road character reach B

land and building use





Golden Mile - Chiswick Roundabout to Ealing Road

Character Reach B constitutes the eastern section of the Golden Mile, the trans-Brentford stretch of the Great West Road. The dominant use is commercial. Large office and warehouse developments to the east of the reach give way to green open space at the centre. To the west stands a recent mixed use (including residential) development with car dealerships and more warehouses, north of which use becomes more uniformly residential.

The pre-dominance of large footprint structures with large areas of surface parking give rise to a coarse urban grain. Most of the buildings are low to mid rise with the exceptions of the Vantage West office tower to the east and the restored Wallis House and a new residential tower to the west. Building quality ranges from well-considered restoration and bold hi-tech to post-modern pastiche and the plain and functional.

The central part of the reach is flanked by parkland and is lined with mature trees, making it the greenest portion of the Golden Mile. However the divided parks are affected by noise and pollution. The GWR and the elevated M4 generate high levels of noise (and air pollution) which spreads well into the areas of open space but is in some cases buffered by the more substantial buildings alongside. The elevated M4 has created a gloomy and hostile left-over space along the centre of the GWR, not helped by the often apparently poor condition of the concrete supports.

East to west

Approaching Chiswick Roundabout along Chiswick High Road, offices give way to car dealerships which front an earlier Golden Mile-associated 1930s trading estate. West of the roundabout on both sides of the GWR is a mostly late C20th incoherent mix of buildings of varying shapes and sizes in office, industrial, retail and community (sports centre) uses. The similar style, age and layout of buildings within this area give it a uniform character as a small-scale industrial business park. It relates well to the commercial character of the GWR to the north and east but contrasts starkly with the Victorian buildings to the south and west.

To the immediate west lie open yard works within a railway triangle, accessed by a one way through road from Kew Bridge Road to the GWR. At the centre of three railway junctions and within a dip in the landscape this triangular area is well contained from surrounding areas. There are very few buildings, and the works taking place within the area dominate its appearance.

Just to the north and flanking the GWR and elevated motorway is a group of mid to high rise office buildings of contemporary design with glass and metal exteriors. Vantage West, a re-clad 15 storey 1960s building, is most prominent, particularly from Kew Bridge. The buildings act as a noise buffer between the M4 and Gunnersbury Park. All of the buildings are set back from the roadside and have frontages dominated by car parking.

A linear group of low-rise warehousing units with large car parking areas to the south side is followed by tree-lined green open space on each side. The northern space, Carville Hall Park North, is bleak and contains, with regard to noise and air pollution and according to environmental professionals, an inappropriately located children's play area. The southern space, Carville Hall Park South, is better enclosed and more attractive and has received a new lease of life as a local park at the eastern end of the axis through the nearby 2010s mixed use Great West Quarter (GWQ) development. This includes residential, hotel, retail, community and leisure uses in 4-10 storey buildings with a 25 storey tower to the west, with courtyards, a playground and a central square. Thus the GWQ is an emerging and much-needed high quality local centre for this section of the GWR and for North Brentford as a whole.

On the north side are commercial uses (recent trade retail boxes and car dealerships) which buffer and cut off a residential area of mostly 2 storey semis and short terraces. The residential scale of this area contrasts significantly with the commercial developments and environment of the GWR.



i - Low-rise trading estate and business park at eastern end



ii - Highly visible Vantage West office tower beyond the re-clad 1930s clock tower



iii - Environmentally poorly located children's play area, Carville Hall Park North



iv - Trading estate boxes buffer residential areas from GWR and M4 noise



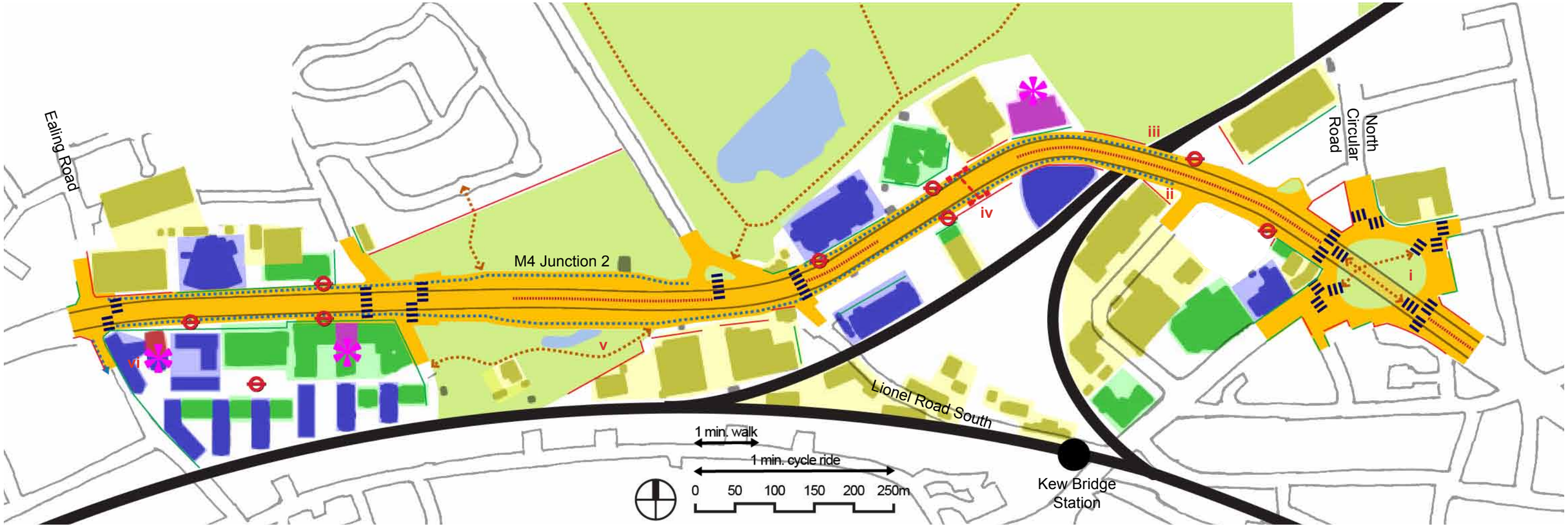
v - 2010s mixed use Great West Quarter (GWQ) development, and emerging local centre



vi - Audi car showroom - innovative design for the spectacle of motorway travellers

Great West Road character reach B

movement and legibility



Footpath
Footbridge
Active edge
Cycleway
Barrier
Inactive edge
Surface crossing
Local bus stop
Landmark
Subway
Elevated carriageway

Building heights

> 60m
10 - 20m
40 - 60m
< 10m
20 - 40m

Golden Mile - Chiswick Roundabout to Ealing Road

The character reach traverses a gentle slope downwards and southwards from Gunnersbury Park and Little Ealing to the River Thames. The park's rising ground level makes development along the GWR particularly visible from the park and its mansions.

Essentially two major roads in one, the six lane-wide east-west GWR/M4 combination dominates movement with north-south local roads forming four-way junctions with the GWR at irregular intervals. Of particular note is Lionel Road South, a narrow, former railway service road, which passes through the railway triangle and provides businesses along the central part of the reach with the only pedestrian and cycle connection to the railway station and re-emerging local centre at Kew Bridge. Major features are: the GWR/M4 Junction 2 with its four ramps widening the carriageway to an equivalent 14 lanes; and the Chiswick Flyover and Roundabout which has been landscaped with footpaths. The GWR can be said to create severance to some degree along its entire length but the effect is at its greatest at the walled and barriered linear Junction 2 with the elevated M4. This severance is becoming more significant as residential and mixed use developments, which depend for recreation on Gunnersbury Park and Carville Hall Park north are occupied.

The ribbon of commercial buildings to the south of Gunnersbury Park relate relatively well to the GWR giving some sense of continuity and enclosure, as do the buildings on each side of the road to the west. Elsewhere buildings turn their backs and sides to the road.

Whilst it is nowhere a pleasant activity, pedestrian and cycle movement improves west of the railway bridge, with crossings becoming more frequent and at-grade, with the option, on the south side, of diverting through Carville Hall Park South. The park should receive a new lease of life as a related open space at the western end of the axis through the Great West Quarter development, which is surprisingly well-connected to the surrounding areas given its island location.

Five bus routes cross the Chiswick Roundabout but only the H91 (Hammersmith - Hounslow West via Chiswick High Road) continues along the GWR. The 65 (Ealing – Kingston via Brentford town centre) crosses at the western end and the 235 (Sunbury – Brentford via Feltham and Hounslow town centres) terminates at the Great West Quarter (for some reason labelled North Brentford Quarter by Transport for London). Bus stops are well-located with regard to commercial and residential activities.

The Chiswick Flyover and Roundabout and the surrounding anonymous commercial buildings function poorly as the eastern gateway to the Golden Mile, unless the recent advertising towers either side of the flyover can be considered to fulfil this role. More advertising towers sporadically line the GWR as far as Junction 2, purely for the assumed benefit of travellers on the M4. The Vantage West building is highly visible from the south (particularly from Kew Bridge) and the north across Gunnersbury Park. The Great West Quarter mixed use development to the west includes the restored Art Deco Wallis House and a new landmark hotel and residential tower providing a gateway structure to the character reaches either side.



i - Recent landscaping and footpath, Chiswick Roundabout



ii - Mixed movement, signage and landmark buildings at eastern end



iii - One of the many advertising towers for the assumed benefit of motorway travellers



iv - Non-step-free subway crossing serves businesses at eastern end



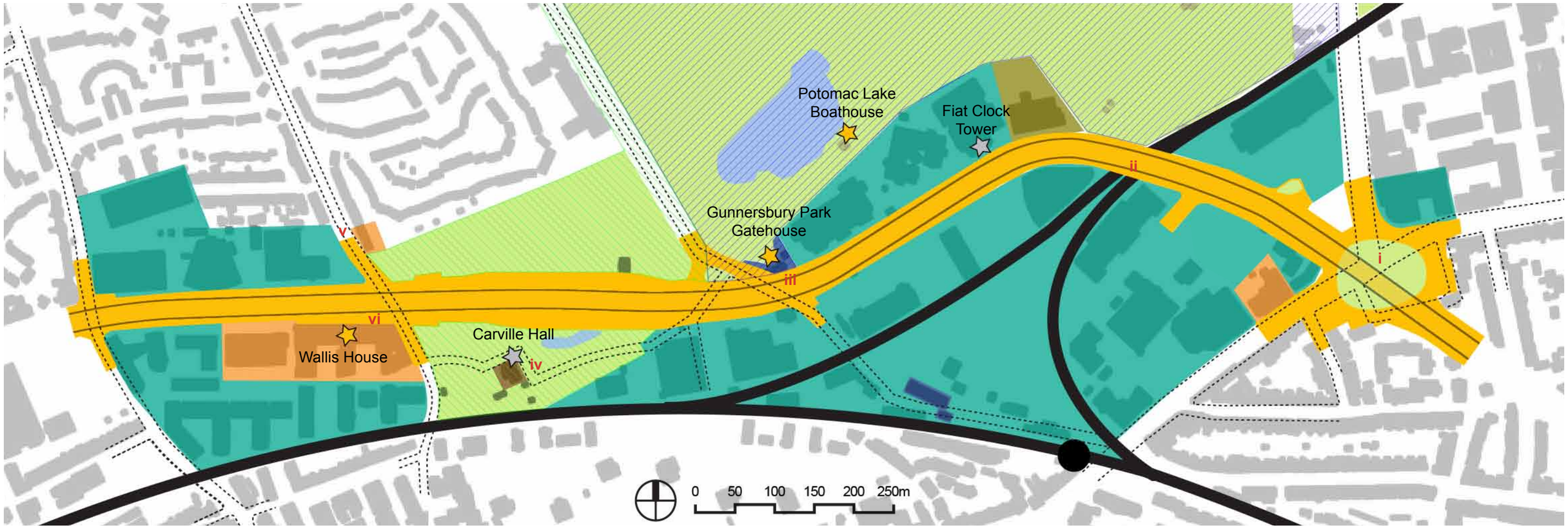
v - A pleasant alternative route through Carville Hall Park South



vi - New landmark residential tower with continuing construction work at western end

Great West Road character reach B

history and heritage assets



- Georgian to Victorian
- Victorian to Prewar
- Interwar
- Postwar
- 1980s to Present
- Block pattern/routes (1913) prior to GWR construction
- Conservation area
- Area of Special Character
- Listed building
- Potential listed building

Golden Mile - Chiswick Roundabout to Ealing Road

The Great West Road opened in 1925 as a bypass for Brentford. In this character reach it skirted the southern edge of Gunnersbury Park, severing Carville Hall's park and cutting through many market gardens. The GWR did not follow a pre-existing route but the pre-existing north-south tracks have become local roads. By the 1930s British and in particular American hi-tech (for their time) manufacturers had established offices and factories in Art Deco and moderne-style buildings along the Brentford stretch of the GWR, which by the 1950s had become known as the Golden Mile. Most notable of these along this reach are the former Beecham works and Henlys Garage, most of which has disappeared. The controversial elevated carriageway arrived in the mid-1960s as part of the initial Chiswick to Langley section of the M4 motorway to the west of England. The residential area to the immediate northwest is of early interwar vintage in a vaguely Garden Suburb-style layout.

Historic buildings en route include the Victorian Gothic Gunnersbury Park gatehouse, the earlier Carville Hall, both recently restored, and a cluster of Victorian industrial buildings within the railway triangle. Little remains of the 1930s industrial/commercial buildings bar the recently restored silo-like Wallis House in the Great West Quarter development and the heavily re-clad Henlys/Martini/ Fiat Clock Tower, which has provided some dubious architectural cues to the designs of the post-modern office buildings each side of it. Almost all the buildings along the reach are in fact recent (1980s to present) or are re-clads or renovations of post and interwar buildings.

Wallis House, the Gunnersbury Park gatehouse and the Potomac Lake boathouse are statutorily listed buildings. Carville Hall and the Fiat Clock Tower have potential for such and are of local townscape value. Gunnersbury Park and the neighbouring Kensington Cemetery, which both border the character reach, are part of a conservation area, which has the potential to be extended to cover Carville Hall Parks North and South. The park itself is listed Grade II* on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens. Any tall structure development along the Golden Mile can be expected to attract critical assessment in terms of its visual impact upon views from Gunnersbury Park, Syon Park and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



i - Chiswick Flyover was opened by Hollywood star Jayne Mansfield in 1959



ii - The surviving original balustrade of the GWR bridge across the railway



iii - The recently restored statutorily listed Gunnersbury Park gatehouse



iv - Carville Hall, an early Victorian set-piece



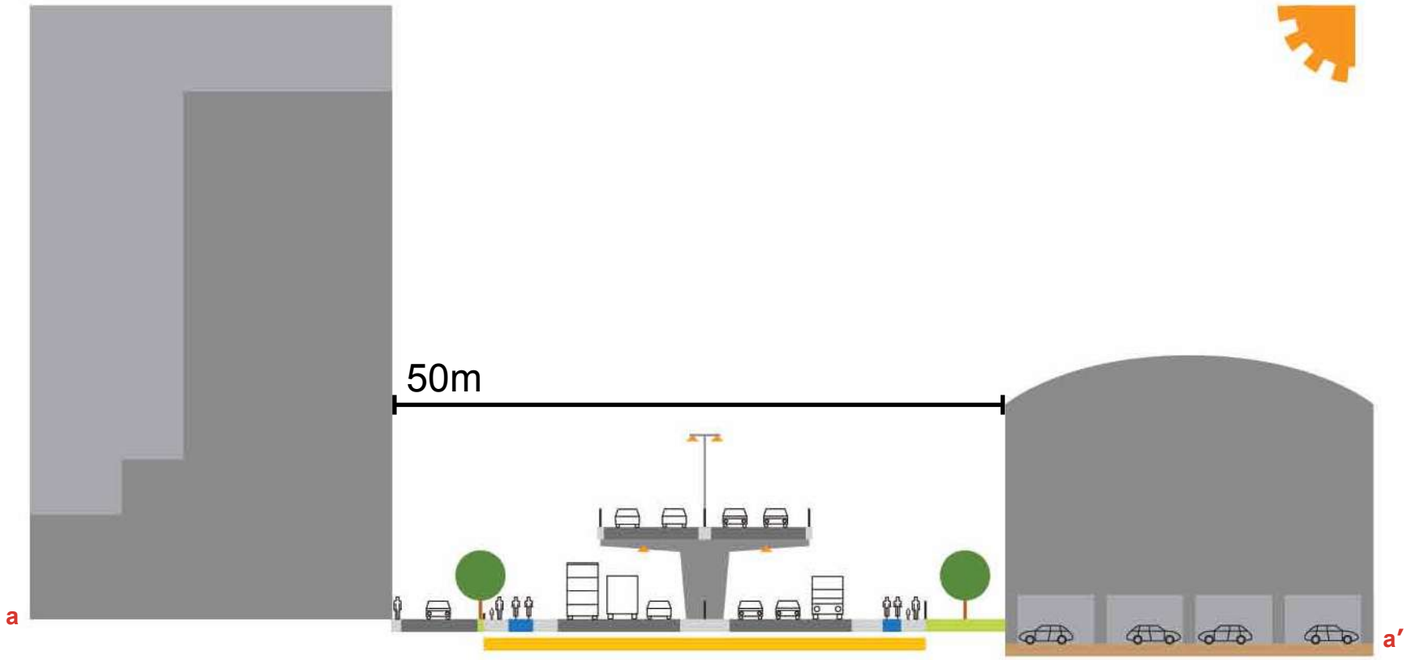
v - Early interwar local authority housing to the north of the GWR

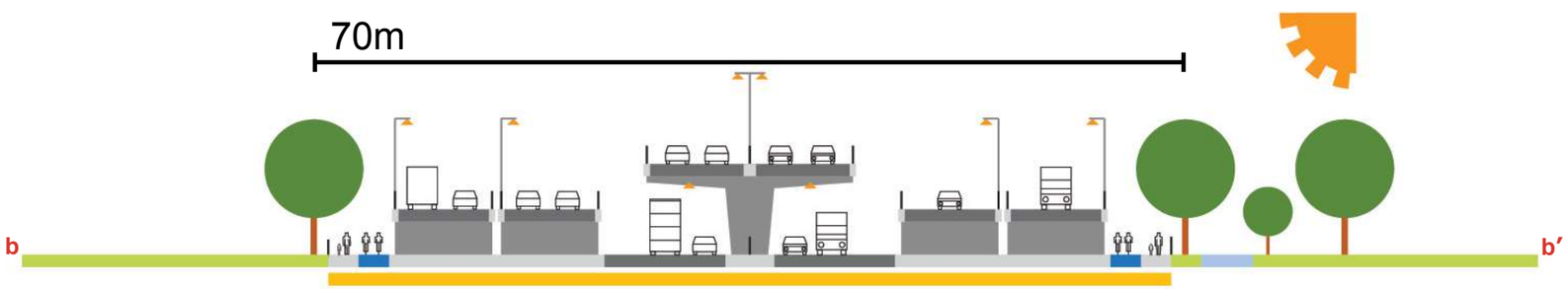


vi - Wallis House and associated buildings, restored as part of the GWQ development

Great West Road character reach B

streetscape





The total public highway width is consistently around 35m with the exception of the Junction 2 stretch where it reaches 66m.

The east-west orientation of the GWR affords the street-facing building elevations on the north side the maximum of sunlight gain, where not over-shadowed by the elevated motorway.

The sense of street continuity and enclosure is greatest at the western end of the character reach, though this is visually compromised by the presence of the elevated motorway.

Footways and cycleways are on the whole wide (allowing comfortable two-abreast cycling) and separated from the carriageway, which for the most part accommodates three lanes of traffic in both directions.

There are no grass verges within the highway, though there is some planting within the curtilage of the commercial buildings. The Carville Hall Park stretch is notable for the softening effect of the trees to the edge of the highway. These also offer some sense of continuity and enclosure along this stretch. Chiswick Roundabout benefits from considerable tree cover.

Lighting is from units suspended from the underside of the elevated motorway, supplemented along much but not all of the route by pole lighting on the footway.

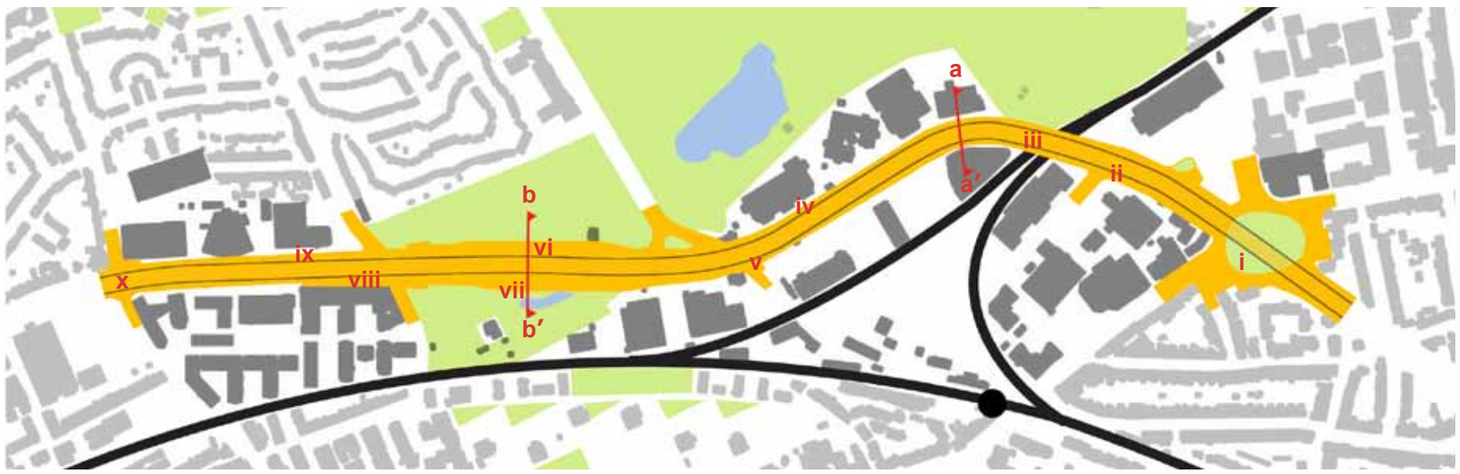
There is no on-street parking, most being in private surface, underground or undercroft lots.

Public highway

0 5 10 15 20 25m

Golden Mile - Chiswick Roundabout to Ealing Road

visual experience





i



ii



iii



iv



v



vi



vii



viii



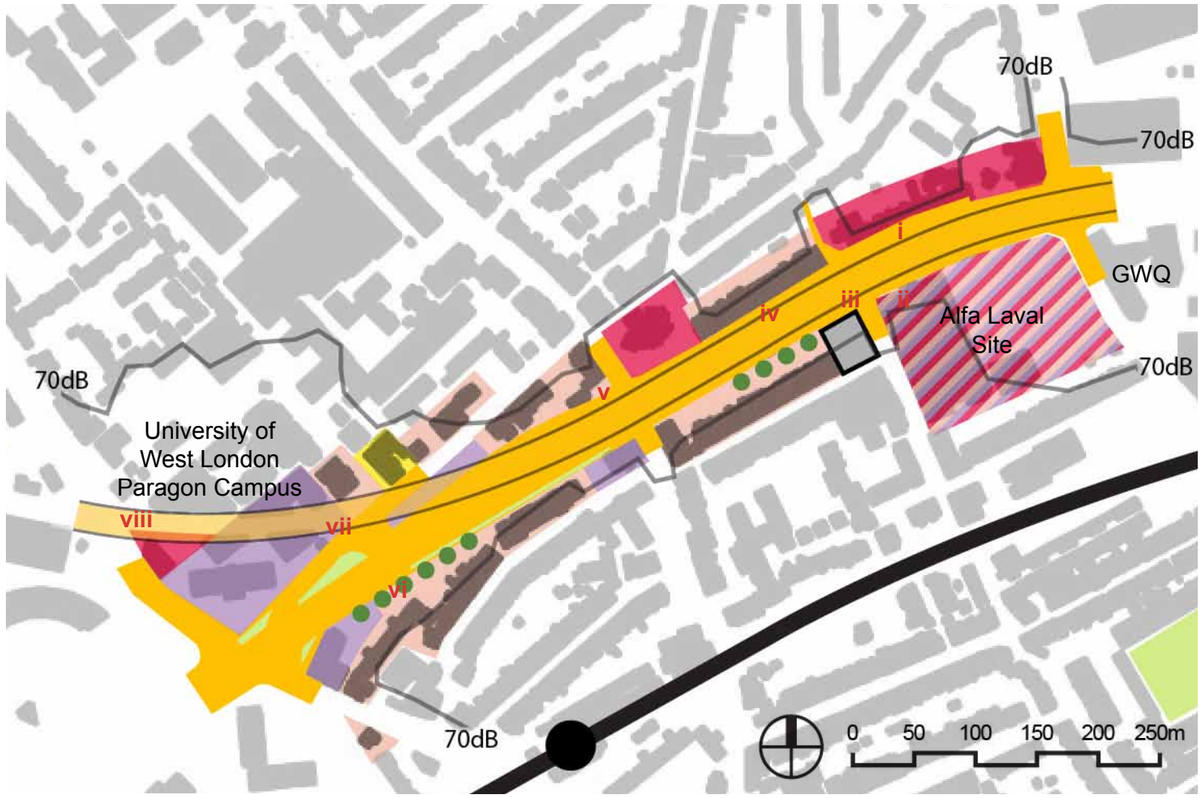
ix

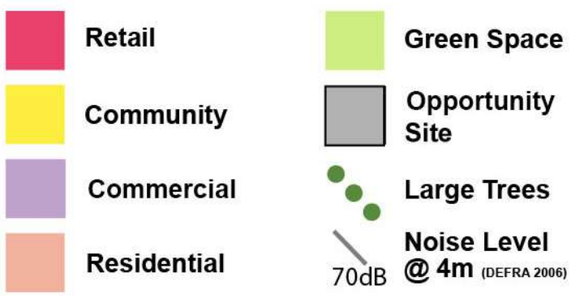


x

Great West Road character reach C

land and building use





Character Reach C constitutes the middle section of the Golden Mile, the trans-Brentford stretch of the Great West Road. The dominant use is residential, though this reach has the greatest mix of uses along the Golden Mile. The reach is peppered by relatively small footprint retail, community and office buildings of a wide range of ages and specific uses. To the immediate north and south use becomes more uniformly residential, with a smattering of public houses, some older commercial and some community uses. At the western end is a cluster of high-rise commercial, educational and residential buildings.

The survival of the c1900 tightly gridded street pattern and its associated 2 storey terraces, a row of which in one stretch abuts the GWR, give rise to a relatively fine urban grain. Heights rarely exceed 15m with the notable exceptions of the tall office towers (one awaiting redevelopment) at each end. Building quality is on the whole mediocre or shabby and not helped by the presence of a large, long derelict site and the elevated motorway. Indeed the atmosphere has been described in a recent study of architecture and the motor vehicle as one of ‘howling desolation’.

The reach’s only green assets are in the form of some continuous grass verges and mature street and rear garden trees on the south side only. The GWR and the elevated M4 generate high levels of noise (and air pollution) which is in some cases baffled by the long terraced houses alongside. The elevated M4 has created a gloomy left over space along the centre of the GWR, not helped by the often apparently poor condition of the concrete supports, and some poorly used lost urban spaces where it veers off to the west.

East to west

The character reach announces itself with the giant advertising banner suspended down the entire façade of the long-derelict Alfa Laval office tower, just part of a large development site which will be a continuation of the 2010s Great West Quarter mixed use development to the east. On the north side is a car dealership followed by a visually and functionally unappealing interwar shopping parade with two storeys of residential above. The next section, of around 200m in length, is perhaps the most poignant of all, being the remnants of a traditional doubly constituted street of c1900 terraced houses. The houses on the north side now face directly onto the GWR with the elevated motorway looming above. On the south side are the rear gardens of the terraces on the next street down. Moving westwards, what little coherence there is rapidly disappears, particularly on the north side as the elevated motorway rises and veers away from the GWR, making fresher cuts into the urban fabric.

North of this stretch is primarily residential with a school and a trading estate to the northwest. Housing is a mixture of 2 storey Victorian and Edwardian in long terraces and interwar housing on loops and lollipops, with a small amount of infill development. The north area provides an attractive residential environment interspersed with local amenities surprisingly well-buffered from the noise of the GWR and M4, though access to open space is poor. South however feels squeezed between the GWR and the railway, is much less coherent and is of lower quality. The residential scale of this area contrasts significantly with the commercial developments and environment of the GWR: the townscape has the sense that it has been interrupted and overwhelmed by the major roadways at its centre.

The reach ends at the junction with Boston Manor Road around which there is a cluster of high-rise commercial, educational (University of West London Paragon Campus) and residential buildings and advertising columns which create a focal point but are out of scale and context with the surrounding residential areas and parkland. However, for first-time travellers to the UK via Heathrow Airport and the M4, this complex, with its vaguely North American ‘Edge City’ feel, is their first impression of urban London, and as such is considered a major international gateway.

Golden Mile - Ealing Road to Boston Manor Road



i - Unappealing interwar shopping parade with two storeys of residential above faces directly onto GWR



ii - The long-derelict office tower at the eastern end of the reach



iii - Vacant sites and derelict buildings on the southern edge of the reach



iv - The only strip of housing which fronts directly onto the Golden Mile



v - Edge City, West London - extreme contrast in built form at the western end of the reach



vi - 4 storeys of maisonettes back onto the GWR amidst taller office buildings



vii - Lost urban space below the M4 flyover at the western end of the reach



viii - An unlikely gathering place for University of West London students, western end of the reach

Great West Road character reach C

movement and legibility



Footpath
Cycleway
Surface crossing
Subway
Footbridge
Barrier
Local bus stop
Elevated carriageway
Active edge
Inactive edge
Landmark

Building heights

> 60m
40 - 60m
20 - 40m
10 - 20m
< 10m

The character reach traverses a gentle slope downwards and southwards from Little Ealing to the River Thames. Taller developments along the GWR are particularly visible from the higher ground to the north.

Essentially two major roads in one, the six lane-wide east-west GWR/M4 combination dominates movement with north-south local roads forming four-way junctions with the GWR at irregular intervals. Of particular note are Ealing Road at the eastern edge, with its uncomfortable roundabout, inadequate pedestrian crossings and discontinuous cycleways; and Boston Manor Road at the western edge with its cluttered signage. Both are busy Brentford and Ealing town centre connecting routes. Windmill Road in the middle offers a calmer route into Brentford town centre. A major feature is the rising and west-veering elevated M4 with its associated advertising towers and further townscape disruption. The GWR can be said to create severance to some degree along its entire length but the effect is at its most visually, environmentally and socially dramatic along this reach.

As a result of this severance the south side is almost entirely lined with the exposed backs of housing. The eastern half of the north side consists of uncomfortable housing and retail fronts.

Pedestrian crossings are present at all junctions and are all at-grade, though Ealing Road and Windmill Road lack pedestrian-controlled east-west crossings. The cycleway on the south side is almost continuous. Pedestrian and cycle movement becomes particularly awkward at the western end due to solely motor vehicle-oriented road layouts.

The GWR itself is served by the H91 bus (Hammersmith - Hounslow West via Chiswick High Road). The 65 (Ealing – Kingston via Brentford town centre) crosses at the eastern end, with the E2 (Greenford – Brentford town centre via Ealing) crossing in the middle and the E8 (Ealing – Brentford town centre) crossing at the western end. There is a usefully-placed though disused bus stop on the south side at the western end.

To the east, tall landmark structures are provided by the new residential tower and the to-be-redeveloped Alfa Laval tower at the Great West Quarter mixed use development. To the west is the cluster of high-rise commercial, educational and residential buildings and advertising columns which is considered to function as a strategic gateway to West London. At ground level however this area is notable for its inactive edges, dead spaces, car parks and cluttered signage.

Golden Mile - Ealing Road to Boston Manor Road



i - The reach is marked at its eastern end by a new residential tower just beyond the Alfa Laval site



ii - Generous pedestrian and cycleways in an otherwise unattractive environment



iii - Residential backs flank a pedestrian route from the north of the GWR



iv - Relatively dense trees and shrubs soften the edge and provide a degree of continuity



v - A grass-verged stretch of the reach's varied footway



vi - Residential backs along the northwestern edge of the reach



vii - Signage and a typical advertising tower where the M4 rises and veers away from the GWR



viii - The junction with Boston Manor Road at the western end of the reach

Great West Road character reach C

history and heritage assets



Georgian to Victorian

Victorian to Prewar

Interwar

Postwar

1980s to Present

Block pattern/routes (1913) prior to GWR construction

Conservation area

Area of Special Character

Listed building

Potential listed building

The Great West Road opened in 1925 as a bypass for Brentford. In this character reach it sliced through the existing urban fabric of two-storey Victorian and Edwardian housing in long, primarily east-west oriented terraces, which represented the gradual merging of the suburbs of Ealing to the north and Brentford to the south, cutting through market gardens to the east. In one place only it followed a pre-existing street of which a row of terraced housing survives on the north side. By the 1930s British and in particular American hi-tech (for their time) manufacturers had established offices and factories in Art Deco and moderne-style buildings along the Brentford stretch of the GWR, which by the 1950s had become known as the Golden Mile. However due to the pre-existing residential nature of this reach only a handful of these were built at the eastern end on what is now the vacant Alfa Laval site. The controversial elevated carriageway arrived in the mid-1960s as part of the initial Chiswick to Langley section of the M4 motorway to the west of England. The residential area to the immediate northeast is of early interwar vintage in a vaguely Arts and Crafts Garden Suburb-style layout.

There are few historic buildings of significance en route, though the reach has the greatest range of buildings in terms of period.

Although it could be regarded as a prototype of the locally disliked advertising towers, the Lucozade sign above the shopping parade to the east of the reach is a well-loved local landmark. The sign is in fact a digital replica, the original being in Gunnersbury Museum.

The Church of St John the Evangelist on Boston Park Road to the west is of local townscape value and has the potential for statutory listing. The extensive area of Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing to the north has the potential to become a new conservation area. Any tall structure development along the Golden Mile can be expected to attract critical assessment in terms of its visual impact upon views from Gunnersbury Park, Syon Park and Kew Gardens (UNESCO World Heritage Site).

Golden Mile - Ealing Road to Boston Manor Road



i - The much-admired Lucozade sign at its present home



ii - Row of c1900 terraced houses in the residential area to the north



iii - C1900 Adelaide Terrace, on the north side of the reach, its facing terrace obliterated by the GWR



iv - One of a number of nearby local corner pubs for which Brentford is famous



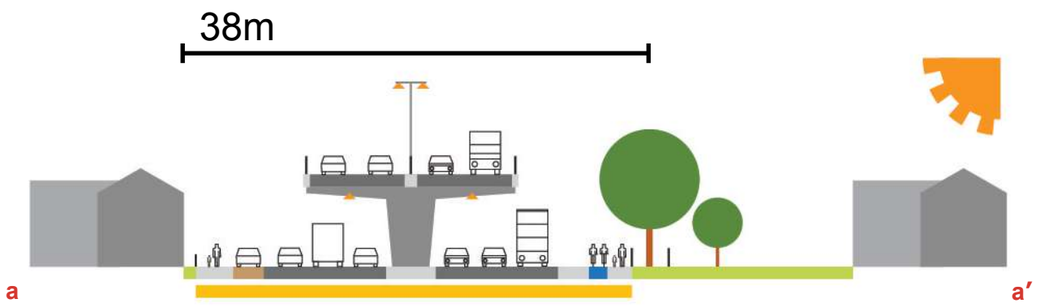
v - The Church of St John the Evangelist on Boston Park Road to the west



vi - Listed Georgian town house seems lost amid the elevated motorway and high-rise buildings

Great West Road character reach C

streetscape



The total public highway width is for the most part around 35m with the exception of the western-most stretch where it reaches 50m.

The east-west orientation of the GWR affords the street-facing building elevations on the north side the maximum of sunlight gain, where not over-shadowed by the elevated motorway.

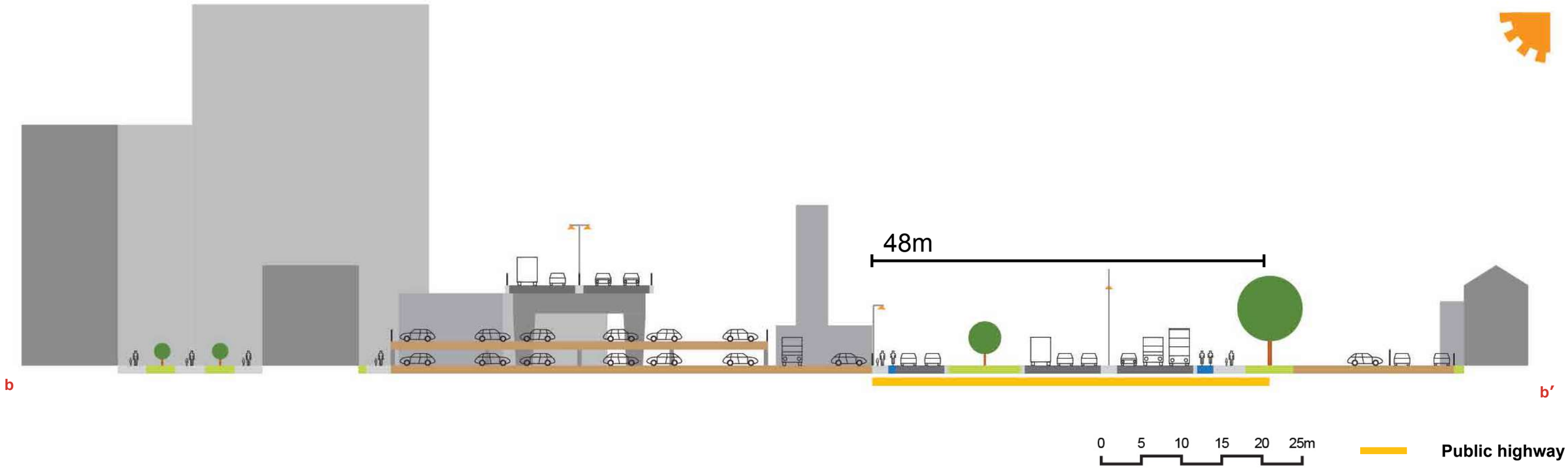
The sense of street continuity and enclosure is greatest in the middle of the character reach, though this is visually compromised by the presence of the elevated motorway.

On the south side the footways and cycleways are on the whole wide (allowing comfortable two-abreast cycling) and separated from the carriageway, which for the most part accommodates three lanes of traffic in both directions. On the north side a compromised cycleway only extends from the western end to the middle of the reach.

The south side has some stretches of grass verge and there is some planting including mature trees within a linear enclosed space between the rear gardens of the housing beyond and the footway. These provide some softening of the edge of the highway and a degree of continuity and enclosure. Greenery is virtually absent from the north side.

Lighting is from units suspended from the underside of the elevated motorway, supplemented along the route by pole lighting on the footway. At the western end where the elevated motorway departs, central catenary lighting begins.

Most parking is on side streets or private surface and multi-storey lots. There is on-street parking alongside the housing and shopping parade on the north side, which acts to some extent as a buffer for pedestrians.



Golden Mile - Ealing Road to Boston Manor Road

visual experience





i



ii



iii



iv



v



vi



vii



viii



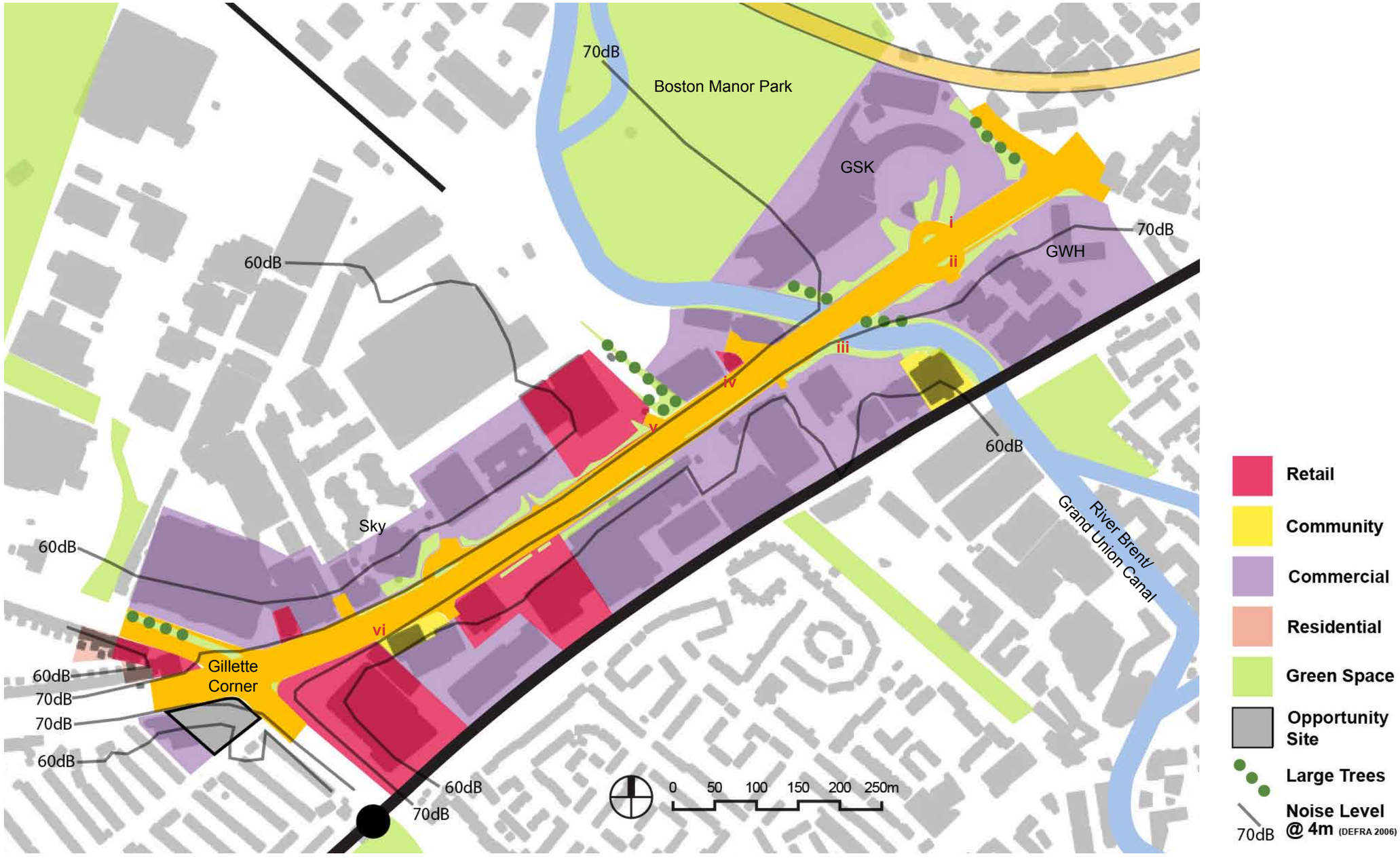
ix



x

Great West Road character reach D

land and building use



Golden Mile - Boston Manor Road to Gillette Corner

Character Reach D constitutes the western section of the Golden Mile, the trans-Brentford stretch of the Great West Road, and remains, by a stretch of the imagination, the closest to its original interwar/early postwar form and, in design terms, its most successful.

The use is exclusively non-residential and almost entirely commercial with the possible exception of two private clinics. The especially tall buildings at the eastern end form part of the cluster of high-rise commercial, educational and residential buildings where the elevated M4 motorway joins the GWR. These give way westwards, via the valley of the River Brent/Grand Union Canal, to a strip of business parks and large footprint commercial and retail boxes, some of which are fronted by remaining Art Deco office buildings. The railway line to the south, running parallel to the GWR, marks the southern extent of the commercial uses and cuts off the area from the residential beyond. On the north side however the strip is merely a front for an extensive zone of commercial, industrial and utility uses which extends northwestwards along the river to the edge of Osterley Park. At the western extreme of the Golden Mile stands, appropriately, the 1930s Gillette factory building with its celebrated clock tower, after which interwar suburbia begins in earnest.

The pre-dominance of large footprint structures with large areas of surface parking give rise to a coarse urban grain. Most of the buildings are low-mid rise with the exceptions of GSK and GWH to the east and the Gillette clock tower to the west. Building quality ranges from well-considered restoration and bold hi-tech to post-modern pastiche and the plain and functional. Whilst individual buildings such as GSK have achieved high standards of design and generous settings others have debased their surroundings.

The eastern part of the reach is softened considerably by the presence of the River Brent and some sensitively landscaped spaces, some private but visible, some publicly accessible. The reach is sporadically and irregularly grass-verged and tree-lined. The noise and air pollution of the M4 motorway gradually reduce westwards though levels can still be high in the immediate vicinity of the GWR.

East to west

The tall, massive and shiny 'iconic/landmark/gateway' international headquarters of GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and the re-clad 1960s twin towers of Great West House (GWH) dominate the eastern end of the character reach, at the junction with Boston Manor Road. Although they create a strong focal point they are often considered out of scale and context with the surrounding residential areas and parkland. However, for first-time travellers to the UK via Heathrow Airport and the M4, this complex, with its vaguely North American 'Edge City' feel, is their first impression of urban London, and as such is considered a major international gateway.

On the south side of the GWR two low-mid rise business parks are located on each side of the river, taking some advantage of the semi-natural context. On the north side a single office tower looms over a small, single storey restaurant and fast food outlet which serves the entire area. Moving westwards, buildings become more uniformly large footprint, bland and low-rise, featuring some big box retail particularly to the southwest and a large superstore just beyond to the northwest. The exceptions are the three remaining Art Deco buildings on the south side and the post-modernist Sky complex on the north side. The Art Deco buildings have recently proven difficult to let in a modern commercial context though one has found reuse as a private clinic. The western end is served by an early interwar shopping parade.

The big box commercial landscape abruptly gives way to an extensive interwar ribbon development of semi-detached and short-terraced two storey housing alongside and to the north and south of the GWR.



i - The international headquarters of GlaxoSmithKlein



ii - Recent re-clad of 1960s office tower - Great West House



iii - Sensitive landscaping around business park on bank of River Brent/Grand Union Canal



iv - Popular lunch stop at the middle of the character reach



v - Mixed business and retail park on site of demolished Art Deco factory



vi - Re-use of Art Deco former office and factory building

Great West Road character reach D

movement and legibility



Golden Mile - Boston Manor Road to Gillette Corner

The River Brent/Grand Union Canal is the most prominent topographical feature of this character reach, forming a valley from which the land rises northwestwards towards Osterley Park. The river flanks Boston Manor Park to the northeast, a popular recreational destination though visually and acoustically compromised by the nearby motorway. The area around Gillette Corner is one of the most elevated in the borough, with views southeastward across Isleworth to Richmond Hill and the North Downs beyond. For this reason the Gillette building's clock tower (and any potential tall building in this area) is all the more prominent.

The six lane-wide east-west Great West Road dominates movement with north-south local roads forming four-way junctions at each end. Boston Manor Road at the eastern edge with its cluttered signage and awkward vehicular traffic movement regime is busy Brentford and Ealing town centre connecting route. Syon Lane at the western edge connects the GWR with western Brentford, Isleworth and Twickenham to the south.

For the most part the buildings create relatively active frontages to the street though in some cases there are intervening deep car parks or clusters of free-standing buildings which bear little or no relationship to the street.

Along its length the reach has numerous side access roads, some only providing access to the immediate building and its parking and some, particularly on the north side providing access to the extensive commercial and industrial hinterland. In particular the northeast's industrial warehousing and open yard operations attract large volumes of heavy goods traffic.

Pedestrian crossings are mostly at-grade with a step-free subway at the western end and non-step-free access to the canal tow path. In the middle is an ageing and little used non-step-free footbridge – many would rather risk crossing informally at-grade, since there is a gap in fully accessible, formal crossings of approximately 800m. The cycleways on each side are almost continuous though there are frustrating gaps caused by side access roads.

The River Brent/Grand Union Canal provides attractive cycle and pedestrian access along the tow path to the town centre and the River Thames to the south and to Boston Manor Park and further afield to the north.

The GWR itself is served by the H91 bus (Hammersmith - Hounslow West via Chiswick High Road). The E8 (Ealing – Brentford town centre) crosses at the eastern end, with the zig-zagging local H28 crossing at the western end. Bus stops are sparsely though evenly spaced along the reach.

To the east, tall landmark structures are provided by the cluster of high-rise commercial (notably the Glaxo-Smith-Klein building and Great West House), educational and residential buildings and advertising columns which is considered to function as a strategic gateway to West London. At ground level however this area is notable for its inactive edges, dead spaces, car parks and cluttered signage. The GSK building's internal 'street', "designed as a zone for impromptu employee interaction", has a detrimental effect on actual and potential local street activity and retail use.

Some significant remaining examples of Art Deco architecture from the Golden Mile era provide landmarks along the way, culminating in the Gillette clock tower at the western end. A tall and highly visible mast-like structure above and to the front of the superstore to the southwest contrasts poorly with the the clock tower.



i - View from the bridge - looking eastwards towards the Boston Manor Road junction



ii - Street condition alongside GSK



iii - Steps down to the canal tow path



iv - The little used non-step-free footbridge



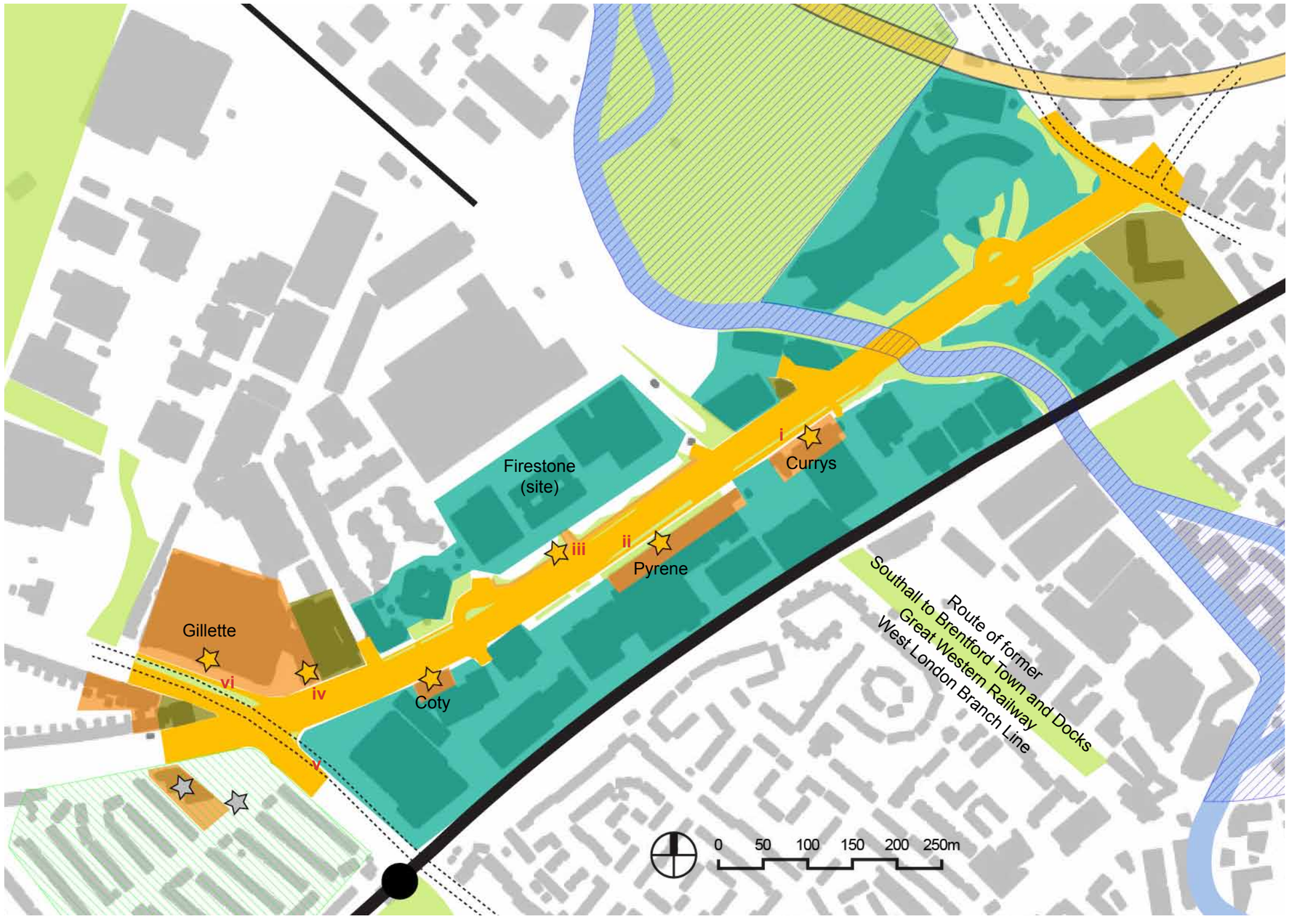
v- Street-view in the middle of the character reach



vi - Many prefer to risk informal crossing than use the sparsely located formal crossings

Great West Road character reach D

history and heritage assets



- Georgian to Victorian
- Victorian to Prewar
- Interwar
- Postwar
- 1980s to Present
- Block pattern/routes (1913) prior to GWR construction
- Conservation area
- Area of Special Character
- Listed building
- Potential listed building

Golden Mile - Boston Manor Road to Gillette Corner

The Great West Road opened in 1925 as a bypass for Brentford. In this character reach it skirted the southern end of Boston Manor Park, cutting through farmland and market gardens, crossing the River Brent/Grand Union Canal and passing under the Southall to Brentford Town and Docks Great Western Railway West London Branch Line before meeting Syon Lane. The GWR did not follow a pre-existing route but the pre-existing north-south routes have become important local roads. By the 1930s British and in particular American hi-tech (for their time) manufacturers had established offices and factories in Art Deco and moderne-style buildings along the Brentford stretch of the GWR, which by the 1950s had become known as the Golden Mile. Many were located on this particular reach, the most notable being the Macleans, Currys, Pyrene, Firestone, Coty and Gillette works. The Great Western Railway Brentford Branch linked the main line at Southall with Brentford High Street and Dock but there was no formal passenger stop at the Golden Mile. The extensive interwar ribbon development of semi-detached and terraced two storey housing to the west developed as a consequence of the coming of the GWR.

Historic buildings en route include the front office buildings of the original Currys, Pyrene and Coty works and the entire Gillette factory building with its celebrated landmark clock tower. All that remains of the Firestone factory are its fenced walls, gate and steps. To the west are some examples of more austere interwar and early postwar commercial buildings including the Northern European Expressionist-style National Westminster Bank.

All of the above named structures are statutorily listed. At the extreme western end there is a small Art Deco factory and an historic brick wall, part of an earlier structure, which are considered to be of local townscape value and as such have potential statutory listing. Boston Manor Park and the River Brent/Grand Union Canal are part of a conservation area, which extends into the Brentford Lock area near the town centre. Any tall structure development along the Golden Mile can be expected to attract critical assessment in terms of its visual impact upon views from Gunnersbury Park, Syon Park and Kew Gardens (UNESCO World Heritage Site).



i - 1930s Art Deco former Currys factory



ii - 1930s Art Deco former Pyrene factory



iii - Remains of 1930s Art Deco Firestone factory



iv - Northern European Expressionist-style interwar bank building at western end



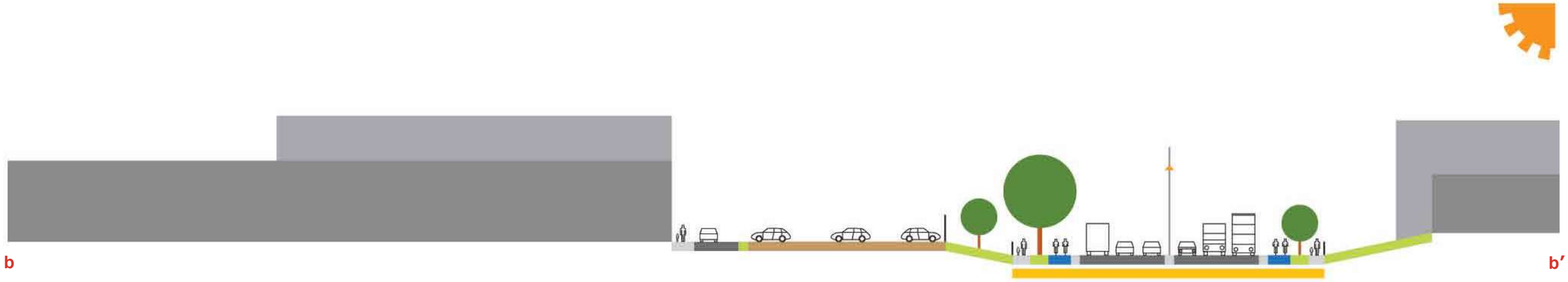
v - Early example of a pedestrian subway at western end



vi - The celebrated landmark Gillette building and clock tower at the western extreme

Great West Road character reach D

streetscape



The total public highway width is consistently around 30-35m.

The east-west orientation of the GWR affords the street-facing building elevations on the north side the maximum of sunlight gain.

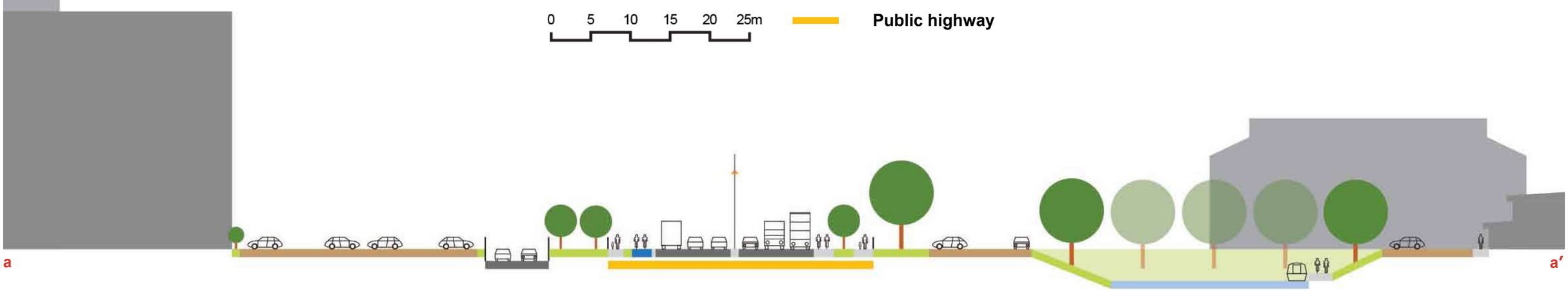
Any sense of street continuity and enclosure is compromised by the deep setbacks of recent developments.

Footways and cycleways are on the whole wide (allowing comfortable two-abreast cycling) and separated from the carriageway, which accommodates three lanes of traffic in both directions.

There are sporadic and irregular grass verges with some trees of varying sizes within the highway, though there is higher quality planting within the curtilage of the commercial buildings. The grassed banks fronting the Art Deco buildings are particularly attractive features.

Central catenary lighting is supplemented along some of the route by pole lighting on the footway.

There is no on-street parking, most being in private surface, underground or undercroft lots.



Golden Mile - Boston Manor Road to Gillette Corner

visual experience





i



ii



iii



iv



v



vi



vii



viii



ix

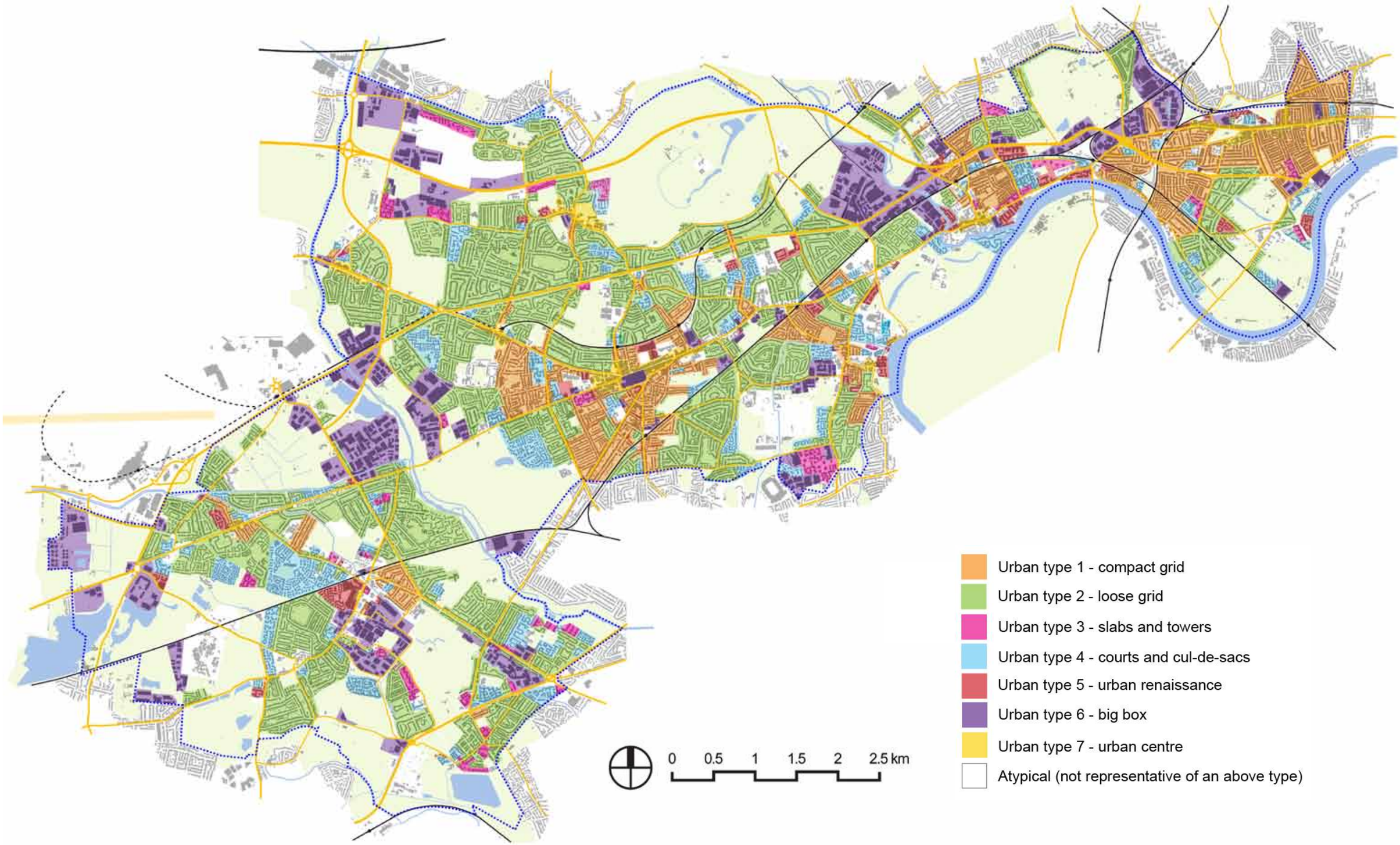


x

Urban types

4

Summary of urban types



Summary of urban types

urban type 1



Compact grid

urban type 2



Loose grid

urban type 3



Slabs and towers

urban type 4



Courts and cul-de-sacs

urban type 5



Urban renaissance

urban type 6



Big box

urban type 7



Urban centre

The Urban Context and Character Study has identified seven broad urban types which are common to and may be found across the entire borough. Each is described in detail and analysed on the basis of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). This will ultimately provide a basis on which to prepare general design recommendations based on the qualities of each type along with more specific recommendations for each study area and its character areas.

It should be noted that there is often overlap between the urban types identified. For example, the compact grids of type 1 evolved smoothly into the looser grids of type 2, and the slabs and towers that characterise type 3 may contain elements of the low-rise courts and cul-de-sacs layouts of type 4. Furthermore not all examples of each type exhibit all of the characteristics in the summary of the types.

Type 1 | Compact grid

brief summary

- Compact grid layout ranges from strict orthogonal grids to more relaxed grids
- Streets connect together - there are very few dead end streets
- Street lengths and blocks size and shape vary resulting in a variety of grid layouts
- Predominantly terraces and pairs - overall medium to high density (60 - 100dph)
- Low rise - predominantly 2-3 storeys
- Small scale mixed use - often found on corner plots or on the main street
- Minimal setbacks with well-defined front boundaries - often low brick walls
- Chiefly brick construction with party walls and chimneys
- Most commonly found in the eastern part of the borough: Chiswick, Brentford, Isleworth
- Examples in the borough include: the Glebe Estate in Chiswick, Brook Road and surrounds in Brentford, the Inwood Road area in Hounslow, Byford Road and Linkfield Road both in Isleworth
- Lacking in civic and amenity spaces
- Non-residential corner uses



Figure ground showing land use pattern with small pockets of non-residential uses such as the local pub, corner shop, GP etc.

historic development

- Rise of the industrial city - mass migration to the city from the countryside and the need for cheap housing en masse to house the growing population.
- The grid layout came later to this borough than inner London, because LBH remained generally agricultural for much longer, but most was in place by the end of the C19th and nearly all by WWI.
- Victorian railways (from mid C19th) opened up parts of the borough to Victorian commuters. New development layouts were based on lanes between market garden plots or, following Enclosure and sale of common or heath land, purposely laid-out. Grid networks led from and often between through-roads.
- Speculatively built by private individuals/builders often to a pattern book.
- Terraces often built in small piecemeal lengths eventually forming long terraces with subtle variations in size, style and detailing.
- Different sizes and types built to different standards dependent on affluence and class status of occupiers.
- Built in brick as most the cheapest and widely available building material.
- Plots and dwellings generally become larger towards the end of the C19th.



Typical terraced street with on-street parking (orthogonal grid layout)



Aerial view of compact grid layout with densely planted back gardens

variations

- There are two main varieties of the compact grid evident in the borough: orthogonal grid and relaxed grid.
- Orthogonal grid - regular streets lined with terraces or short perimeter lengths of brick buildings. They were speculatively built in small piecemeal lengths, resulting in subtle variation in size (width and spacing of streets and plots, forecourts), style (gabled or classical, arched forms, porches, bay windows), and applied decoration (colonnettes, brick or terracotta banding) (Examples: Glebe Estate and Inwood Road).
- Relaxed grid - slightly looser, more sweeping grid layout than orthogonal with larger plots for villa style properties in set piece gardens catering for more affluent clientele. Residences usually in pairs or short terraces if narrow fronted, presenting themselves as larger villas with landmark features or individual wider houses at prominent locations (Examples: Grove Park and Bedford Park).

Type 1 | Compact grid

dominant period

- Predominantly from the late 19th century and pre-World War One periods with some examples from recent times (post 1990s - see urban renaissance type)
- Spatial and aesthetic differences evident depending on the affluence of the target market with higher quality, larger (often semi-detached), more ornate properties for wealthier clientele, e.g. Dukes Avenue
- Edwardian housing tended to be more elaborately detailed than earlier periods
- Many examples and variations of compact grid found in Chiswick

land use

- Predominantly residential with some mixed use on corner plots and/or main streets
- Pubs and corner shops often included as part of development - sometimes also small business and light industrial premises and community uses
- Often contains quite prominent churches that act as a local landmark, e.g. St Stephens Church
- A great number and variety of public houses are found in this type but many have unfortunately been converted to other uses in recent years
- Sufficient dwelling density to allow for a mix of uses to be sustained and profitable

layout and structure

- Perimeter block structure with streets lined by buildings.
- Blocks can vary from the regular and orthogonal to a looser, deformed pattern responding more to landscape and topography
- Blocks sizes vary between 50m to 150m on a side
- Street based layout creating a fine grain network of routes where vehicles and pedestrians are integrated
- Layout is very walkable offering a good choice of routes for the pedestrian with very few dead-end streets
- Pattern of small plots results in a fine urban grain and a rich, varied townscape



Photomontage of a typical Victorian terraced street highlighting key characteristics

Type 1 | Compact grid

streetscape

- Narrow(ish) street widths (10-12m) with low-rise buildings
- Pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles integrated into street design
- Minimal building setbacks (1-3m) with front low boundary walls or fencing - front gardens are too shallow to accommodate car parking
- Car parking is almost exclusively on-street - usually on both sides - sometimes one side
- Mews set behind the principal terraces that front onto the street have a smaller, more compact, domestic scale
- Pavement widths are narrow at 2m to 2.5m.
- Shallow front gardens can soften the streetscape when planted generously and consistently
- Street trees feature in some streets aligned to party walls, but are not always consistent
- No grass verges

building type and form

- Urban yet domestic scale with strong vertical emphasis
- Small, compact scale with a close and clear relationship between street and building
- Predominantly terraced houses and semi-detached (from Edwardian period)
- Larger, imposing, detached ‘villas’ also evident (e.g. Woodlands Grove) these are often now divided into flats
- L-shaped building plan is the most common for the terraced property
- Heights chiefly 2 to 3 storeys - sometimes 4 storeys with half-basements
- Average dwelling density between 60-100dph sometimes slightly higher
- Garden sizes - front gardens are shallow (1m to 2.5m) back garden lengths range from patio size 5m to an extensive 25m

materials and detailing

- Level of detailing, craftsmanship and ornateness varied greatly depending on the clientele and affluence of target market when built, e.g. Bedford Park was very different from Windmill Road
- Period features commonplace and a variety of historic styles were used - Italianate, Gothic, Arts and Crafts
- Detached or semi-detached villas tended to be far more ornate and lavishly detailed than terraced properties
- Party wall parapets and chimneys give a distinctive rhythm to the skyline
- Mostly constructed of yellow stock/red/brown brick or local stone
- Decorative patterned brickwork - Flemish bond is a common pattern.
- Slate roofs with lead lining and ridge lines
- Steeply pitched roofs or butterfly roofs concealed by parapets
- Bay windows in a variety of shapes - square bays common in Edwardian properties
- Coloured glass in front door part of original design
- Sash windows with glass panes - window heads, sills and columns feature
- Decorative ceramic tiles laid onto path to front door, porches and halls



Compact grid with sweeping streets and mature trees



Larger villa style properties with good size front gardens



Tight arrangement of semi-detached houses with strong vertical proportions and ornate applied detailing



Typical L-shape building form with small back garden



Non-residential uses on and near to the corner plot



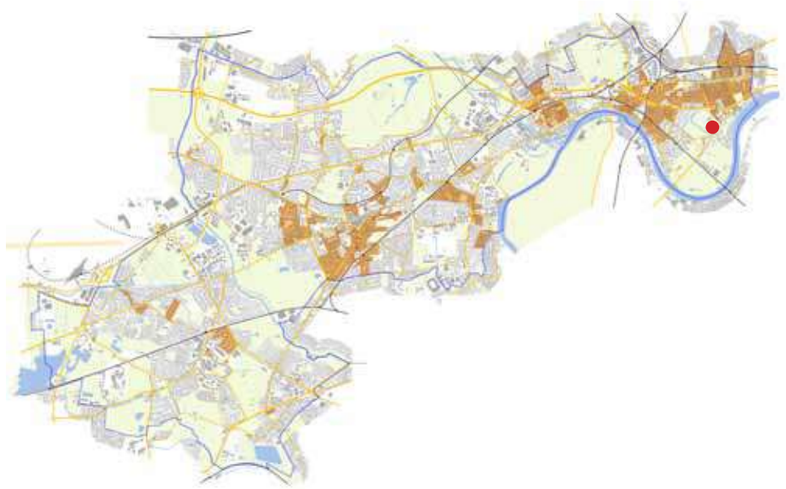
Narrow fronted ‘cottage style’ terraced houses with various facade treatments



Distinctive features; slate roof, lead edging, chimney stacks, party walls, window heads and painted brickwork

Type 1 | Compact grid

Glebe Estate, Chiswick

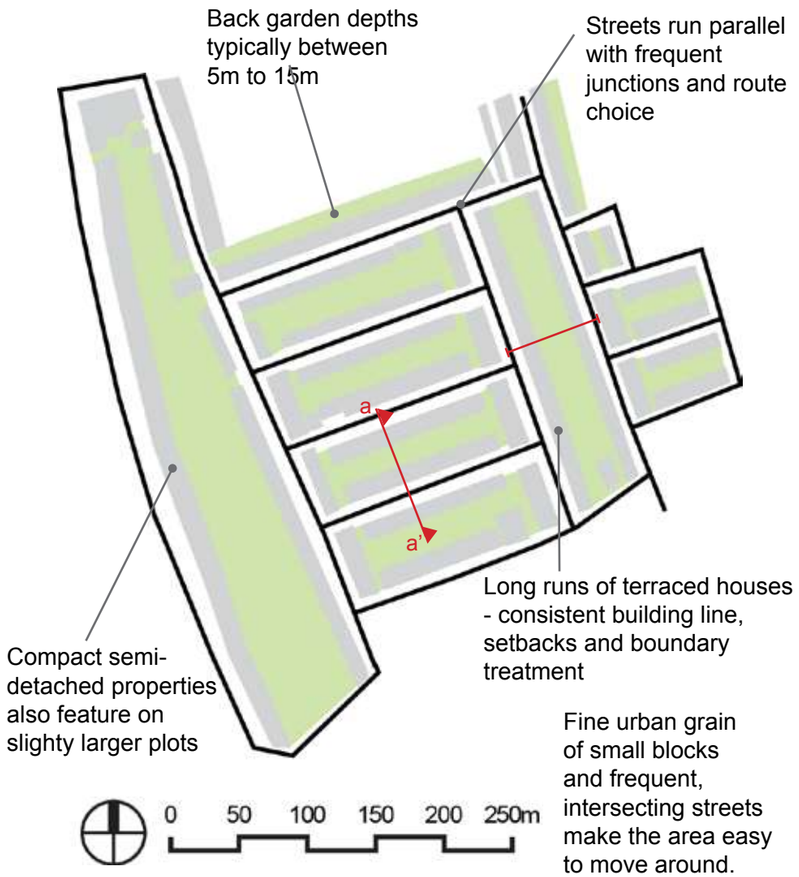


The Glebe Estate lies just south of Chiswick High Road and is a very compact and reduced scale example of a compact grid. It is comprised of narrow, long rectangular blocks, between 70m wide and 200m in length on a simple, orthogonal grid layout, with compact two storey terraced houses. The streets are narrow (10m to 15m wide) with a high frequency of front doors in a variety of shades and colours lining the street. The area has a domestic and human scale and feel.

The Glebe Estate was built between 1871 to 1891 on church-owned land. Based on a simple orthogonal street plan with cottages fronting onto the street, the estate was divided into plots and built speculatively over this period. The estate provided worker cottages for skilled/semi-skilled households divided often into two or three tenements. Some were owner-occupied, but most were bought by landlords to let out. Freeholds were bought in the 1970s and a new, wealthier class of people started to renovate these cottages with a new-found appreciation for Victorian townscape, architecture and conservation.

The inhabitants have changed over the years but the built fabric has remained fairly intact albeit some alterations, additions and minor changes. The area is a very popular and affluent part of Chiswick, with houses now largely occupied and owned by one household.

See Character Area L in the Chiswick Study Area for more information on this area and its surrounding context.



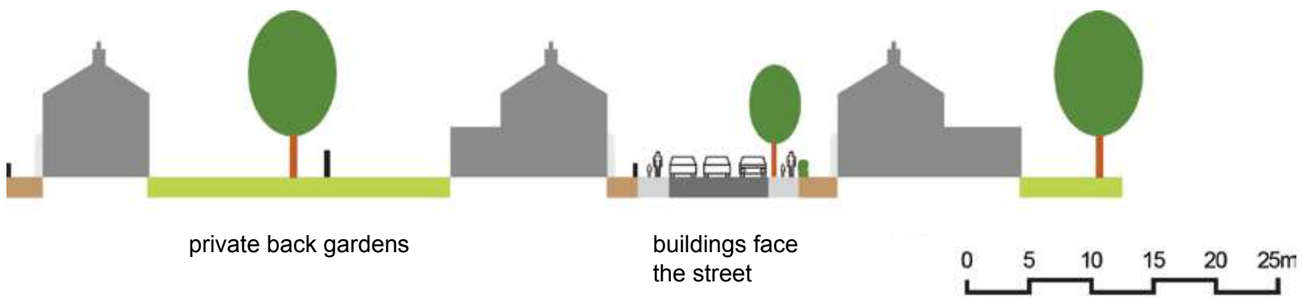
Street and block structure



Typical terraced streetscene: buildings line the street, 1-2m setbacks, low boundary wall, narrow pavements, street trees, on street parking



Four-panelled Victorian door with glass panels covered by timber porch



Section a-a'

Type 1 | Compact grid

strengths

- Sufficient density allows for a healthy and sustainable mix of uses to provide for local conveniences within a 5-10 minute walk
- Close to public transport - partly because of when and where they were built these areas are within walking distance to train, underground and bus services
- Walkable - the layout is very walkable with street intersections often no more than 100m apart and very few dead end streets
- Navigable and legible - logical street pattern with corner landmark buildings/features makes navigating easy with clear views to the end of the street, lengths, angles are consistent, regular and reliable
- Well-defined public and private space with secure private back gardens and public-facing small front gardens adjacent to the fully public street
- Enclosure - buildings clearly define the street without overshadowing or dominating it, giving a domestic and human scale to the street
- Uniformity – the consistent style and layout repeated in an area gives it a particular character and sense of place
- Rhythm and variety in the elevation as bay windows and other features are repeated down the street
- Rhythm in the roof line with chimneys and original dormers repeating down the street
- Front gardens - the shallow planted front gardens can soften the streetscape and do not allow for conversion to car parking
- Feels safe and secure - front doors and windows front onto and overlook the street which due its intimate scale does not feel too big
- Economical - uses space efficiently, provides adequate density without needing high-rise buildings
- Adaptable - the fine grain plot structure allows for constant and gradual internal adaption and rear extensions
- Period features and high quality craftsmanship evidenced in external detailing gives a visual richness and personality to the facades
- On-street parking helps provide constant activity and natural surveillance on the street
- Robust building types can be used as houses or flats
- Dual aspect dwellings provide good access to daylight and through-ventilation
- Traditional look and feel is currently fashionable

weaknesses

- Uniformity and consistency can be boring and dull if the buildings and spaces do not give activity and life
- Often fails to respond to the underlying landscape, of contours, natural features such as rivers etc.
- Due to many that exist in the borough being created before the advent of the motor car - lack of car parking is an issue as there is little to no off-street parking
- Cars can easily dominate and overtake the streetscape making the public space one-dimensional and making social interaction and children's play impossible
- Incorporates little green civic space or amenity space
- Pavements can be too narrow to allow social interaction/meeting especially when occasionally cluttered by rubbish and recycling
- Limited street greenery - street trees are often small or inconsistently planted
- Small front gardens offer inadequate space for storage of refuse and recycling bins and/or cycle parking

opportunities

- Infill development should be of the highest architectural standard and respond to context and character
- Sensitive backland development is appropriate where there is suitable space within the backs of blocks
- Creation of home zones along many of the quieter streets to find a better balance between cars and pedestrians and social activity
- Introduction of cycle parking within small front spaces
- Designation of some areas as Conservation Areas for their special architectural and historic interest
- Local listing or listing as an asset of community value of some of the unique buildings that feature in this type and are at risk of being lost, for example, local pubs and corner shops
- Visual animation and differentiation through sensitive treatment of building facades, sensitive front space planting and boundary treatment, street planting and/or improved landmarking where necessary, especially at corners
- Introduction of communal refuse and recycling systems to take pressure off front gardens and pavements

Type 1 | Compact grid

threats

- Unsympathetic and poor quality subdivision of houses into HMOs
- Conversion of non-residential uses (e.g. local pub or corner shop) into residential thereby losing important local employment and amenity.
- Unsympathetic infill or backland development that fails to adhere to layout and streetscape of building line, setback, heights, scale and massing
- The addition of poorly designed extensions or porches that disrupt the rhythm and consistency of the street elevation
- The loss of external detailing through the replacement of sash windows, original doors and tiles
- The loss or concealment of brickwork through rendering, cladding, pebble dashing or unsympathetic sandblasting and repointing
- The addition of poorly designed dormer windows, roof lights and poorly arranged photo-voltaic panels, which disrupt the rhythm in the roofline
- The loss of original chimney stacks or their covering by satellite dishes
- The loss of front gardens and garden walls to hard standing
- Becoming increasingly expensive and no longer affordable to the young families they once provided a first step on the property ladder for – knock-on effects for housing market.



Individualistic yet sensitive infill, Chiswick



The type is being revived in regeneration schemes such as this one in Neasden, London Borough of Brent

Type 2 | Loose grid

brief summary

- A very common type in the borough, due to the significant growth experienced during the interwar and early postwar period
- Large areas of the borough contain variations of this type resulting in it being ubiquitous
- Can be found across outer London, especially outer West London, known as Metroland due its growth post-expansion of the London Underground
- Mostly comprises large, irregular blocks on a network of wide, curving streets with a mixture of closes and cul-de-sacs
- Some blocks are more regular and straight, others are more curving and gestural
- Characterised by their low density, consisting of large plots with large front and back gardens
- Consists of largely detached, semi-detached or short terraces and predominantly 2 storeys
- Epitomise current suburban character - a generosity of space, large back gardens, deep front gardens, space for your car, space to extend your house, uniform and conservative in style, detailing



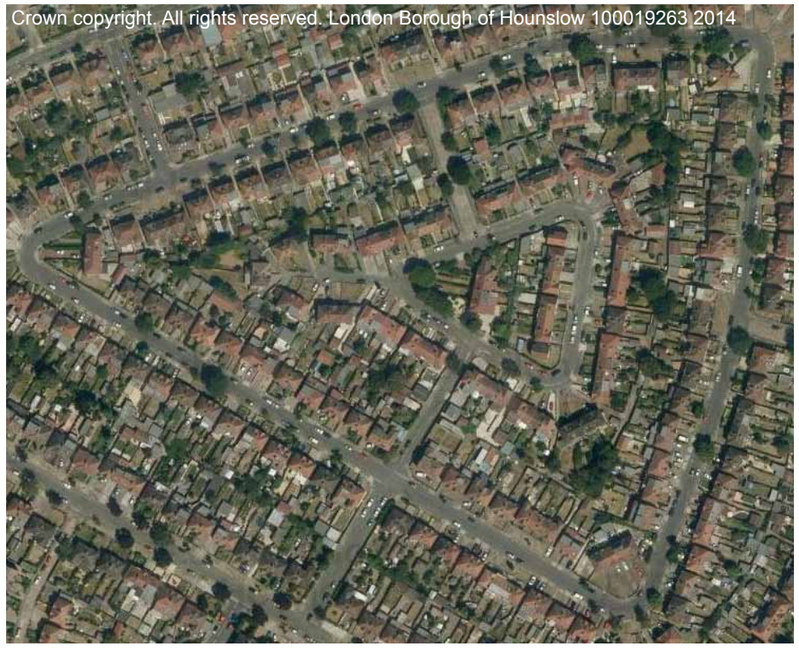
Figure ground showing the limited non-residential uses apart from a small parade of shops and local school

historic development

- Housing Act 1919 offered council Housing for the working masses, ‘Homes for Heroes’ as it was termed.
- Suburban housing boom after the late 1920s depression - massive population growth met with huge house building program - ribbon development covered swathes of previous countryside/market gardens.
- The underground railway was extended and offered quick access into the West End and City.
- Offering light, space and good air to city dwellers in a time of TB and bacterial infections.
- Demand to escape the cramped, dark terraces of the Victorian estates.
- Marketing by estate agents of this new lifestyle for the aspiring, affluent household was very successful.
- Growth and accommodation of the private motor car heavily influenced the layout and design of these houses.
- Advances in technology - electrification of the home, plumbing and sewage.
- Decline in domestic servants and help.
- More small speculative builders at the beginning of the period gave way to larger building firms able to develop large estates - the volume house building firms of today originated in this period.
- More leisure time and the demand for gardening led to the creation of large gardens where fruit and vegetables could be cultivated.



Semi-detached houses arranged on wide street with grass verged pavements typical of the ribbon development type



Crown copyright. All rights reserved. London Borough of Hounslow 100019263 2014

Aerial view showing wide streets, large plots with sizeable, leafy back gardens and deep front gardens

variations

- There are three main variations of the loose grid evident in the borough: garden suburb, ribbon development and curves and closes, often described as ‘loops and lollipops’.
- Garden suburb - shorts terraces (4 or 6 dwellings), wider and shallower plots, influenced by Arts and Crafts movement with a more direct relationship to the private garden. Many built by trusts or local authority on garden suburb ideals (Example: Worple Avenue, Isleworth). Later postwar variant has a more new town style - less applied detailing, simpler, economical forms (Example: Morris Road, Isleworth) and rectangular greens with parking bays (Example: Sparrow Farm Estate, Feltham).
- Ribbon development - Interwar development lining major streets, characterised by a more regular, orthogonal grid (Example: Boston Manor).
- Curves and closes - large, irregular shaped blocks forming a loose and coarse grid structure of straight, gently curving and sweeping streets. Closes often feature with houses grouped around the close in a semi-circular arrangement (Example: Central Way, Hounslow).

Type 2 | Loose grid

dominant period

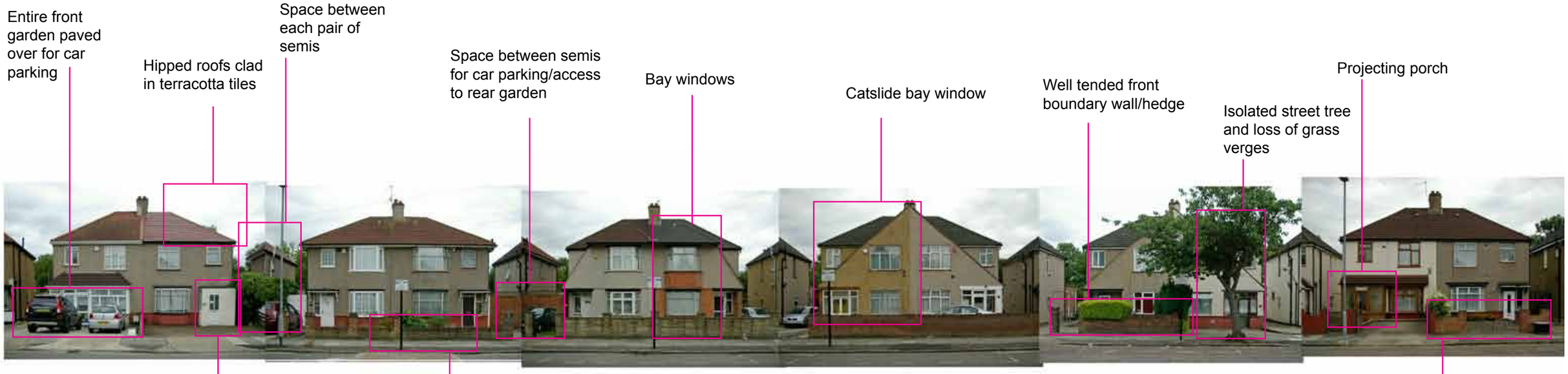
- Predominantly from the interwar and early postwar period - late 1910s to late 1940s and early 1950s
- Includes mixture of speculative development by small house builders or local authority planned estates
- The 1920s and 1930s saw a significant council house building programme which had a dramatic effect on the landscape and created a number of garden suburb-style estates
- This growth came about and was heavily influenced by the increasing popularity of the new underground lines, the motor car and road building, opening up new areas that were not previously accessible
- This period witnessed a loosening and opening up of the more compact urban grain of Victorian and Edwardian housing layouts. Blocks became bigger, streets widened, plots deepened and houses gained more space with bigger front and back gardens
- This type has been somewhat undervalued and criticised for its low densities, suburban and sprawling nature
- Architectural recognition is beginning to occur, but often little is known about the architects and building firms who created many of these estates

land use

- Predominantly residential (low density)
- Can contain a small parade of retail units and pub, though these are not always within a 5-10 minute walk
- Usually in close proximity to a primary school which were sometimes provided as part of a planned estate
- Access to open space and green amenity space feature strongly

layout and structure

- Large, irregular blocks with closes and cul-de-sacs forming a loose grid structure. Block lengths range from 70m to over 300m
- Streets form a network that is fairly permeable to pedestrians but catering principally for the car as street intersections can be as far apart as 300m
- Sometimes a network of separated footpaths are evident which interweave through the middle and side of blocks
- Medium to wide streets of between 12-20m (the more recent the street the wider it tends to be)
- Main streets often have larger, grander houses on bigger plots
- Large internal space of blocks given over to deep back gardens - 50m to 100m
- Generous pavement widths sometimes with grass verges and street trees
- Buildings are set back from boundary line between 4-9m
- Boundaries are mostly low brick walls but in many instances have been removed to allow for car crossovers
- Parking is often on paved over front garden and also on-street (one sided and sometimes two-sided)



Photomontage of a typical interwar street with semi-detached houses highlighting key characteristics

Type 2 | Loose grids

streetscape

- Use of short and long sweeping curves in street design - a departure from the more orthogonal grids described in urban type 1
- Uniformity of street layout and dimensions - plus the use of closes and cul-de-sac for the first time
- Wider streets allowed for more light to penetrate houses and to begin to accommodate the motor car
- Desire to bring greenery and a touch of the countryside to these estates with street trees, grass verges and small green spaces
- Lower building heights and wider streets lessen the sense of enclosure and feeling of being somewhere urban
- Building setback far from boundary line - usually 4m to 8m
- Bay windows with gable ends add a vertical rhythm to the street
- Importance of front boundary walls to streetscape enclosure

building type and form

- Beginnings of standardisation and mass production building methods - a few standard house types with some variations, though some of the larger, grander houses were customised for affluent clients
- Suburban in character - buildings set on large plots with space (usually 2m-4m) between each set of buildings to access rear
- Semi-detached houses, short terrace runs (in postwar period) and occasional detached house (often on the prominent corner plots)
- Houses were wider and shorter with an emphasis on the horizontal
- House internal layout usually consisted of sitting room at front, dining room behind, kitchen at rear and 3/4 bedrooms on first floor with indoor bathroom
- Some apparently semi-detached houses in fact contain ground and first floor flats accessed via front and side doors
- Includes both detached and semi-detached single storey bungalows
- Low densities - usually between 25-50 dph
- Garages becoming common - often set back to the side of the house

materials and detailing

- Simpler in style and detail than Edwardian/Victorian houses, using less expensive materials and building methods
- Earlier interwar houses had more ornate detailing craftsmanship than later examples (particularly postwar) which were much simpler and less detailed due to economic and aesthetic reasons.
- Often traditional ‘country style’ influences including mock beams, lattice windows, weather boarding, pebble dash - Tudorbethan and Jacobethan were popular
- Houses have been personalised through painting of facade, render and front doors
- Curved and square bay windows feature heavily with gable ends or catslides
- Terracotta detailing on bay surrounds and porches a common feature
- Mixture of brick and render, pebble dash in later examples, often render on ground floor with brick work above
- Hipped roof, dormers and gable ends predominate with slate and tiled roofs
- Metal and wooden windows, later examples using uPVC with top and side swing openings



Houses arranged around large green spaces with mature trees - careful appreciation of landscape



Typical streetscape where front boundaries have been removed to accommodate on-plot car parking



Tudor style with mock beams and angled bay windows



Elegant interwar semi-detached pair with strong vertical proportions and curved bay windows



Semi-detached single storey bungalows



Garden suburb style of book ended short terraces



Early postwar gambrel-fronted 4-unit terrace, a sub-type most common in the west of the borough

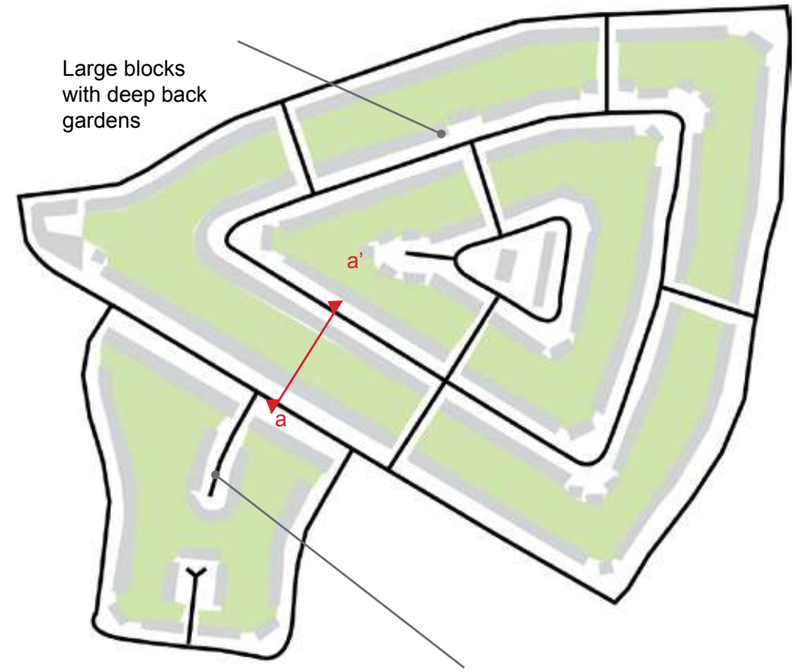
Type 2 | Loose grid

Central Avenue, Hounslow



This late interwar development is situated in the centre of the borough between Hounslow and Isleworth. It consists almost entirely of semi-detached houses with a handful of short terraces of four units set around large sweeping crescents and gardens of which Central Avenue forms the spatial spine to the area. Plots are wide and long, occupying large blocks which reduce pedestrian permeability. They have large front and back gardens giving a generous, suburban but not particularly leafy character to the area. Most houses have hipped roofs with large projecting bays and large chimney stacks. Streets are long and fairly wide, but mostly not tree-lined.

See Character Area O in the Hounslow Study Area for more information on this area and its surrounding context.



Street and block structure

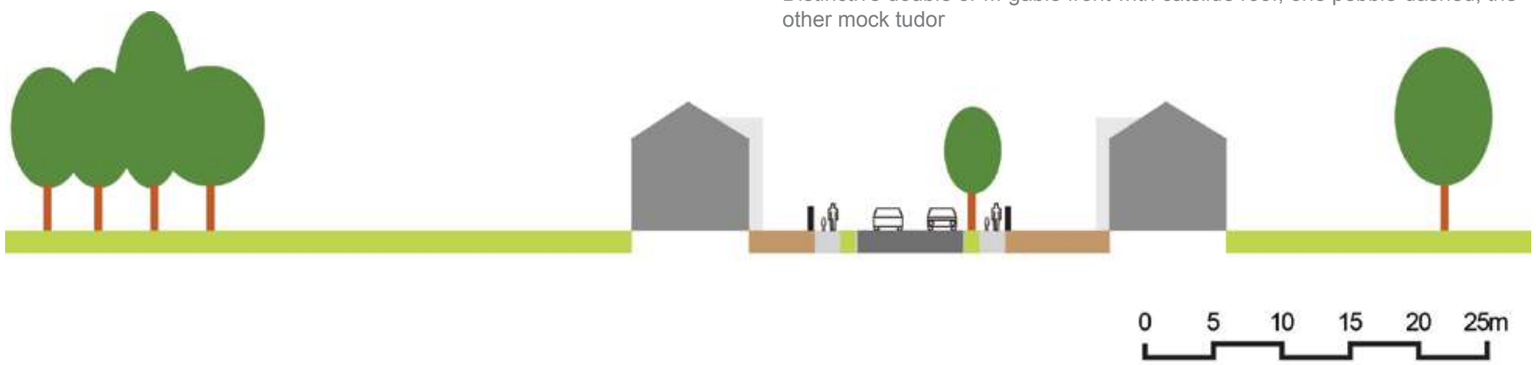


Long run of semi-detached houses in various styles

A close with houses arranged in a horse shoe



Distinctive double or M-gable front with catslide roof, one pebble-dashed, the other mock tudor



Section a-a'

Type 2 | Loose grid

strengths

- Spaciousness make it popular with families - especially young families
- Generous front gardens contribute to the leafy character when they are well planted and not paved over for car parking
- Their ability to be personalised and adapted/improved over time with extensions, alterations and improvements
- Large blocks giving each house a large back garden which can be a haven for wildlife
- Street layout and widths allow for grass verges, street trees and small green spaces
- Interesting architectural elements such as square or curved bay windows, gable ends and porches
- High quality craftsmanship can sometimes be evidenced in the external detailing
- Uniformity – the consistent style and layout repeated in an area gives it a particular character
- Rhythm in the elevation as dormers, bays and set backs are repeated down the street
- Rhythm in the roof line with chimneys and original dormers repeating down the street

weaknesses

- Low density, resulting in inefficient use of land and not enough people within a given area to sustain a mix of uses and/or public transport
- Design and dependence on the private motor vehicle
- Some streets, particularly the wider ones offer poor sense of enclosure
- Front gardens are large enough to be used for car parking
- Front boundary walls are often removed to make way for car parking leading to a loss of definition and enclosure
- Sheer uniformity and endless repetition of some estates can seem quite monotonous and can make way-finding difficult

opportunities

- Intensification and an increase in overall density in certain areas where PTAL is good
- Introduction of a greater mix of uses and improvements to community infrastructure
- Possible provision of innovative, sensitively designed infill housing within the centre of some larger blocks
- Reinstatement where lost and improvement where existing of grass verges and street trees which add so much to the quality of the streetscape
- Reinstatement where lost and improvement where existing of front boundary walls to ensure a clear demarcation between public and private space
- Improvement of pedestrian permeability by improving and linking up footpaths, though care should be taken to ensure they do not become hostile and unsafe spaces
- Encouragement of dense planting of front and back gardens to encourage flora and fauna

Type 2 | Loose grid

threats

- Removal of front gardens and use as car parking
- Inappropriate roof extensions that are out of proportion and scale, use incorrect materials and fail to blend in to the existing building form
- The loss of and general poor maintenance of grass verges
- Problem of large sheds being built in the back gardens that are being used as illegal residential accommodation
- Cross overs eroding the kerb line, pavement quality and grass verges
- The loss of external detailing through the replacement of original windows and doors
- The loss or concealment of brickwork through cladding, rendering or pebble dashing
- The loss of original chimney stacks
- The addition of poorly designed dormer windows and roof lights which disrupt the rhythm in the roofline
- The addition of poorly designed extensions or porches that disrupt the rhythm and consistency of the street elevation
- The loss of front gardens to hard standings and car parking
- The differing elevational treatment of pairs of attached houses
- The loss of a gap between two semi-detached pairs creating a terraced effect
- The addition of poorly designed dormer windows, roof lights and poorly arranged photo-voltaic panels, which disrupt the rhythm in the roofline



Infill makes some attempt at respecting local character though surface treatment could be better, Hounslow



Recent development at higher density though on loose, looping street layout, Stanmore, London Borough of Harrow

Type 3 | Slabs and towers

brief summary

- There are few examples of this type across the borough but these few have significant impact due to their structure, scale and height
- Freestanding buildings set within open space which consists of grassed areas, mature trees and shrub planting
- Structure and layout makes this type stand out from its surroundings which are usually street based layouts
- Mixture of high-rise towers (point blocks) and lower-rise, linear slab blocks
- Usually medium to high density
- Highly visible and prominent on the skyline due to the towers
- Segregated movement of internal access roads and pedestrian footpaths
- A mix of housing types, commonly flats, maisonettes and terraced houses
- Large car parking courts and hard-standing dominate the public space
- Green Dragon Lanes (Brentford Towers) and Ivybridge Estate in Isleworth are the most typical examples of this type in the borough



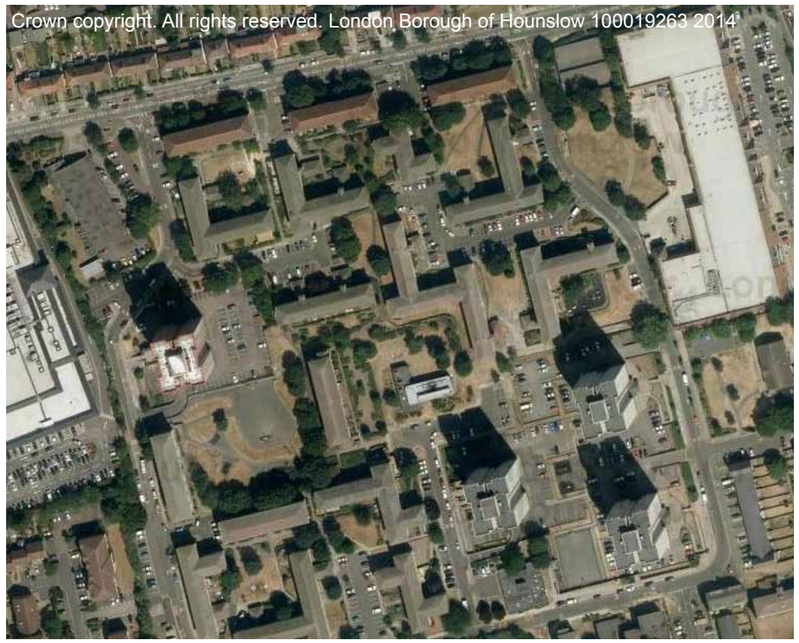
Figure ground showing residential estate with attached community building

historic development

- Modern architecture arose in the 1920s and 1930s but was not popularised and commonplace until the building of postwar housing estates.
- Part of slum clearance legislation - compulsory purchasing of ‘slums’ and demolition alongside the rebuilding of areas bomb damaged or destroyed during WWII.
- The 1956 Housing Subsidy Act led to the building of ‘tower blocks’ as the subsidy increased the taller the building - around 4,500 tower blocks built up until 1979 - only 6 built (35m and higher) between then and 1998.
- Streets in the sky part of the modernist vision, first popularised by CIAM and Le Corbusier.
- Proliferated following successful development of Park Hill in Sheffield in the 1950s.
- Access to daylight, nature and open space as a reaction to the compact and tight urban grain of previous Victorian terraced housing.
- With the collapse of Ronan Point in East London in 1968 the building of tower blocks dramatically reduced.
- Popularised as dystopian future in the film A Clockwork Orange (1971).
- Type gradually waned in popularity amongst designers, local authorities and developers in favour of Type 4.



Mix of slabs blocks comprising masionettes and towers comprising flats



Aerial view showing large freestanding buildings set within open space and car parking areas

variations

- Examples to be found in the borough: Ivybridge Estate in Isleworth, Brentford Towers in Brentford, Heston Farm and Convent Way, both in Cranford and Heston.
- Few major variations in the borough. Some later examples are exclusively lower-rise as the popularity of tower blocks waned in mid-late 1960s. These still characterised by freestanding residential blocks set within open space.

Type 3 | Slabs and towers

dominant period

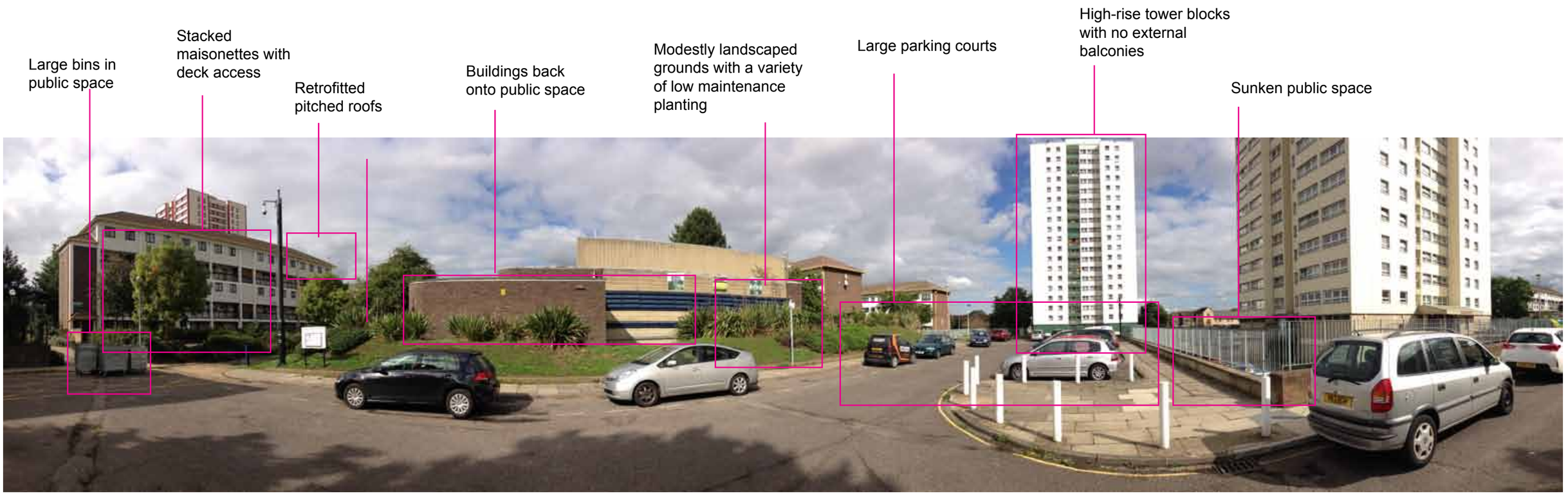
- Exclusively postwar period (1950s,1960s and 1970s)
- Local authority-designed and constructed with in-house architect teams, often as replacement of earlier housing that was bomb damaged from WWII or deemed unfit for habitation
- Local authority building programmes dependent upon central government long-term loans and grants made development financing heavily reliant on central government agenda
- Heavily influenced by International and modernist principles of urban planning and architecture - Le Corbusier and CIAM movement
- Radical in their departure from traditional housing layouts (in which houses face onto a street) and the materials and technology used (e.g. reinforced concrete panels)

land use

- Predominantly residential - with a mix of flats, maisonettes and terraced houses
- Quite often contain a parade of shops (launderette, take away, public house etc.) located within the estate to serve estate residents
- Sometimes contain dedicated civic and educational facilities such as a school, church and community centre

layout and structure

- Buildings sit within open space - absence of a perimeter block and street pattern
- Designed as self-sufficient estates with own services and shops
- Routes do not align with surrounding street network giving them their own movement structure
- Buildings set back from roads and paths - accessed from open space or courtyards in contrast to street access seen in previous types
- Large amounts of open space either grass patches, car parks or sometimes landscaped



Photomontage of a typical slabs and towers type highlighting key characteristics

Type 3 | Slabs and towers

streetscape

- Landscape is seen as an important element with buildings set within it
- Landscape is semi-public, for residents to use as amenity space but is accessible to anyone
- Landscape consists of access roads, pedestrian footpaths, car parking courts and green space
- Streets in the sky were devised with linked deck access to offer dedicated pedestrian routes across the estate
- Pedestrians and vehicles often segregated, pedestrians use footpaths and cars use access roads
- Dwellings often accessed from decks and service cores - sometimes exposed, sometimes internal
- Entrances and doorways are few, serve many dwellings and often difficult to identify

building type and form

- Medium and large floor plan apartment blocks, including a mix of high rise towers (often known as point blocks) and lower-rise, linear slabs
- Complex building layout patterns arose with later examples only comprised of lower-rise slabs rising to no more than 6 stories
- A mix of dwelling types and sizes - studio, 1, 2 and 3 bed flats and maisonettes. Stacked maisonettes are a common dwelling type
- Contrast in building heights is a strong feature e.g. 2 storeys next to 20 storeys
- Density range varies by estate - between 70-180 dph
- Private outside space is minimal - few have private gardens, some have balconies or deck access space
- Provision of amenity space is through the large, communal landscape that surrounds the buildings
- Buildings have deck access and were sometimes raised on pillars to allow landscape to flow underneath uninterrupted

materials and detailing

- Modern building materials and finishes being used for first time on a mass scale
- Pre-cast reinforced concrete (PRC) was a common building material used in a ‘natural way’- a departure from brick which had been the dominant building material up to now
- Prefabricated and standardised construction systems used to keep costs down and build efficiently en masse
- Many new materials were not robust or suitable for wet, cold climate, suffering structural and aesthetic problems
- Large sheets of plate glass used to allow light and air into dwellings
- Minimal to no detailing - a free facade or ‘brutalist’ aesthetic - free from embellishment and ornament to reflect new tastes and a rejection of previous values
- Flat roofs were common though some have been pitched since as problems arose with leaking
- Most have new uPVC windows, put in as part of the estate renewal programme



‘Understated’ entrance way to a tower block


Towers rise to 20+ stories with no external space


Large car parking court set above open space which lies either side of a 20 storey tower block


Blocks of flats arranged in parallel set in open space


Large, tall slab block set back from road


Tree-lined footpaths provide access to tower blocks


A mix of terraced houses and flats set around a car park

Type 3 | Slabs and towers

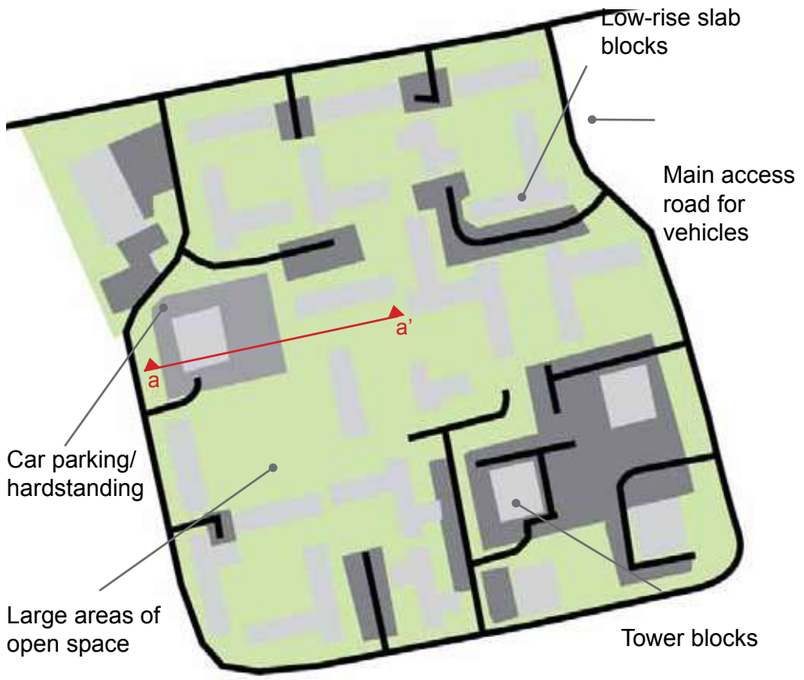
Ivybridge Estate, Isleworth



Ivybridge Estate in Isleworth is an example of this urban type. Located in the south of Isleworth close to the borough boundary with the London Borough of Richmond.

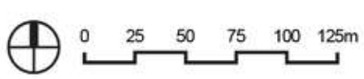
The estate, built in 1970, consists of four 18-20 storey tower blocks and long, L shaped slab blocks arranged and set within open space and car parking. The traditional street pattern has been replaced with a footpath network and internal vehicular access roads.

See Character Area V in the Isleworth Study Area for more information on this area and its surrounding context.



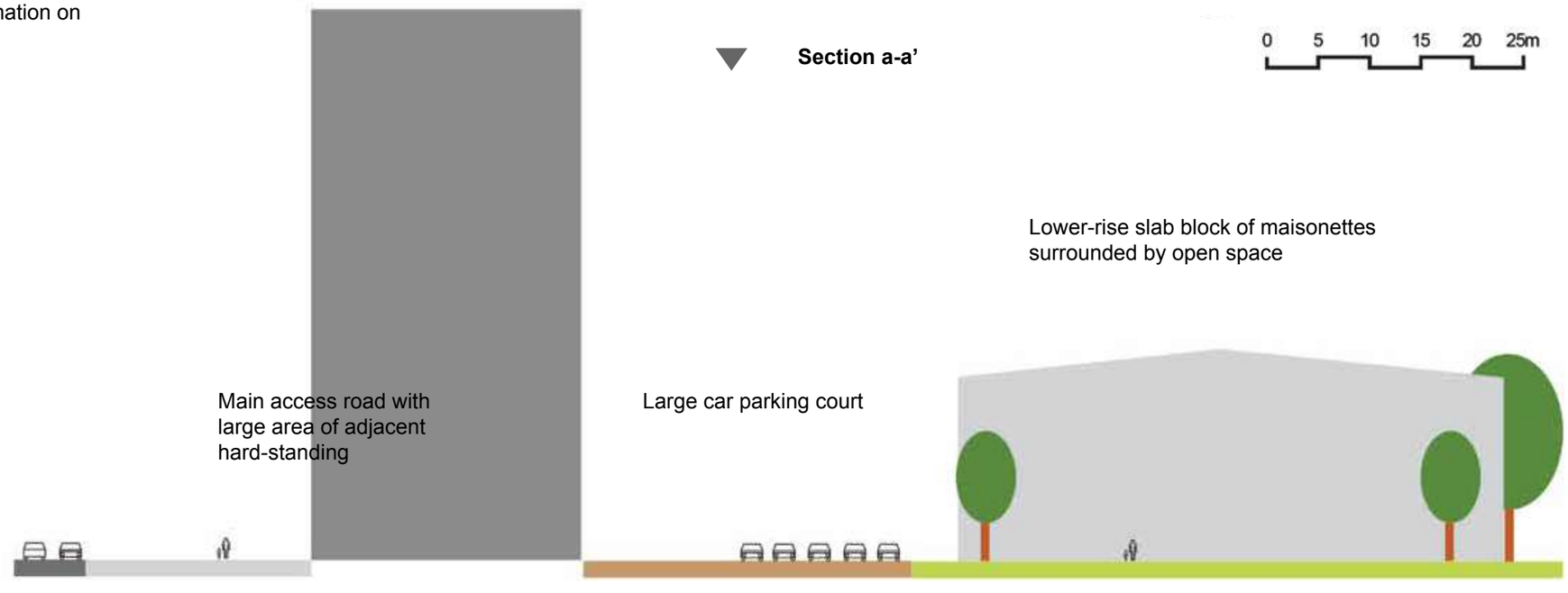


Two towers with dead ground floor frontages onto a large car park. Landscaping is generally low maintenance and of mixed quality.



Street and block structure

Section a-a'



Type 3 | Slabs and towers

strengths

- Internal dwelling sizes and spaces are generous and well laid out
- Plenty of natural daylight and air circulation were considerations in the design
- Offers high-rise living with great views
- Large areas of open space – when it is well maintained and of good quality
- A variety of building types within an estate meets a diverse set of housing needs
- Benefited from dedicated community spaces and areas to play for children
- Landscape benefits from mature trees and shrubs giving a leafy, parkland feel to many estates
- Some early examples featured public art, often in the form of sculpture and mosaic

weaknesses

- Internal shopping parades are often difficult to access from outside the estate by non-residents which diminishes passing trade/footfall and makes it difficult for traders to survive and prosper
- Suffer from poor ventilation, mould, damp and leaking roofs as a result of new and generally untested building construction systems and materials
- Require high levels of maintenance compared with other housing types due to the large amount of open space and layout arrangements
- The uniform and consistent style and layout can make such an estate seem bland and oppressive
- The open layout and removal of a traditional street system makes them difficult to navigate for those who do not live there
- Though often highly permeable they are often poorly legible, requiring layout signs at entry points
- Multiple properties (often more than 15) accessed from one service core often leads to security and surveillance issues
- The network of footpaths are often too quiet and poorly lit which makes them feel unsafe particularly after dark - especially for vulnerable users such as the elderly
- Due to the high rise nature of many of the properties families find them difficult to live in - particularly if lift maintenance is poor

opportunities

- Improvement of the layout in conjunction with building new homes by better enclosing space and framing key movement routes to improve legibility
- Improvement of wayfinding to and through the estates for visitors and passers-by
- Reduction of the impact of cars and the amount of public space they occupy
- Sensitively draw upon the original architectural aesthetic, pattern and visual language when considering upgrading works and investment
- Communities to plan, manage and maintain the large areas of open space which have potential to be community gardens or allotments
- Redevelopment of unused and redundant areas occupied by, for example, garages
- Incorporation of public art

Type 3 | Slabs and towers

threats

- Ad-hoc piecemeal changes which do not address underlying layout and structures issues
- Insensitive repairs and alterations lead to a weakening of the architectural integrity of the estate
- Poorly designed new infill development
- Poor, inadequate maintenance and lack of investment - particularly on the large amounts of open space which is maintenance-heavy
- An increase of open space given over to car parking and hard-standing rather than landscaped gardens.



Housing built on under-used open space, regenerated estate, Feltham



Regenerated estate, Brixton, London Borough of Lambeth

Type 4 | Courts and cul-de-sacs

brief summary

- A significant number of developments of this type exists across the borough, though they are more prevalent in the west
- This type can cover small areas such as Brookwood Road in Hounslow, to large estates such as Haverfield Estate in Brentford
- Examples are predominantly from the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s
- Characterised by a main distributor or loop road with a series of access roads forming semi-enclosed courts or cul-de-sacs, creating a ‘superblock’ structure
- Traffic separation principles ensure vehicles and pedestrians are often segregated especially in the more Radburn-esque examples
- Lower-rise buildings are arranged in groups around a semi-enclosed court or cul-de-sac, sometimes inward facing, sometimes outward facing
- Predominantly medium density but can vary greatly depending on dominant building type - 1980s examples can be very low density (range 30-50dph)
- Building types can be very mixed with apartment blocks, short terraces and semi-detached
- Car access and parking is integral element of the design, with ease and proximity a key design feature
- Characterised by an insular, self-contained feel, resulting from its lack of through-movement and wider connectivity



Figure ground showing the almost exclusively residential nature of this type

historic development

- Inspired by the garden city principles of Ebenezer Howard, residential vehicle-pedestrian segregation was first applied in the town of Radburn, New Jersey, USA in 1929 as a response to mitigate the effects of the motor car.
- Though it never caught on in the USA, the town gave its name to the design principle.
- The basic Radburn principle: vehicle access is to the back of the home while pedestrian access is to the front.
- Addresses road safety issues arising from increasing car ownership (Buchanan Report 1963). This acceptance of the car led to ways of designing housing areas to accommodate this long-term trend.
- New standards and professional practice guides like DB10 and DB32 both heavily influenced housing design and layout during the 1960s and 1970s.
- The principle has been altered and applied (some say eroded and corrupted - hence the terms quasi- and pseudo-Radburn) in various forms across the world including the UK.
- The type evolved during the 1980s into the so-called ‘Noddy Box’ estate of small, sometimes poorly-built units on small plots with an emphasis on privacy and insularity.



Two storey houses loosely arranged around a cul-de-sac in various orientations



Aerial view showing branching cul-de-sac and parking court estate of small units on small plots, typical of 1980s and 1990s private housing schemes

variations

- A great many variations of this type exist with some considerable changes made over time to address problems and changes in lifestyles, but two principal variations are:
- Public court based housing estates. These tend to strictly segregate users: cars onto roads, pedestrians onto footpaths and the two rarely mix. Houses are grouped around a court or cul-de-sac, where cars would be able to park either outside or within garages. Heavily influenced by Radburn principles and subsequent DB10 and DB32. The Beavers Estate in Hounslow West is a good example of this variant.
- Private cul-de-sacs estates - built by large private house builders in the 1980s and 1990s. The large housing estate along Westmacott Drive in Feltham is a good example of this variant.

Type 4 | Courts and cul-de-sacs

dominant period

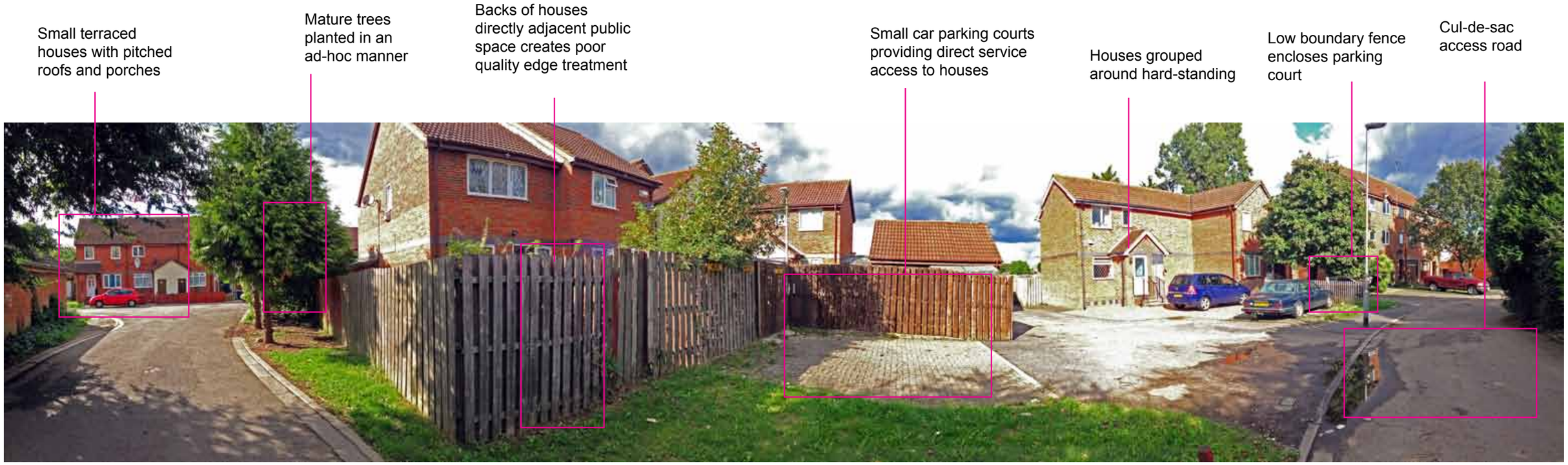
- The Radburn examples were built in the 1960s to 1970s usually by the local authority or the newly emerging housing associations
- The later examples are mostly from the 1980s to mid 1990s built largely by private house builders (referred to as the Barrattification of Britain), which followed a similar layout pattern of cul-de-sacs accessed from a main distributor road but did not separate pedestrians from vehicles to the same extent
- From the late 1970s and through the 1980s public sector build housing virtually disappeared and private house builders dominated house production through ever increasing large, suburban, egde-of-settlement estates
- Housing was mass produced either by a local authority, housing association or private house builder
- Standard house types formed a pattern book which were applied across an estate
- The increasing popularity and ownership of cars influenced the design of estates during this period and housing layouts were reconfigured to try to accommodate cars but to not let them dominate.

land use

- Almost exclusively residential
- Very limited or non-existent provision of any other uses such as local shops and cafes
- Usually contains a mix of dwelling types from flats to terraced houses
- Some contain a provision for local amenities such as shopping precinct, community uses, schools
- Green space often forms an integral feature in the layout

layout and structure

- Main access road provides vehicular access into and out of estate and servicing
- Designed like a pocket or pod, with one way in and one way out, through movement is discouraged and designed out
- Access roads to each cluster of buildings and usually car parking court - these access roads form dead-ends
- Pedestrians use the street network or sometimes a network of segregated footpaths that meander through the landscape
- Pedestrian underpasses sometimes evident which ensure pedestrians and vehicles do not mix
- Many cul-de-sacs have narrow pavements which follow road layout and sometimes include separate footpaths that follow to the side of houses or back gardens



Photomontage of a typical cul-de-sac type development highlighting key characteristics

Type 4 | Courts and cul-de-sacs

streetscape

- Streets no longer hold a general use and are predominantly for the car, pedestrians and cyclists being separated from the street with provision of dedicated footpaths
- A large central open space which wraps around groups of housing is an integral feature
- This open space is dissected by footpaths for pedestrians but is a car free zone
- Buildings are set back from street - sometimes at offset angles, arranged in a group or in a more ad-hoc way
- Boundary lines are often delineated by change in material or other subtle way
- Buildings enclose courtyards and open space not the road

building type and form

- Medium to small scale buildings from linear blocks of maisonettes and flats to groups of terraced housing
- Mix of dwelling types evident in one estate - terraced housing, flats and maisonettes
- Buildings arranged for easy access to and from the car
- In some examples buildings front onto the park and footpath and back onto the court
- Density range - low to medium. Earlier Radburn examples were medium density and the later cul-de-sacs much lower density
- Dwellings arranged to give sunlight, air and best outlook onto landscaped grounds
- Small private gardens and balconies provide private outside space

materials and detailing

- Timber frame construction is typical
- A variety of facade materials, e.g. brick, wood panelling, render
- Horizontal emphasis on windows
- Flat roofs are common - though pitched roofs have since been introduced to tackle leaking issues
- Later 1980s examples have a ‘traditional’ look with pitched roofs, porches and brickwork
- Very sparsely detailed - detail is sometimes applied through manipulation of primary material, e.g. shaped concrete
- Some have since been re-faced or re-pointed to improve robustness and durability



A mix of house types and sizes with on-plot parking and garages



Oriel Estate in Bedfont - housing is arranged around courts



Masionette blocks arranged around a parking court



Simply detailed terraced house



Distributor road loops around estate providing access to individual cul-de-sacs



Two storey houses arranged around and accessed from a cul-de-sac

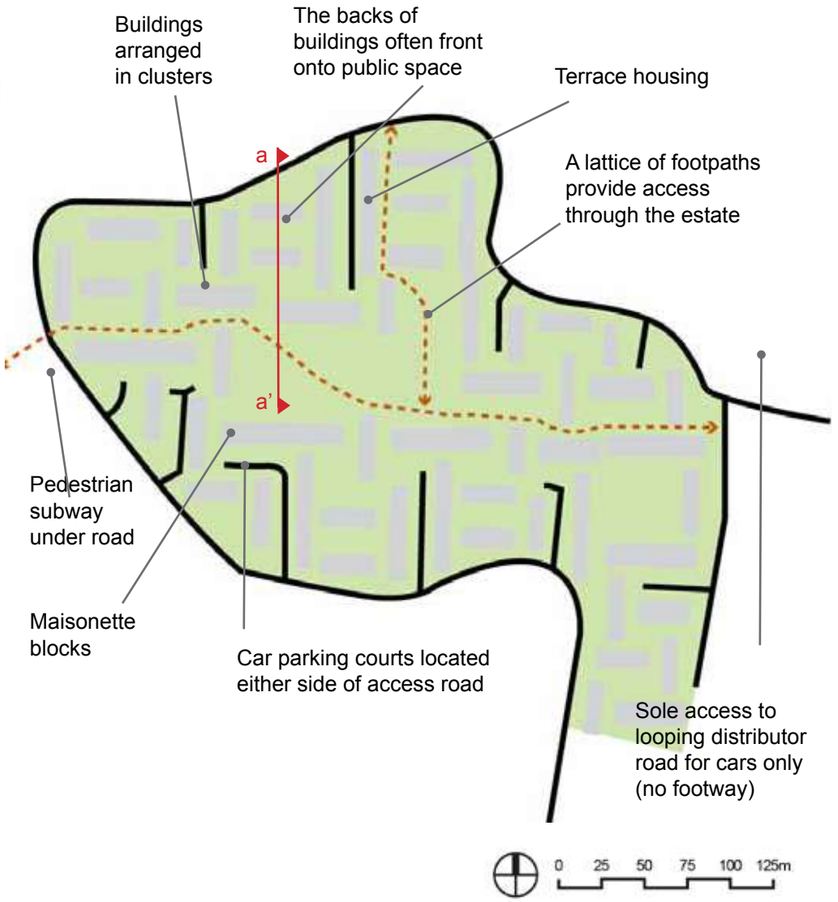
Type 4 | Courts and cul-de-sacs

Beavers Estate, Hounslow West



Beavers Estate is a good example of the quasi-Radburn type and is located in Hounslow West, south of Henlys roundabout. This area consists of irregularly laid-out concrete housing blocks built in the late 1960s. The layout ensures vehicles and pedestrians are segregated, with roads for cars and footpaths for pedestrians making moving around quite confusing unless you know the estate well. Buildings are constructed with fair-faced concrete blocks detailed with white rendered indentations and window frames. Buildings are clustered in blocks of between four and six and heights range from two to four storeys with hipped roofs.

See Character Area H in the Hounslow West Study Area for more information on this area and its surrounding context.



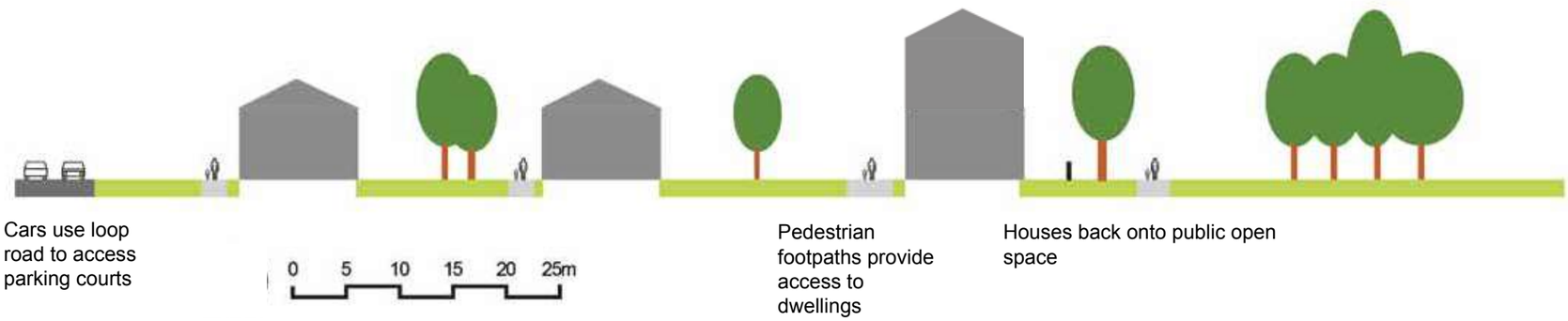
Street and block structure



Pedestrian underpass ensures segregation of cars and pedestrians



Backs of ground floor maisonettes face public open space



Section a-a'

Type 4 | Courts and cul-de-sacs

strengths

- Landscape - green space and mature trees - though strength depends on quality
- Quiet residential ambience within the centre of the estate
- Mixed housing types provide diversity of households
- Safety - as pedestrians and children are separated from vehicles
- Small groupings of houses give a sense of neighbourliness - depending upon how many houses shared a court or cul-de-sac

weaknesses

- Fails to integrate into the surrounding urban structure
- Though often highly permeable they are often poorly legible, requiring layout signs at entry points
- Confused and poorly defined public and private space
- Segregation of pedestrians, cars and cyclists can led to dead and inactive routes
- Poor levels of natural surveillance of public space - especially where houses back onto courtyards and key routes can make routes and spaces feel unsafe especially at night
- Difficult and expensive to maintain due to high levels of public space and poor layout
- Profusion of unadopted streets which do not benefit from mainstream street maintenance and cleansing
- Not easily adaptable - very few examples of side or rear extensions to dwellings
- Confusion over which is the front or back of the house and resulting impacts on privacy, tidiness and general upkeep
- Shopping areas find it difficult to thrive and survive as density of people is low and there is little to no through movement of passers-by

opportunities

- Significant restructuring of the layout to improve legibility and quality of permeability, for example, by connecting culs-de-sacs together to form streets
- Improvements to the quality of public open spaces
- Reintegration of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists on certain key routes, possibly through the creation of home zones
- Introduction of small scale infill development to provide active frontages and resolve exposed backs
- Incorporation of public art

Type 4 | Courts and cul-de-sacs

threats

- Poor quality treatment and maintenance of the landscape and pedestrian footpaths will heavily impact on overall livability of the area
- Ad-hoc, piecemeal and poorly laid out new development which fails to address the weaknesses inherent in this type
- Poor, ad-hoc customisation of the backs of housing
- Poor boundary treatments or over-dominance of car parking on front boundaries



Improvements to public space by addition/refurbishment of children's play area, re-surfacing of footways and better-tended grassed areas, Hounslow West



Infill of quasi-single aspect semi-detached houses on 'spare' land at edge of estate, Muswell Hill, London Borough of Haringey

Type 5 | Urban renaissance

brief summary

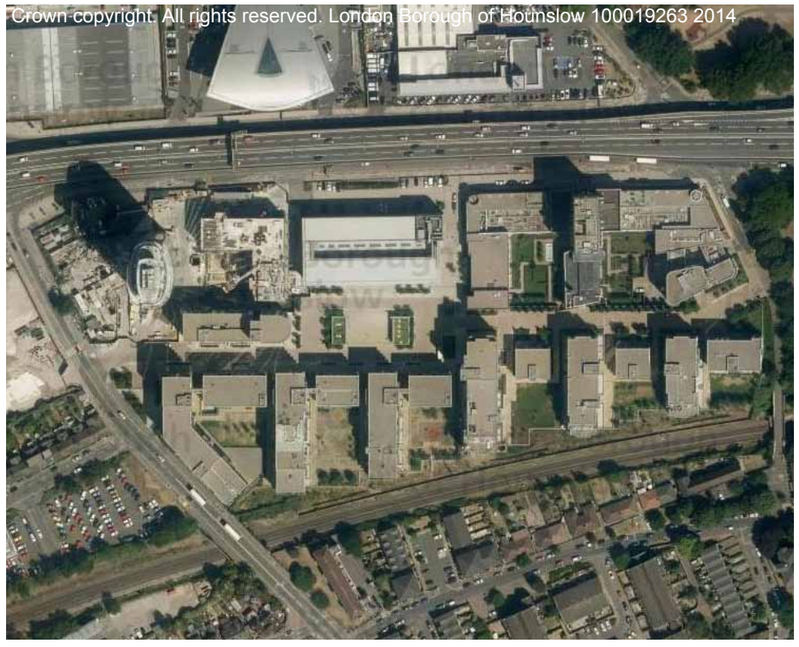
- Even distribution across the borough with the greatest concentration in Brentford
- Many examples to be found along and just off the main roads, e.g. London Road
- Typifies the new type of planning and urban design arisen out of the Urban Task Force Report: Towards an Urban Renaissance which encouraged reuse of brownfield land, higher densities and mixed use-type development
- Mostly comprises a return to the perimeter block with buildings fronting onto and enclosing streets and public space with strong axes
- Blocks tend to be smaller, more square in shape and respond to the underlying landscape in comparison to the compact grid type which tended to have longer rectangular blocks
- Higher densities achieved (up to 250 dph) through compact design principles
- Provision of a mix of housing types including flats, maisonettes, townhouses, mews and terraces, reflecting the diversity of housing need
- Predominantly mixed in tenure with private and affordable units integrated into one scheme
- Built almost exclusively by private developers or housing associations
- Examples include; Brentford Lock, Great West Quarter, Feltham town centre



Mixed use nature of many urban renaissance type developments



Central street with high quality landscaping, seating, materials and lighting - overlooked by 3 to 7 storey apartment buildings



Aerial view showing semi-enclosed courtyards lining a shared surface street running through the middle

historic development

- Reaction to the poor design of large cul-de-sac estates.
- Groundswell of the need for urban design in planning and architecture.
- By design - first government policy (DEFRA) on urban design values/ quality.
- Creation of CABE and a strong push from central government to raise design standards.
- A return to the compact grid style layout with connected streets becoming important again.
- PTAL agenda - optimising sites.
- Part of the regeneration agenda after years of inner city urban decay - using brownfield sites, intensification of transport nodes, investment in infrastructure, place-shaping agenda.
- Lifting of strict planning standards such as the 21m overlooking rule and a push for focusing on performance criteria and outcomes such as privacy.
- Given a boost by the new London Mayor, Ken Livingstone and creation of the London Plan.
- London Plan and push for intensification, densification and tall buildings and responding to huge population growth.
- Re-discovery and emphasis on cities as hubs and economic drivers and places to live and thrive.
- A contextual rather than type based approach is applied with an emphasis that every place is different and needs a suitable response.
- c2010, Rory Olcayto of The Architects' Journal coins the term CABE-ism to describe the type.

variations

- Many respond to context - so form, heights and types vary considerably.
- Even higher density developments witnessed in recent years with a push for intensification - particularly in areas with good PTAL.
- 'Iconic' tall buildings sometimes placed in the urban fabric.

Type 5 | Urban renaissance

dominant period

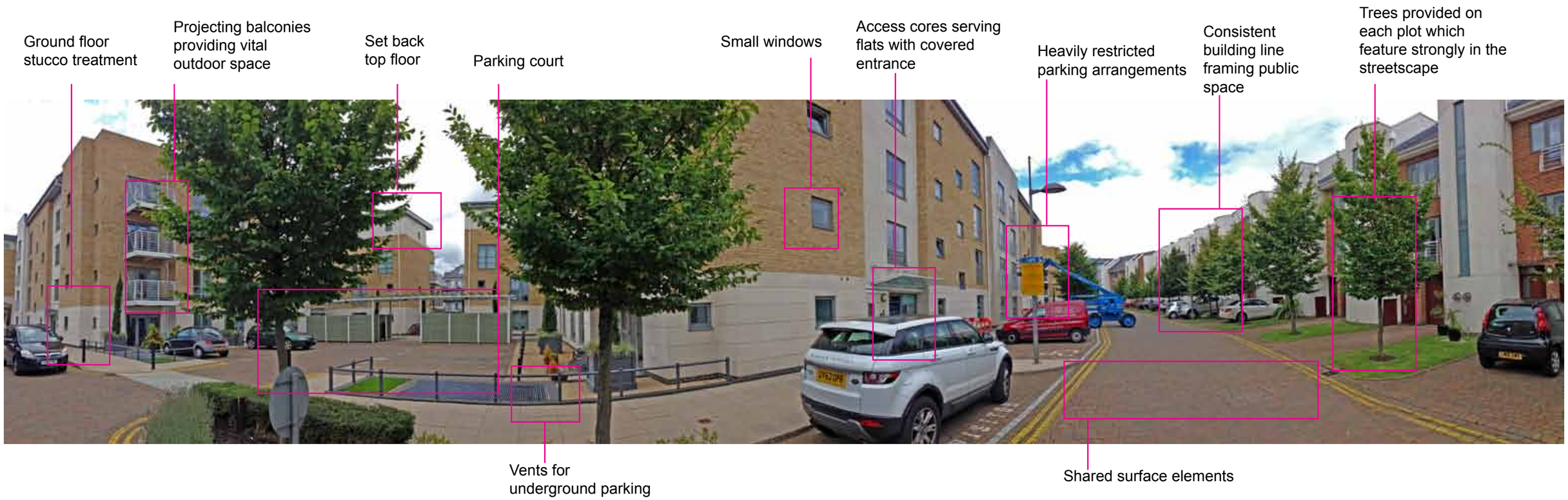
- Almost exclusively 1990s/21st century
- Most built by private developers and/or housing associations guided by the layers of national, regional and local planning policy
- Built on mainly brownfield sites, in old and under-used industrial areas (e.g. Brentford Lock), railway yards and land adjacent to canals
- Some has been public sector-led as part of housing estate renewal programs - can include infill or more comprehensive redevelopment and restructuring
- Historic buildings often reused and incorporated into new development designs - seen as a value uplift as provides a sense of history to a new development
- Considerable difference between those developments of the 1990s and those being built now (mid-2010s)
- New London vernacular emerging in recent years influenced by the Mayors Housing Design Guide, which is seeing a return to brickwork facades, recessed balconies, ground floor maisonette-type terraces and parapet roofs

land use

- Predominantly residential but a significant increase in mixed-use development
- Often with the ground floor given over to commercial, retail or community uses to help animate public space and provide local convenience
- Sometimes these ground floor units have remained vacant for long periods due to poor demand or pressure to turn into residential.
- Some developments (high-end) contain in-house gym, leisure facilities, concierge

layout and structure

- A return (partial) to the perimeter block layout - an unambiguous street-based form is evident
- Blocks are usually smaller and squarer than those from type 1
- Emphasis on through-movement and permeability for the pedestrian
- Clearer definition of public-private space and fronts and backs
- Can include internal access routes - pedestrian only sometimes
- Open courtyard layouts popular with one edge not built
- Private internal courtyards shared by residents - delineated by a gate or wall



Type 5 | Urban renaissance

streetscape

- Often high quality streetscapes with a return to importance of the street with doors directly fronting onto street to create activity and an ‘urban buzz’
- Internal pedestrian prioritised streets or home-zones (e.g. Union Lane, Isleworth)
- Parking a big design issue - mixed response - sometimes provided on street but usually provided within the block at the rear or underground to reduce pressure on on-street parking
- Landscaping often provides piazzas, courtyards, squares as part of public realm (not always publicly accessible however)
- Public art often featured in these new public spaces
- Boundary treatments are usually clear and intact - delineated by low boundary edge or change in material

building type and form

- Very mixed building types - townhouses, houses, mews houses, flats and maisonettes
- Smaller, domestic scale house types which share common characteristics to the Victorian terraced house (4-5m wide, L or T shaped plan)
- Medium to large scale apartment blocks usually provided at the corner of blocks
- Densities are medium to high (80-250dph) to optimise land and increase values
- General building heights vary from 2 storeys to 7 storeys with the occasional taller element
- Substantially taller buildings mark key locations/nodes (e.g. GWQ tower - 75m), the first since the 1960s office and residential towers
- Apartment buildings feature heavily as a way to increase density and offer urban living
- Landscaped grounds with dense, mature planting soften the dense, urban landscape
- Small dwellings sizes due to the push for maximising units on sites - being addressed by the London Housing Design Guide (LHDG)
- Low ceiling heights (2.5-2.6m) and little to no differentiation between floors

materials and detailing

- Concrete and timber framed construction systems
- Return to an emphasis on materials with a mixed palette used with consistency across a scheme
- Use of external cladding systems (e.g. coloured panels, faux-terracotta)
- Articulation of form through careful use of contrasting materials or patternwork
- Increasing use of sustainability measures in architecture - mechanical ventilation, louvres, triple glazing, passivhaus principles
- Stripped back facade treatment and building specification to minimum but a push for architectural elements to add visual richness
- Roofs in a variety of forms, pitched and flat, arising out of local context
- Windows in a variety of shapes and sizes but increasing use of full panel glazing
- Horizontal emphasis and squat feel to many elevations as a result of low ceiling heights
- Beginning to see a return to craft and careful choice of materials
- Common use of recessed and projecting balconies, external bays, articulation of the service core which add some visual interest but are not consistent to achieve rhythm along an elevation



Shared surface streetscapes overlooked by balconies



Subtle boundary treatment and on-plot parking



Thoughtfully landscaped street with on-street parking



Double height ‘penthouse’ apartments on top floor



Type ideally features public transport and a mix of uses



Brightly coloured facades with projecting balconies

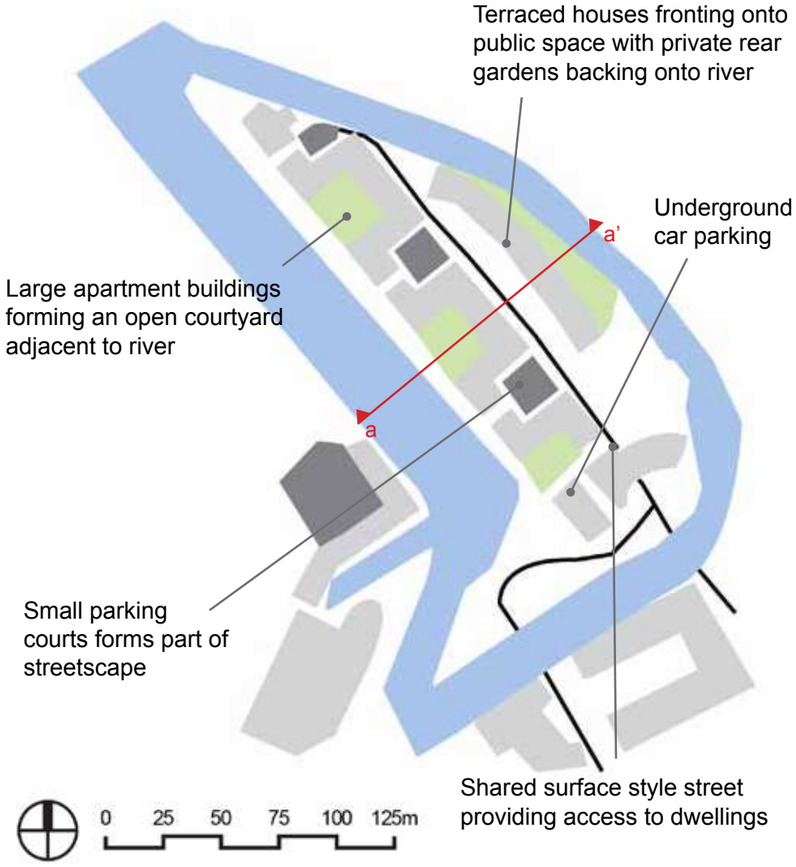
Type 5 | Urban renaissance

Brentford Lock, Brentford

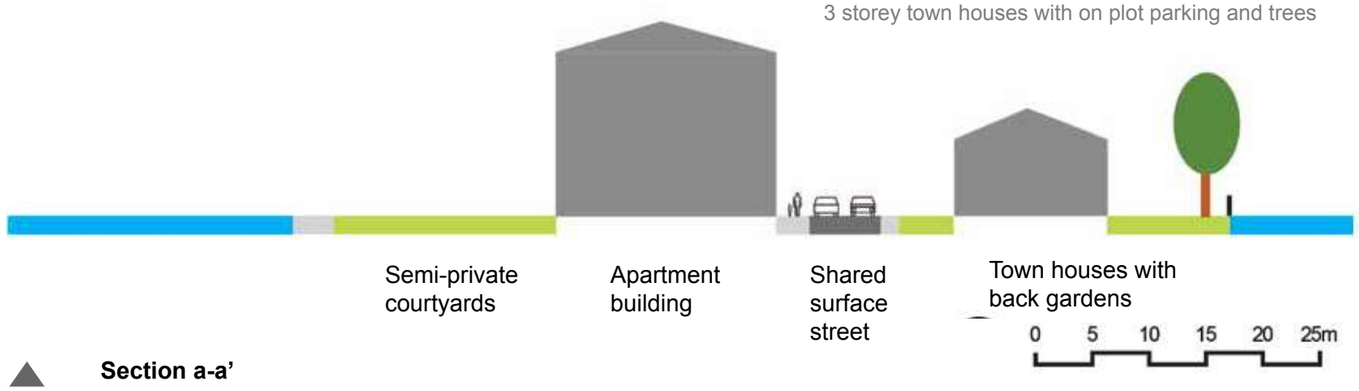


Brentford Lock is located in Brentford, just north of the High Street by the River Brent, canal and lock. Built in 2000s this residential development has some small retail units, hard landscaped areas of public open space and narrow-boat moorings, all focused on the canal at Brentford Lock. The scale of the buildings at 3-6 storeys is significantly greater than surrounding areas. The Island site has more variety of form to link with its river fronts and the tallest buildings relate to the High Street with an 8th storey feature and public square. However, the Lock and the vista along the canal to GSK provide the only connections to the wider Brentford townscape.

See Character Area O in the Brentford Study Area for more information on this area and its surrounding context.



Street and block structure



Section a-a'



Small car parking courts arranged to be overlooked by apartments



3 storey town houses with on plot parking and trees

Type 5 | Urban renaissance

strengths

- Often located in areas with good services and public transport
- Higher densities make better use of land and intensify urban areas
- Return to the importance of a connected street pattern
- Attempts are made to understand and respond to the local character
- Mixes housing types and tenures (tenure-blind) into a development ensuring a mixed population
- Often feature public art in the form of sculpture

weaknesses

- Do not always fit into their surroundings
- Cores serving multiple flats suffer from management problems
- Single aspect flats give little adaptability and long-term livability
- Some developments are poorly located with regard to services and public transport, going against one of the main principles of the type
- Some developments do not fully integrate tenures
- Repeated use of similar, often cheap, materials and finishes can give developments an anonymous, ‘cloned’ feel

opportunities

- Use as a catalyst for wider improvements to the public realm
- Use as a catalyst for improvements to local public transport accessibility
- Reuse of older buildings for new uses
- Innovative and imaginative solutions to development on restricted and unusual sites
- Removal of the perceived need for gated developments through use of perimeter blocks which provide security through their intrinsic design
- Realistic inclusion of non-residential uses, including ground floor retail, in terms of viability and impact on residents
- Introduction of imaginative frontage treatments such as artwork from local schools and local historic information, where non-residential ground floor units remain unlet for extensive periods
- Incorporation of public art

Type 5 | Urban renaissance

threats

- Excessively tall and insensitively designed buildings in inappropriate locations
- Poor maintenance of the public spaces (which are sometimes in private ownership) or restricted access to non-residents



Early 18th century building restored for office use within early 21st century mixed use development, Brentford

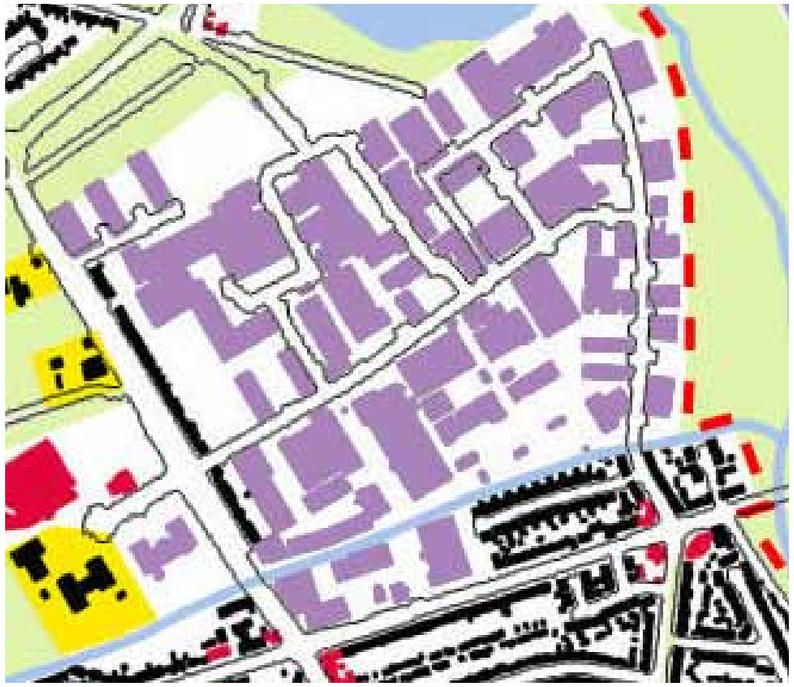


Home zone development of neo-terraces, Plymouth

Type 6 | Big box

brief summary

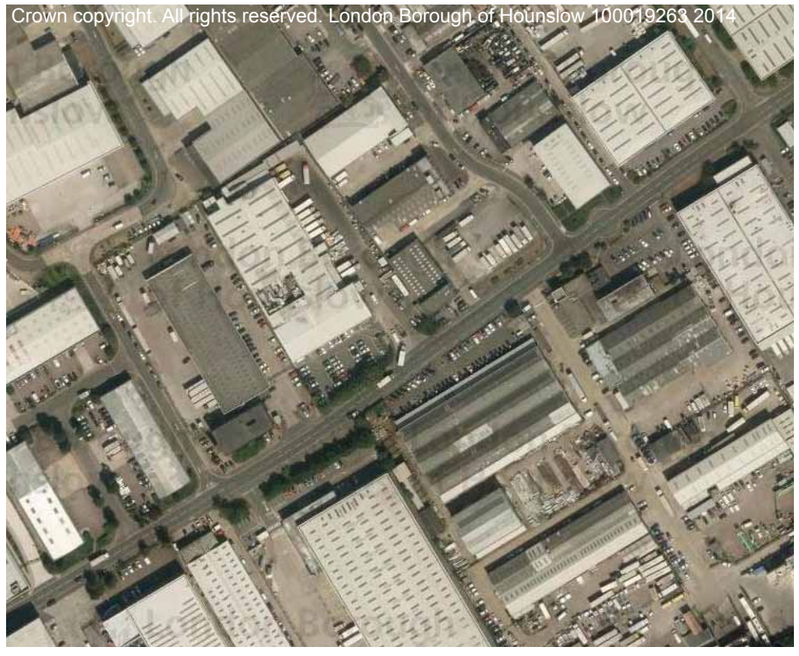
- Located across the borough but more common in the west and along the Golden Mile section of the Great West Road
- Located close to major A roads (A4, A315, A312, A30, A244), the M4 and Heathrow
- Self-contained pods with one or two access roads (little to no through movement)
- Large footprint, rectangular, freestanding buildings, also known as super sheds and LSSBs (large single-storey buildings)
- Buildings surrounded by car parking and/or hard and soft landscaping
- 4-10m building heights - often double height ceilings
- Mono-use - either industrial, office or retail uses
- Examples in the borough include; North Feltham Trading Estate (Feltham), Chiswick Business Park (Chiswick), Brentford Campus Paragon Site (Brentford), Halford and Lidl off Hospital Road (Hounslow), Heathrow International Trading Estate (Hounslow West), Tesco supermarket off Rugby Road (Isleworth), Airlinks Business Park (Cranford and Heston)



Large mono-use estate designed for vehicles



Large signs on building facade advertise to passing traffic



Birds-eye view showing large rectangular sheds surrounded by car parks

historic development

- Large footprint commercial/industrial buildings in the UK have their roots in the factories and warehouses of the late C18th and early C19th, but the type can be dated to the vast portside warehouses of the Romans.
- Developments in road transport in the first half of the C20th (e.g. the Great West Road) gave rise to the suburban and exurban siting of large factories and warehouses in trading estates, some fronted by Art Deco office buildings.
- From c1970 continuing developments in logistics (containerisation and larger road haulage vehicles) and communications (the advent of the motorways), the shift from manufacturing to service industries and changes in consumer behaviour and expectations led to the establishment of very large storage and distribution centres in strategic locations.
- Through the 1980s retailers began to favour big box-style stores (hypermarkets/superstores) in out-of-town(centre) retail parks and shopping malls.
- Leisure uses such as multiplex cinemas and bowling alleys followed.
- In the mid 1990s planning policy guidance discouraged out-of-town(centre) retail, noting its detrimental effects on the life of urban centres.
- Through the 1990s higher quality business parks began to appear, featuring architect-designed low to mid-rise large footprint office buildings with integral landscaping.
- Most recent use of the big box is the heavily secured data centre and self-storage, the latter effectively displacing space from recent small residential units to large commercial units.

variations

- Industrial and trading estates - these make up the majority of the big box type and range in age, quality and size. More recent examples tend to be much larger in every sense and much coarser in grain than older 1950s/60s examples.
- Retail parks - sometimes located within town centres, e.g. Asda in Hounslow, cater for car-based shopping trips. Consist of large retail shop floors of usually one storey but sometimes two, surrounded by car parking with loading bays to side or rear. Many retail parks contain 4-6 retail stores clustered together sometimes with a filling station.
- New high quality business parks are notably different with a strong emphasis on quality of public realm, landscaping and employee/client experience, e.g. Chiswick Park with its high quality public realm with buildings framing footpaths, lakes and densely landscaped gardens.

Type 6 | Big box

dominant period

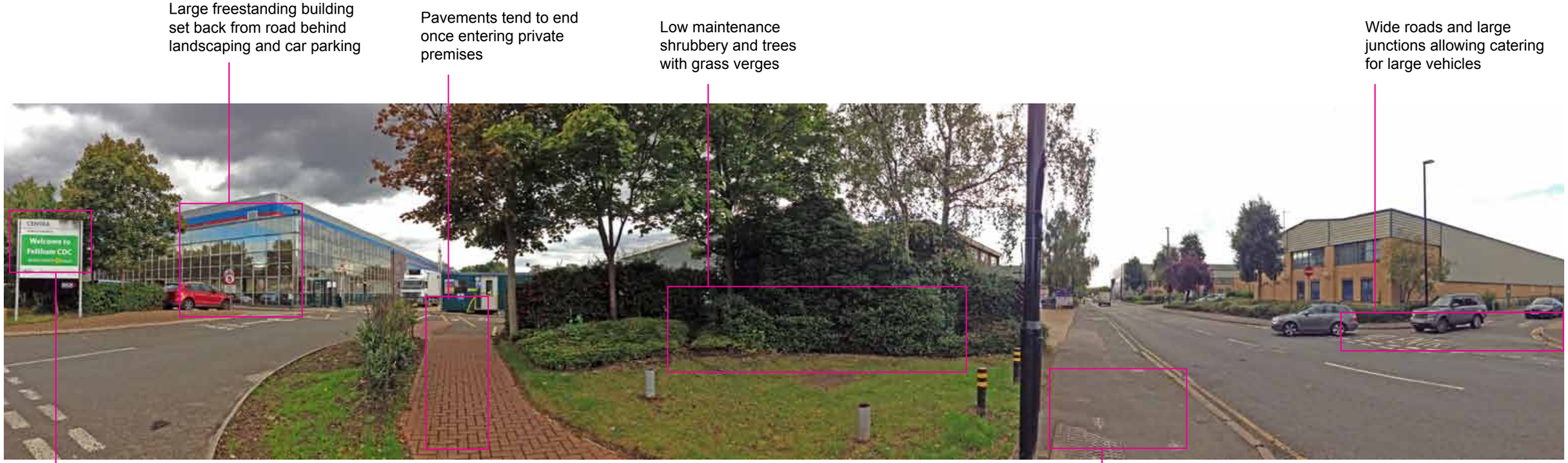
- Predominantly 1980s to present
- Some older and smaller estates from interwar and postwar period feature smaller scale office and industrial buildings mostly constructed from brick, with windows
- Generally estates, plots and buildings have got larger over the years as a result of economic and operational advantages which has an impact on the grain and scale of areas

land use

- A range of land uses depending on type of estate: industrial, office, commercial or retail often with leisure
- Specific uses include distribution centres, small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs), film and television studios, car dealerships, swimming pools, multiplex cinemas, wholesale builders' merchants, DIY and garden centres, superstores and light engineering and manufacturing
- Can include small food and drink premises to cater for workers or visitors
- Low value areas which are affordable places from which to trade
- Retail and leisure uses in particular require large areas for car parking and circulation

layout and structure

- The detached urban structure offers limited through movement or connections which marks these areas out from their immediate surroundings
- Large scale, coarse urban grain with large plots, buildings and few routes
- Internal pod-like layout - one access road in and out - sometimes restricted access
- Often cover a large area and have little relationship to the natural landscape
- Buildings arranged next to or around an access road or large cul-de-sac
- Clusters of buildings sometimes form a loose, open courtyard layout
- Car-based layout with limited provision for pedestrian/cyclists



Type 6 | Big box

streetscape

- Streets are wide with large turning circles/junctions to cater for heavy good vehicles
- Buildings set back from street behind a sea of car parking, sometimes with soft landscaping
- Generally, buildings do not front onto the street - entrances face inwards away from the street towards the car park from where majority of visitors arrive
- Boundary lines demarcated by low and high fences and/or planting
- Soft landscaping is usually low maintenance shrubbery with the occasional tree
- Pavements on main access road but less so on plot access roads
- Tarmac roads and mixed quality materials on pavement
- Scattered arrangement of street furniture - low bollards, street lights etc.

building type and form

- Very large plots with a large proportion given to car parking/hard-standing (30% to 60%)
- Medium to large footprint buildings/sheds - 20m to over 150m in length
- Simple rectangular building forms - highly regular and standardised forms
- Building heights typically 5m to 10m forming one double-height single storey building or two storey buildings
- Buildings have blank edges with exception of entrance and exits. Retail stores have semi-glazed edges
- Multiple businesses can be located in one large building with shared entrance
- Buildings arranged and constructed to suit commercial and operational requirements
- Large floorplate buildings which cater for expansive shop floors with loading bays at rear, e.g. large supermarket or electrical wholesaler
- No vertical stacking of uses, e.g. residential or office over ground floor retail store

materials and detailing

- Mixed materials - brick, metal sheets, glass (clear and coloured), pre-fabricated panels
- Very little detailing - functional and commercial aesthetic
- Signs/brands feature heavily on building facade advertising name and operations of business
- Few windows or if building is heavily glazed this is often reflective or opaque glass
- Flat roofs with the occasional, more distinctive saw-tooth roofs
- One main entrance with side and rear entrances for loading/staff access
- Air conditioning units and fume vents common place on external facade



Internal gated access road to a number of premises



Blank building edge to street behind low maintenance planting



High quality landscaped gardens with lake framed by office buildings at Chiswick Business Park



Dark reflective glazing panels offer some (though limited) overlooking onto street



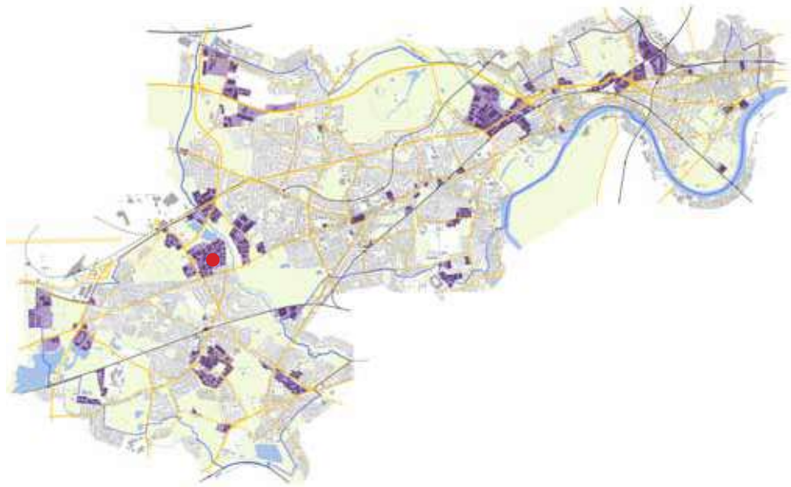
High fences and large floor plate buildings



Soft boundary edge with low shrubs and trees

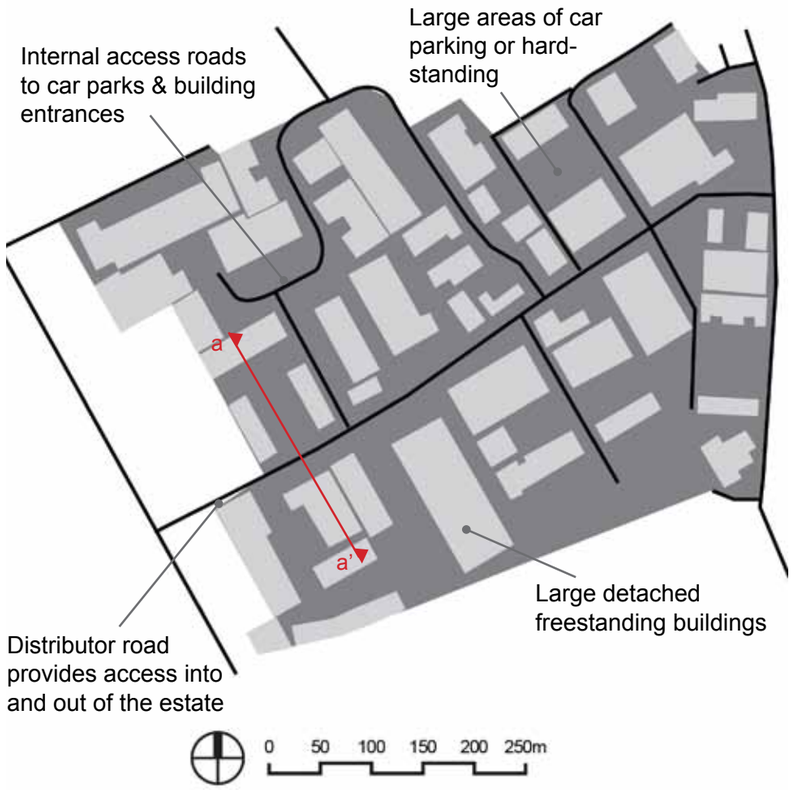
Type 6 | Big box

Feltham trading estate



The map above shows the distribution of this urban type across the borough. This example, located in Feltham is typical of a big box type trading estate. This type of estate can be found across the western half of the borough, taking advantage of good accessibility to the road network and Heathrow Airport. Set back behind a row of early postwar semi-detached houses this estate is accessed by a distributor road (Central Way). Small access roads provide a means of entry to the low-rise sheds and office units. Car parking is extensive and is sometimes controlled access with a manned barrier point.

See Character Area A in the Feltham Study Area for more information on this area and its surrounding context.



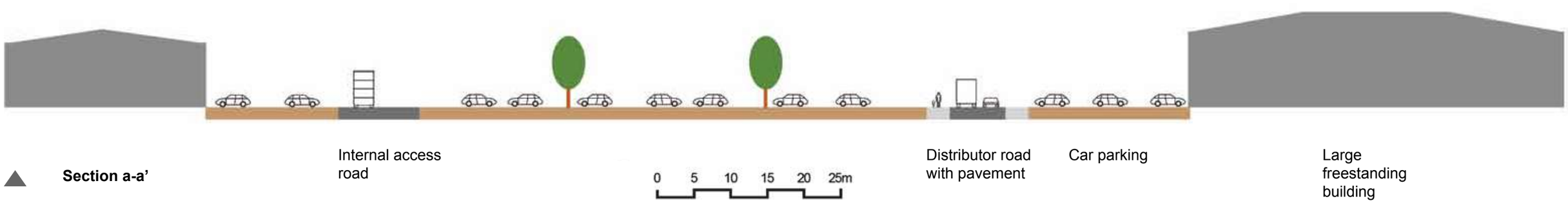
▲ **Street and block structure**



Double height rectangular building clad in one material with flat roof



Internal access road (restricted) to a large freestanding building surrounded by car parking



▲ **Section a-a'**

Type 6 | Big box

strengths

- Offers dedicated space for businesses suited to their requirements
- Economic drivers for local area and often wider sub-region
- Support the operations and economic activity of Heathrow Airport
- Provide a place for the dirtier, noisier industries to be located away from sensitive residential areas
- A safe, controlled, campus-style place for business to locate and be close to other businesses, e.g. Chiswick Business Park

weaknesses

- Not permeable, usually only functioning as a place to drive into and out of
- Car-based model relies on and encourages use of the private motor vehicle and not walking or cycling. Subsequent impacts on sustainability and health
- Do not contribute to walkable neighbourhoods
- Impacts on town centres - drawing potential trade and business exchange away from established centres which benefit from public transport access
- Sprawling nature, inefficient use of land and isolation, large areas devoted to car parking and circulation
- Little to no connection to underlying natural landscape - often limits accessibility to such natural assets, e.g. River Crane in Hounslow West
- Can affect retailers in established town centres

opportunities

- Improvements to the walkability and legibility of these areas
- Improvement to public transport provision to these large employment locations
- Introduction (or improvement where existing) of a communal focus, for example, a cafe
- Reconnection to the natural landscape which often surrounds some of the estates
- Wrapping of other uses around the big box buildings to soften and animate edges
- Introduction of residential uses into some of the more pleasant estates
- Introduction of vertical stacking of uses, for example, residential or office over ground floor retail
- Incorporation of public art

Type 6 | Big box

threats

- Usually dependent on one main economic driver, e.g. Heathrow Airport - if this driver changes location then the knock-on effects would be substantial
- Big box developments, particularly retail, locating in town centres reduce variety and activity



Sensitively landscaped waterside edge of business park, Golden Mile, Brentford



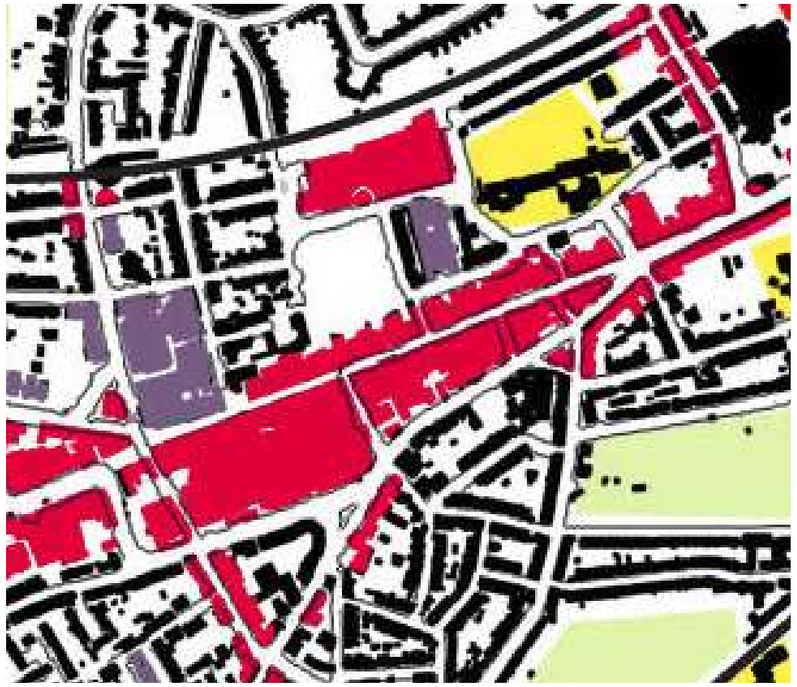
Residential above superstore, Hounslow town centre fringe

Type 7 | Urban centre

brief summary

- Mixed use areas with high levels of local accessibility - intensity and proportion of mix varies from centre to centre
- Centres spatially arranged along high streets, historic cores and at key road junctions
- Streets and spaces lined by buildings with ground floor non-residential uses
- Residential or commercial uses often stacked above ground floor retail
- Usually a diverse mix of building types and ages reflecting their historic origin
- Many examples in the borough lie along or just off the London Road - Hounslow High Street, Chiswick High Road, Brentford High Street, Feltham town centre (remnants)
- Other examples include Hounslow West along Bath Road (Hounslow West), South Street (Isleworth), Heston Road village centre (Cranford and Heston)

Note: The urban centre type boundaries relate to spatial layout and urban character and therefore do not necessarily accord with the town centre designations outlined in planning policy.



The predominantly retail and commercial uses of the high street

historic development

- Historic street pattern normally evident - settlement origins lie in the centre, e.g. Hounslow town centre lies along the old Roman Road (now London Road) which subsequently became home to coaching inns and associated trade.
- Modern urban centres originate from settlement cores - have grown and expanded as the settlement grew but still have strong physical connection to early form and landscape.
- Rise of the modern department store and larger footprint retail units lead to a loosening of the urban grain and in some cases elimination of the historic urban core character.
- Changes in commercial and retail technology and patterns have heavily influenced form and layout of urban centres.
- New shift for urban centres with the rise of internet shopping and the bigger leisure and social interaction role that centres play in the C21st.



A busy high street lined by 2-3 storey buildings



Aerial view showing narrow, deep plots that characterise most of the high street

variations

- Many variations of the urban centre in the borough resulting from size, scale, form and history.
- High streets, i.e. Hounslow, Brentford and Chiswick, are strong, linear centres with buildings lining either side of a busy thoroughfare (the Roman Road).
- Modern C20th regenerated centres, i.e. Feltham, have historic cores but have undergone significant restructuring and development in recent times.
- Historic village centres, i.e. Heston, cluster around a strong civic building such as a church and remain the civic and economic heart of a settlement.
- Smaller centres clustered around public transport, i.e. Hounslow West, Isleworth station these originated and grew as a result of the footfall arising from the public transport provision.
- Local shopping parades/clusters, i.e. St Johns Road in Isleworth.

Type 7 | Urban centre

dominant period

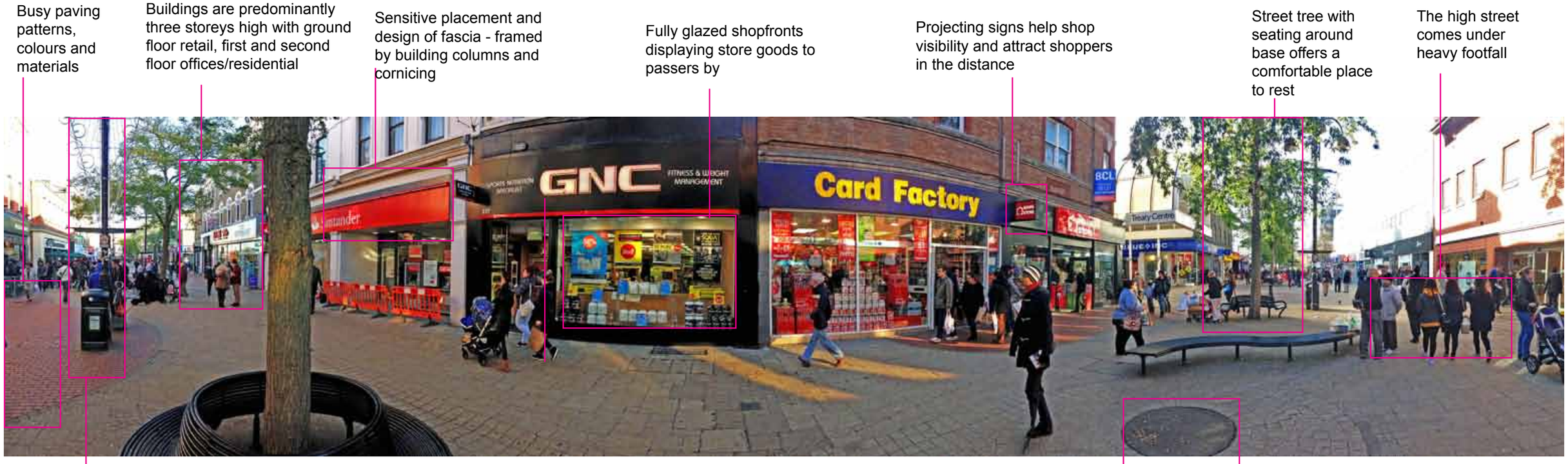
- All periods - though many centres have historic routes as trading points/centres
- The form and pattern of many centres can be traced back to medieval times from where settlements originated and grew
- Often contain some of the oldest buildings in the borough, e.g. St Leonard's Church in Heston
- Huge importance of the London Road as principal trading route still evident today in the location and form of the borough's urban centres
- Many of the high streets buildings date from Victorian/Edwardian period when significant growth, enterprise and civic building took place

land use

- Easily distinguishable from surroundings by the change in land use mix, intensity and distribution but also levels of activity and footfall
- This change can often be quite distinct and sharp - turn a corner from a quiet residential street onto a busy high street, e.g. Montague Road turning onto Hounslow High Street
- Very mixed use of land - retail uses dominate but commercial, leisure, office, food and drink, civic and residential uses also feature to greater and lesser degrees
- Due to their good accessibility and high levels of footfall many land uses which require constant passing trade, e.g. shops, restaurants locate here
- Importance of critical mass and diversity of land uses to support one another and attract a mix of potential customers
- Traditionally shop owners lived above their shop, though nowadays flats and/or offices often built over shops

layout and structure

- Urban centres characterised by both strong global connectivity and strong local connectivity
- Arranged along and around the principal street in the area - scale and size of the centre corresponds to the hierarchy of the street
- Smaller network of local streets connect into the principal street offering important local accessibility
- Characterised by a fine urban grain of narrow, deep plots reflecting the high competition for street frontage
- A few arranged around historic cores/nodes where two important and busy routes intersect, e.g. the village centre of Heston
- Some centres pedestrianised in recent years to reduce the impact of heavy vehicular traffic and provide a more pleasant experience
- Smaller centres often laid out along or at junction of the busier residential street(s) in the area, pavements often a bit wider with seating to encourage meeting and interaction



Type 7 | Urban centre

streetscape

- Buildings face the street with little to no setback from boundary line in order to maximise exposure to passing trade
- Mixed shop front widths though chiefly narrow to medium shop fronts (5m-10m) - have become larger in recent years (10m plus)
- Street trees can be an important townscape feature - Chiswick High Road with its mature plane trees offer a dense canopy and leafiness to the high road
- Linear streetscapes can be broken up with small set backs, offsets or squares which offer important openings and spaces to rest and relax, e.g. the gradual widening of Chiswick High Road and the small public space in front of Holy Trinity Church in Hounslow
- The frequency and quality of side alleys/streets can heavily influence quality of overall urban centre streetscape
- Heavy use of street furniture of lighting, benches, trees, bins, commercial refuse bins
- Market stalls placed on the pavement or side street add animation to the streetscape, e.g. the greengrocers along Chiswick High Road

building type and form

- Typical building heights range 3-4 storeys with some taller buildings/ elements to mark important junctions
- Run of individual buildings along a stretch or one long building with the ground floor broken down into multiple units
- Many of the smaller individual buildings have rear ground floor extensions
- Some large footprint buildings exist such as shopping malls, supermarkets etc.
- High intensity of land uses is reflected in the varied and diverse types of buildings and their adaption over the years
- Vertical stacking of uses with ground floor retail and floors above a mix of retail, office, residential - some buildings feature basements
- Servicing access usually at the rear

materials and detailing

- Very mixed building ages displaying a variety of architectural styles, detailing and materials
- Significant Victorian townscape with ornate applied detailing
- More recent buildings tend to have large expanses of glass sheets - sometimes obscured by frosting or display panels
- Signage and advertising a strong feature in urban centres
- Canopies and outdoor seating sometimes extend onto public space



Three storey high street building with ground floor restaurants and cafes - Chiswick


Smaller local centre clustered around Isleworth station offers local convenience and enterprise opportunities


High density town centre regeneration in Feltham


Wide pavements with room for seating, cycle parking and street trees


Recent town centre development - large retail stores with residential above - Hounslow



Small, narrow fronted traditional shop fronts in Chiswick


Wide variety of local stores with flats above - along Bath Road

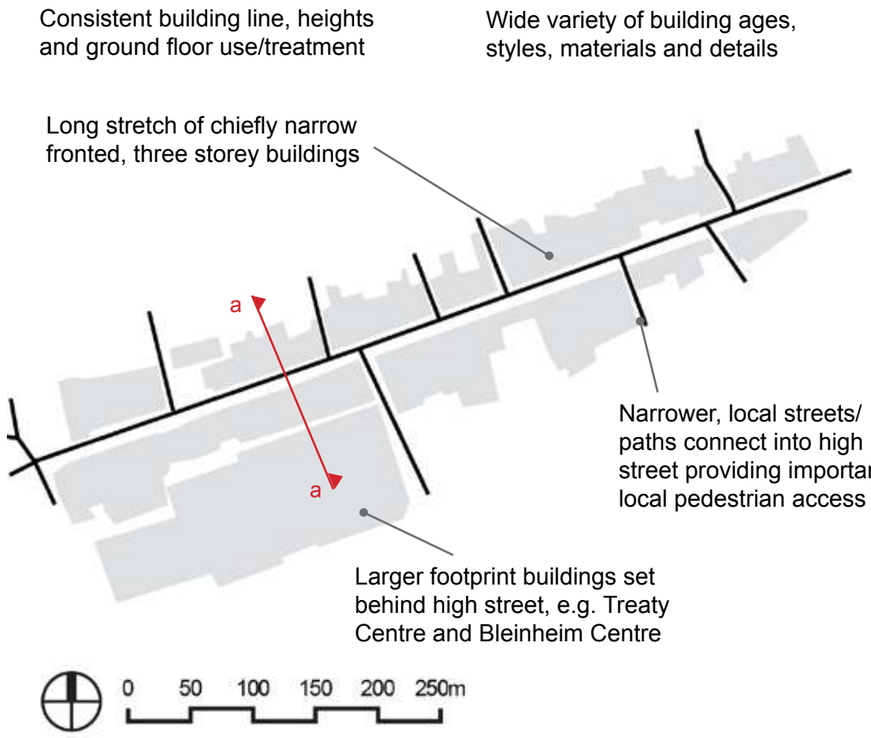
Type 7 | Urban centre

Hounslow High Street

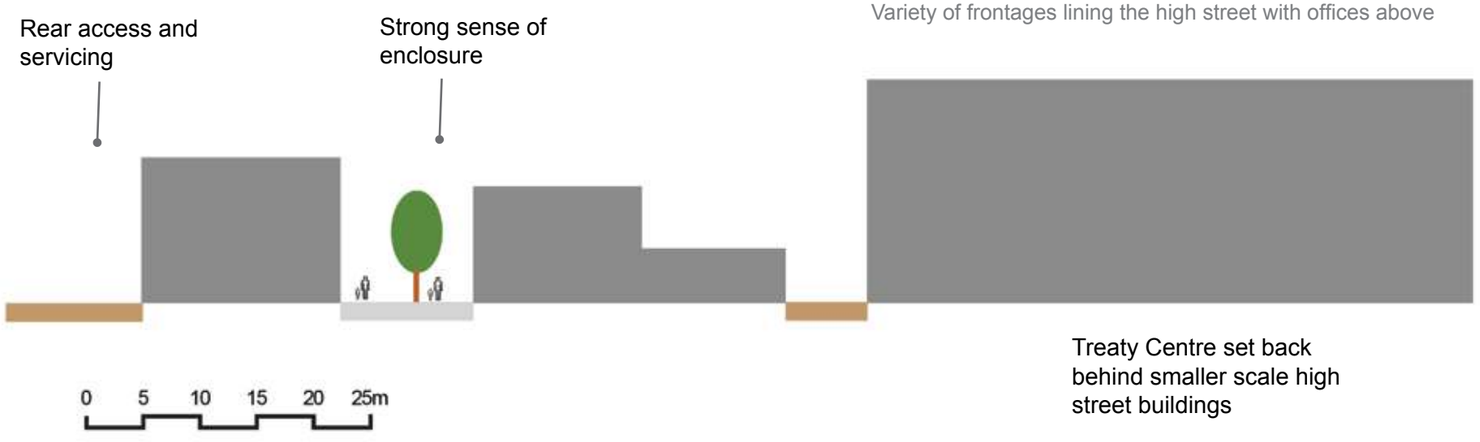


Hounslow High Street is a large and extensive example of the urban centre type. Retail and commercial uses line either side of the high street for approximately 350m, with combined plot depths of up to 70m. The are is chiefly characterised by its mix of uses, predominantly retail units on ground floor and offices above. A diverse mix of building sizes, types and ages line the high street, with a traditional plot pattern of narrow, deep plots. Building heights are fairly consistent, ranging from three to four stories offering a pleasant sense of enclosure to the public space, punctuated by narrow alleyways running north-south. There are terraced streets that sit behind and off the High Street and Kingsley Road lined with late Victorian/Edwardian terraced housing. More recent, larger footprint buildings are evident, such as Trinity Centre, Asda and office buildings in the west. These give a much coarser grain to the townscape, with less visual variety and street level activity.

See Character Area E in the Hounslow Study Area for more information on this area and its surrounding context.



Street and block structure



Section a-a'



Pedestrianised section includes seating around trees



Variety of frontages lining the high street with offices above

Type 7 | Urban centre

strengths

- Provide a focal point and identity to an area
- They are drivers of economic growth and facilitators of wider regeneration
- Location of civic and community uses, providing a place to bring diverse communities together
- Offer a strong connection to the history and early settlement pattern of an area and subsequent heritage still visible in many places
- Rich architectural offering with buildings covering many different periods, styles and types - often display some of the more accomplished buildings in the borough

weaknesses

- Due to their accessibility and land use intensity they can become congested and uncomfortable places to spend time
- Some suffer from poor public transport accessibility or the public transport is difficult to find
- Some are disconnected from their immediate residential surroundings by heavily trafficked roads

opportunities

- Reappraisal of the role of town centres in the 21st century, offering greater opportunities for leisure, civic and non-shopping type activities
- Dramatic improvements to the public realm in order to attract people to and encourage them to remain in an urban centre
- Introduction of food markets which are very popular and can help provide access to fresh food for local people and support local farmers and artisan food makers
- Bring to light the rich heritage of our centres through physical measures and wider education work. Archaeology is very important in these areas
- Service delivery and public sector investment into centres
- Incorporation of public art

Type 7 | Urban centre

threats

- Large out-of-town retail parks which draw potential spend away from town centres
- Parking issues either a lack of parking which discourages people from using a centre or too much parking poorly integrated so it dominates the streetscape
- Internet shopping age - reducing the need to visit shops in a centre
- Insensitive redevelopment that destroys the fine urban grain, variety and diversity that characterises urban centres



Well-used market place in need of improvement not least through complete reorientation of stalls to create single central street, Chiswick



New town centre square enlivens and provides focus for high street, Brentford

Conclusions

5

Recommendations

Introduction

This section concludes the study with broad recommendations for future development and further work.

The study has undertaken a thorough and rigorous assessment of the borough's context and character. Recommendations have been generated at three scales:

- **Overall recommendations** - these are aimed at cross-cutting, strategic issues that have implications across the borough
- **Area-based recommendations** - these are presently broad recommendations based upon the assessments of each character area presented in Section 3: Study Areas and based on the methodology presented in Section 1: Introduction
- **Type-based recommendations** - these are aimed at the seven urban types that prevail in the borough and may presently be derived and inferred from the Opportunities section of the SWOT analysis for each type, found in Section 4: Urban Types

The conclusions and resulting recommendations are aimed at a diverse audience, including the local authority, other public bodies such as Transport for London (TfL), private landowners, developers, community associations and neighbourhood forums.

These are important in order for the borough to protect and promote the distinctive character of its places, streets and buildings. They are intended to provide guidance, inform and assist policy and plan-making, especially neighbourhood planning, and stimulate interest and thought. Most will require further work and feasibility testing to develop in more detail.



Individualistic yet sensitive infill, Chiswick



Sensitively landscaped waterside edge of business park, Golden Mile, Brentford



New large residential developments offer landscaping opportunities, Brentford



Housing built on underused open space, regenerated estate, Feltham

Title page photo: Early 18th century Peerless Pumps building, restored for office use within early 21st century Ferry Quays mixed use development, Brentford

Recommendations

Overall recommendations

The following recommendations are high-level, strategic and far-reaching, looking holistically at what is needed to harness and improve the distinctive character of the borough in conjunction with achieving the ambitious growth and regeneration agenda.

In many cases, the recommendations below identify areas of further work needed which future planning and regeneration projects could address and develop in more detail.

People make places not plans
The power of understanding how places work can facilitate a relationship with local communities to plan, design and develop their own areas. This study should assist and stimulate local communities in delivering effective neighbourhood planning across the borough.

Growth and reinforcing a place's character
Ambitious growth levels should be seen as an opportunity to respond to and reinforce the distinctive character of the borough as presented in this study. Where character is poorly defined, development opportunities should seek to establish a new character taking cues from a place's history, its strengths, assets and local communities.

Context-led design solutions
There is a need for those developing in the borough to understand the borough's distinctive character and take their cue from this context to avoid ugly, bland or out-of-character developments which blight areas for generations.

Intensification of the suburbs
With population levels continuing to rise and a dire need for more housing, there is a real need to look at increasing densities in the borough's suburban areas (mainly urban type 2), especially in areas with good PTALs and access to shops and services.

Future of the Green Belt
There is a need to think strategically and long-term about the borough's network of green belt, a key character feature of many Outer London boroughs. Following an eventual review of the performance of green belt, a balanced approach should be explored, which supports limited development to provide much needed housing, regenerate local town centres and use investment to create a high quality, accessible, borough-wide green grid comprised of small, medium and large spaces and corridors.

Protection of areas of special character
There are many well-loved areas which have a well-established and coherent character that are not designated as a heritage asset but which need protection from insensitive development. These areas should be prioritised for further appraisal and conservation and enhancement through a range of measures including possible conservation area designation.

Urban form and building heights
Heights should relate to the urban structure, accessibility and the character of the borough, with taller buildings focused in our town centres and key movement corridors. Urban form and layout should take its cue from street-based, perimeter block structures (urban types 1, 2 and 5) which are the most successful forms in the borough.

Public transport improvements
Public transport investment has the power to transform the character of an area. There are areas which need substantial investment such as Bedfont, Feltham, Cranford and Heston which all suffer from poor PTALs.

Major barriers to movement
A number of strategic roads create barriers to movement for local people and have a negative impact on the character and livability of an area. Unlike the historic main routes like the London Road around which communities have focused, many modern strategic roads such as the Great West Road and M4 motorway separate and segregate communities. Development should where possible seek to contribute positively to the borough's movement network.

Integrating the big box urban type
These large estates are physically separated from the neighbourhoods they sit within. Integrating these large, big box estates into their surroundings can help local people access employment opportunities, create a better urban form and encourage walking and cycling opportunities. Large retail parks should also be restricted and investment encouraged toward the town centres where good PTALs encourages a shift from cars to walking and cycling.

Diversifying town centres
Our centres are changing and we need to respond. We need to understand what makes a centre viable and unique, build stronger neighbourhood scale centres in places like Bedfont and Hanworth, increase critical mass to support shops and services in suburban areas and tap into each centre's rich history, fine grain of buildings and spaces, diverse mix of uses and sense of character to stamp out bland, clone-like centres full of large boxes with blank edges.

Regeneration of housing estates
A number of housing estates suffer from poor quality design, housing and socio-economic problems. Many of these are classified as urban type 3 and 4 and are spread across the borough, suffering from similar issues arising from their form, layout and structure.

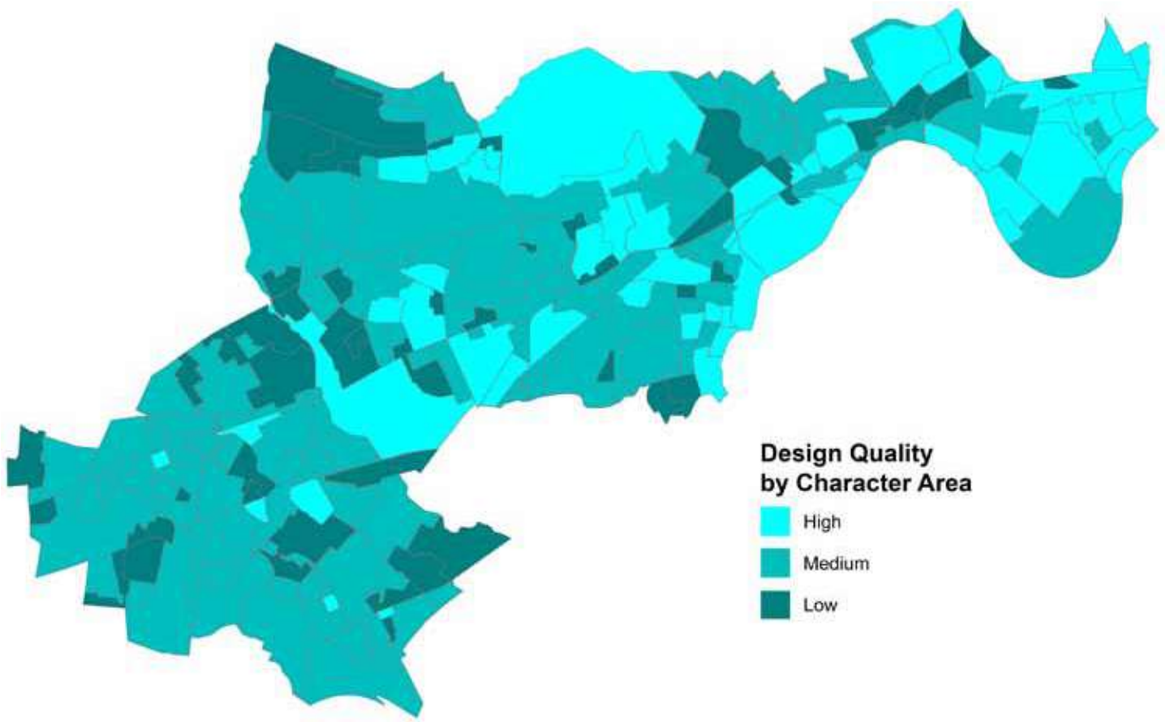
The Great Estates and heritage landscapes
These are special and unique features of the borough and comprise a large part of the landscape. Development should be wise to this context and provide a suitable backdrop and skyline to these historic set pieces.

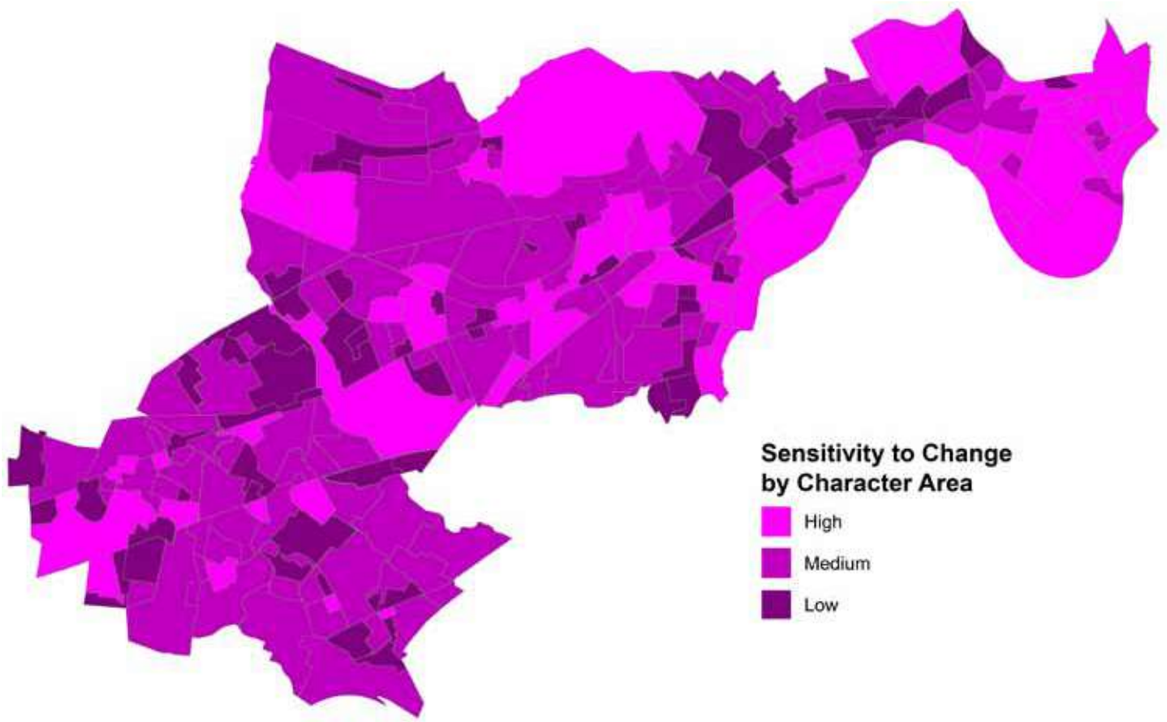


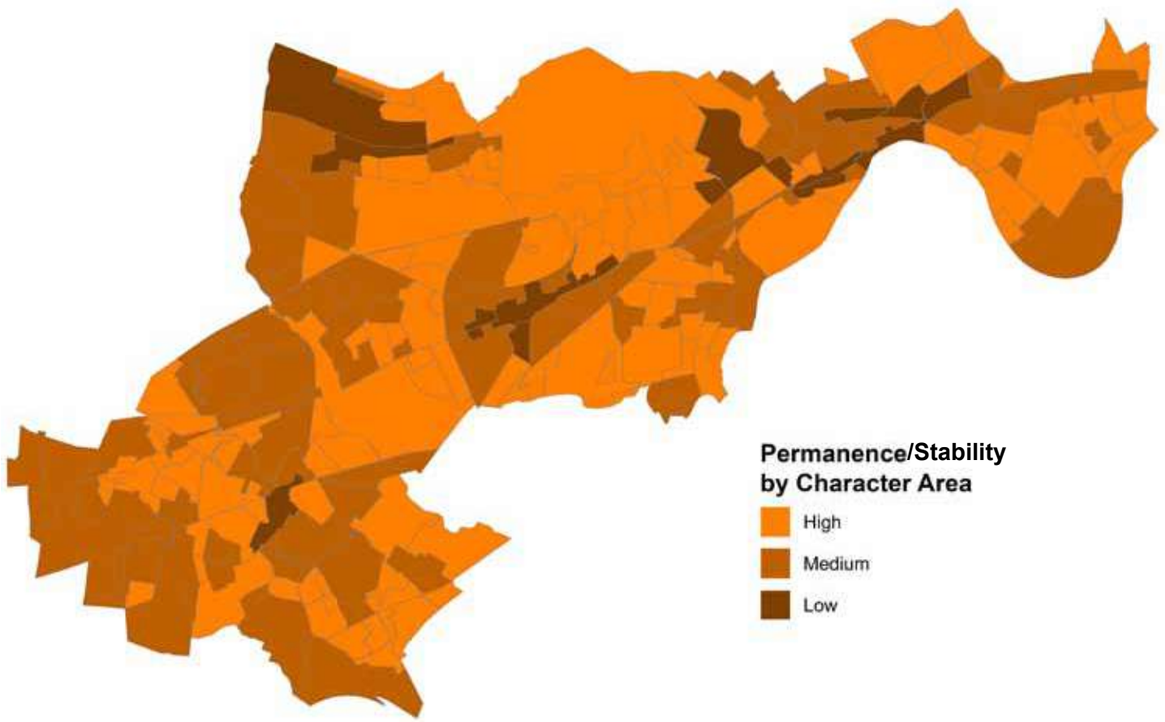
New town centre square enlivens and provides focus for high street, Brentford

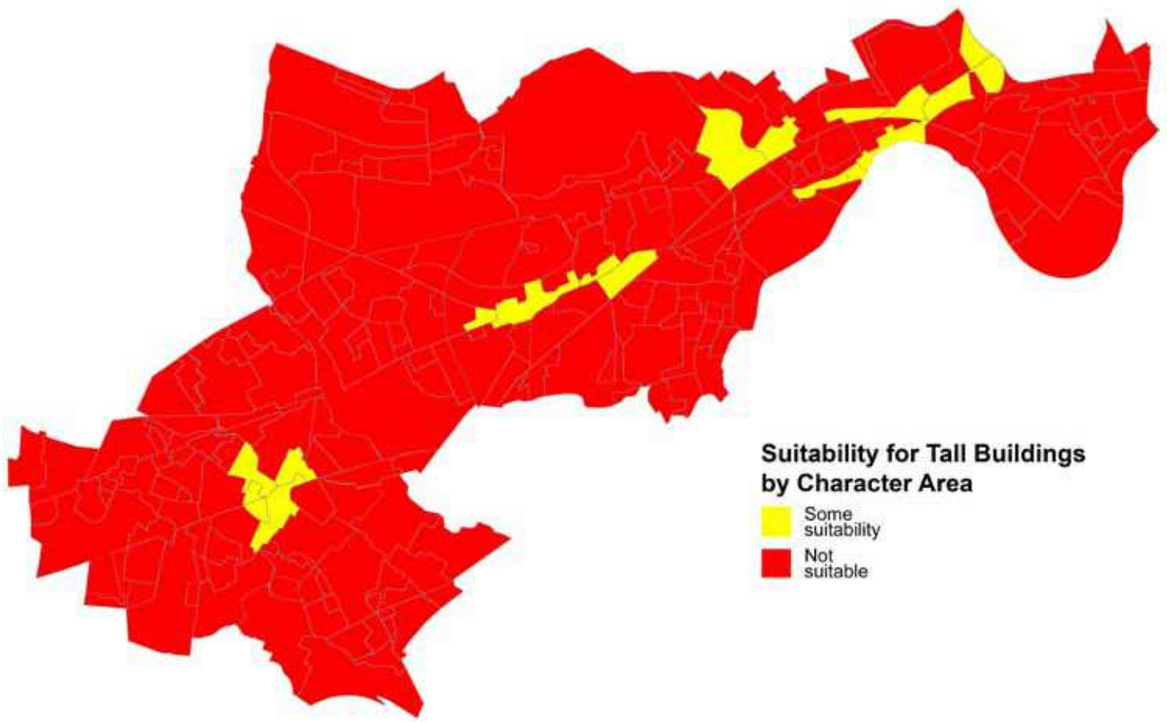
Recommendations

Area-based recommendations - assessments by character area



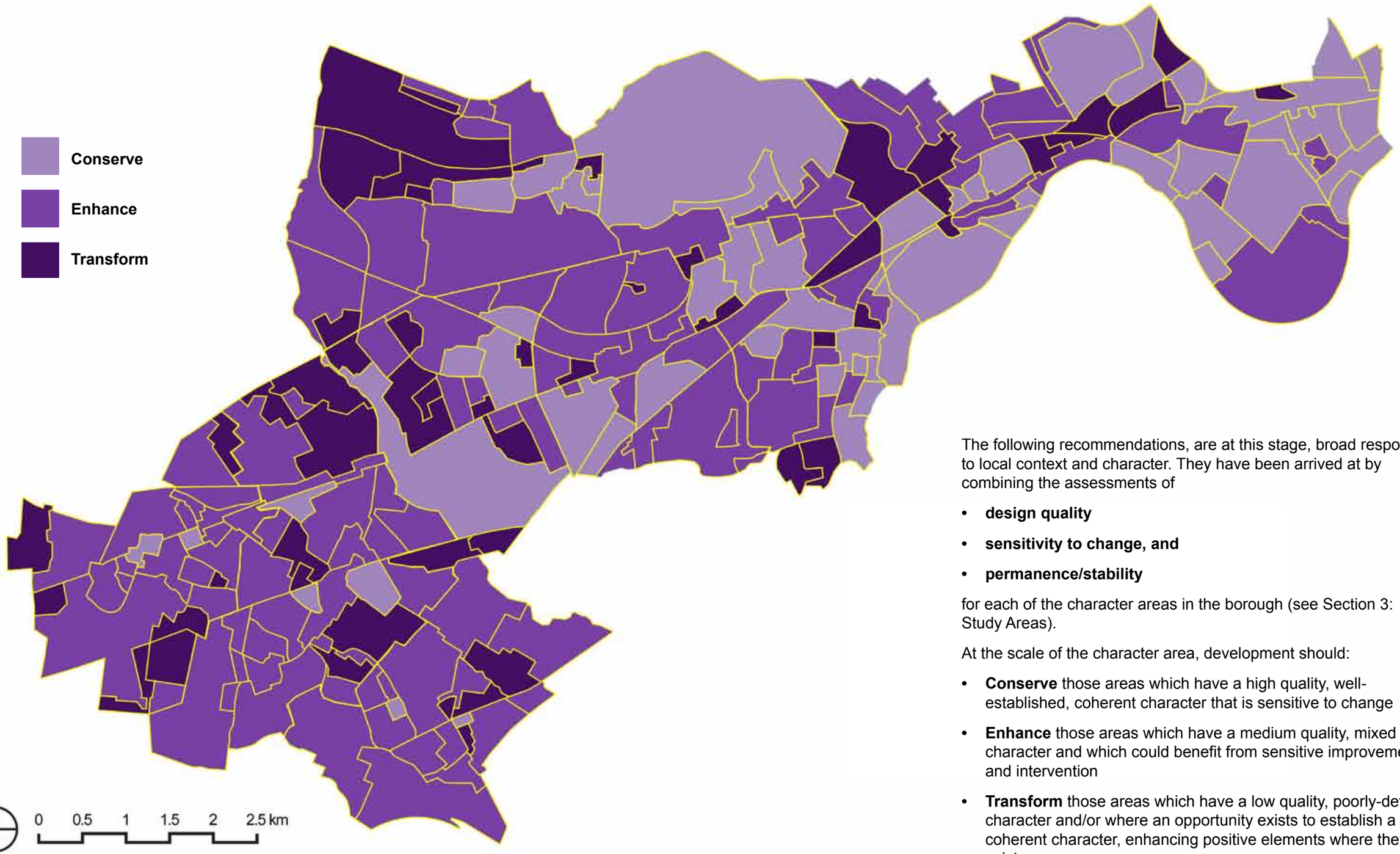






Recommendations

Area-based recommendations from assessments by character area



The following recommendations, are at this stage, broad responses to local context and character. They have been arrived at by combining the assessments of

- **design quality**
- **sensitivity to change, and**
- **permanence/stability**

for each of the character areas in the borough (see Section 3: Study Areas).

At the scale of the character area, development should:

- **Conserve** those areas which have a high quality, well-established, coherent character that is sensitive to change
- **Enhance** those areas which have a medium quality, mixed character and which could benefit from sensitive improvement and intervention
- **Transform** those areas which have a low quality, poorly-defined character and/or where an opportunity exists to establish a new coherent character, enhancing positive elements where they exist

Further work

A number of areas of further work have been identified in the course of the study's production. These include the following:

The study itself

The study will be monitored and periodically updated in order to maintain its effectiveness and relevance. The Great West Road Study Area section will be expanded to include the western stretches as and when considered necessary.

Tall buildings strategy

Drawing upon baseline work provided by the study, the council will produce supplementary guidance on the type and location of tall buildings within the borough. The work will consider tall building types and how they might be accommodated in the borough. The study will also include urban design analysis that identifies appropriate locations for the various types of tall buildings.

Heritage strategy

Drawing partly upon baseline work provided by the study, the council will produce a borough-wide heritage strategy to guide a long-term, ambitious strategy for the continued conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the significance of the borough's heritage assets, in consultation with the borough's local history societies and residents.

Project ideas

As a result of direct observations made by the officers producing the study and suggestions made by participants in the study consultation, a list of potential small to medium scale site/area-specific projects is being compiled

Resource archive

An important legacy of the study is a very large photographic resource which continues to be of value. Those photographs actually published in the documents have been archived by Hounslow Library Local Studies Service. However there remains a large quantity of photographs which still require cataloguing and archiving.

Urban design skills training

During the production of the study, a need for urban design skills training for council officers, elected members and stakeholders was identified.



Project idea: make the Longford River accessible to the public and a pedestrian and cycle route into the town centre, Feltham



Project idea: improve the route from Hounslow Central Station to Hounslow town centre



Project idea: introduce shared surface to improve pedestrian movement along Church Street, Isleworth



Project idea: improve the public realm and movement outside Turnham Green Station, Chiswick

Appendices

6

Glossary

A

Accessibility

The ability of people, including elderly and disabled people, those with young children and those encumbered with luggage or shopping, to move through and around an area and reach places and facilities.

Active edge

Characteristic provided by a building or other feature whose use is directly visible and accessible from the street or space which it faces, in contrast to a long, blank wall (inactive edge).

Adaptability

The capacity of a building or space to be altered so as to respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.

Ambience

The often highly subjective 'look and feel' of a place which arises from the observer/participant's perception and interpretation of the interactions between urban form, natural phenomena and human activities, including factors such as microclimate, soundscape and ambient light.

Amenity

A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area, for example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, and less tangible factors such as tranquillity.

Ancient woodland

An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD.

Archaeological Interest

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

Archaeological Priority Area (APA)

An area of particular archaeological importance or vulnerability which has been identified by the local authority with the advice of English Heritage.

Area Action Plan (AAP)

A type of Development Plan Document focused upon a specific location or an area subject to conservation or significant change (for example major regeneration).

Area of Special Character

An area of the borough which possesses sufficient architectural, townscape and environmental quality to make it of significant local value. Such an area will normally have to meet one or more of the following criteria:

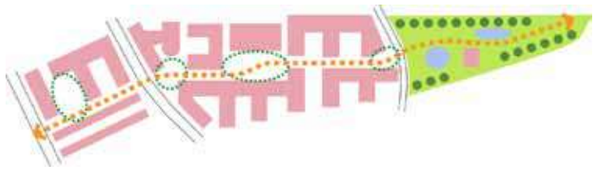
- an area or group of buildings possessing an overall character with identifiable or distinctive features (e.g. details, decoration and materials) that are worthy of conservation
- an area or group of buildings which can be considered as a good and well-preserved example of a particular style of architecture
- an area or group of buildings of particular character, built as a single development over a short period of time
- an area or group of buildings representative of a good example of a particular style or age of housing
- an urban area that is distinguished by the quality or extent of its landscape
- an area that is distinguished from the surrounding area by the planned layout of its road pattern combined with a consistent style of architecture.

Arterial road

In a functional road hierarchy, a major road that connects (and passes through or around) urban centres. Equates to primary and some secondary roads.

Axis

A line, sometimes imaginary, along and around which buildings and spaces are arranged.



B

Back-land development

Development of 'landlocked' sites behind existing buildings, such as rear gardens and private open space, usually within predominantly residential areas. Such sites often have no street frontages.

Block

A block is the smallest area that is surrounded by streets. Urban blocks are the space for buildings within the street pattern of a village, town or city, and form a basic unit of urban fabric. As such the block is a central element of urban design. Urban blocks may vary considerably in size and regularity of shape.





Brownfield land and sites

Previously-developed land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure.

Buffer zone

An area of land separating certain types of development from adjoining sensitive land uses.

Glossary

Building line

The line formed by frontages of buildings along a street. See also Continuity.



Building of Local Importance

See Local Listing.

Bulk

See Massing.

C

Character

Generally, the combination of qualities or features that distinguishes one thing from another. In the urban context, character derives from a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that makes one urban area different from another and gives it identity. Elements can be physical, cultural, perceptual and experiential and can include, but are not limited to: building form and detailing, height, density, plot size, car parking, amenity, landscape and sense of safety and security. If context is essentially ‘what’s there’, character is ‘what it’s like’.

Characteristics

Elements, or combinations of elements, which make a particular contribution to distinctive character.

Components

See Elements.

Connectivity

See Permeability.

Conservation Area Character Appraisal

A published document defining the special architectural or historic interest that warranted the area being designated as a Conservation Area.

Conservation Area

Area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Containment

See Enclosure.

Context

The setting of a site or area, including factors such as traffic, activities and land uses as well as landscape and built form. Context is essentially ‘what’s there’.

Continuity

Successful urban space, including street space, is defined and enclosed by buildings, structures and landscape. Buildings which follow a continuous line along a street block and contain the private space within back yards or courtyards are often more successful than individual buildings that stand in the middle of a site. Buildings with active edges, such as shop fronts, doors directly onto the street, or residential upper floors, enable people to keep an eye on public space and make it feel safer.

Curtilage

The area normally within the boundaries or plot of a property surrounding the main building and used in connection with it.

D

Defensible space

Public and semi-public space that is ‘defensible’ in the sense that it is surveyed or overlooked, demarcated or maintained by somebody.

Density

In the case of residential development, a measurement of either the number of habitable rooms per hectare (hrh) or the number of dwellings per hectare (dph). For commercial development, the ratio of the total floor area to the plot area, often known as the plot or site ratio and sometimes the floor area ratio (FAR).



The same density may be achieved using different types

Design Code

A set of illustrated design rules and requirements which instruct and advise on the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code are detailed and precise, and build upon a design vision such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

Design Guide

A document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice, often produced by a local authority with a view to retaining local distinctiveness.

Desire line

An imaginary line linking facilities or places which people would find it convenient to travel between easily.



Glossary

Development

Development is defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as “the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land”.

Distributor road

In a functional road hierarchy, a road that distributes traffic and bus services within the main residential, commercial and industrial built-up areas. Equates to teriary and some secondary roads.

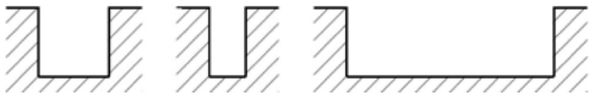
E

Elements

Individual parts, such as buildings, streets, squares and trees, which make up the urban whole. Urban design invloves knitting these elements together to form coherent and successful places. Also known as components.

Enclosure

An enclosed space or street is one where the buildings form a strong continuous edge and where the ratio of the height of the buildings to the width of the space or street is sufficient for the observer to feel they are in an enclosed space rather than an open one. A ratio of 1:1 is considered ideal. Also known as containment.



English Heritage (EH)

Government advisors with responsibility for all aspects of protecting and promoting the historic environment. English Heritage is responsible for advising the government on the listing of historic buildings.

Evidence base

The data and information gathered by a local planning authority to justify the ‘soundness’ of the policy approach set out in Local Development Documents, including physical, economic, and social characteristics of an area.

F

Features

Particularly prominent or eye-catching elements, like civic buildings, church spires and tower blocks.

Figure-ground plan

A drawing produced by colouring the building footprints on a map in (usually) black and leaving the remaining space white. The figure-ground plan is a useful tool for showing and analysing the structure, grain and density of development and the relationship of buildings to space. Though graphically elegant they are also problematic in that they explicitly reduce an area to a binary opposition. For this reason they may be enhanced by the addition of, for example, major transport routes, public open spaces and waterways. The simplification of the figure-ground plan allows the identification of recurring patterns within the built form. The plan is also used in historical analysis to show the evolution of urban form over time.



Formative

Formative describes an early element of the landscape, for example, a building, an estate or an ancient roadway, which exerted a long-term influence on the character, position and importance of future development. Formative elements may or may not still be important in their own right or even have survived.

G

Gateway

An important road or path which serves as a major entry into a city, a district or a local area. Gateways are also created where a road or path intersects with the edge of a district, and are often signified by entrance features.

Grain

See Urban grain.

Green Belt

Predominantly land around built-up areas which has the strategic role of limiting urban sprawl, preventing neighbouring towns from merging with another, safeguarding open countryside from development, assisting in urban regeneration and providing areas for open recreational activity. There is a presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

Green corridor

Green corridors are extensive contiguous areas of trees and open space which straddle or run along major road, rail and waterways. They are of value as habitats for wildlife and plants and as local landscape features. Green corridors can link housing areas to the national cycle network, town and city centres, places of employment and community facilities. They help to promote environmentally sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling within urban areas and can also act as vital linkages for wildlife dispersal between wetlands and the countryside.

Green Grid

A strategic green infrastructure network

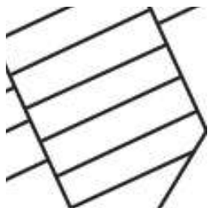
Green infrastructure

A network of multi-functional green spaces, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Glossary

Grid layout

A development layout based on a lattice of connected streets forming distinct blocks. The size and shape of blocks and the degree of connectivity may vary.





H

Habitable room

Any room used or intended to be used for sleeping, living, cooking or eating purposes. Enclosed spaces such as bath or toilet facilities, service rooms, corridors, laundries, hallways, utility rooms or similar spaces are excluded from this definition.

Habitat

An area of nature conservation interest.

Height

The height of a building can be expressed in terms of number of storeys or absolute height in metres. Whilst the latter is preferable in terms of accuracy the former affords a more immediate visual impression. A storey is often averaged at 3m as a convenient compromise between the lower residential and higher commercial and institutional storey heights.

Heritage asset

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.

Highway

Technical, official and legal term for vehicle and pedestrian movement spaces, commonly referred to as roads and streets. The latter implies a more pedestrian-friendly environment which encourages lingering and socialising. Includes the vehicular carriageway and the pedestrian footway.

Historic environment

All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Historic Parks and Gardens

A park or garden of special architectural or historic interest. Designated by English Heritage and graded I, II* or II with grade I being the highest.

Human scale

The use within development of elements which relate well in size to an individual human being and their assembly in a way which makes people feel comfortable rather than overwhelmed. See also Scale.

I

In-curtilage parking

Parking within a building's site boundary, rather than on public streets or spaces.

Infill development

The development of a relatively small gap between existing buildings.

Infrastructure

Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

Intensification

See Urban intensification.

Glossary

L

Landmark

A building or structure that stands out from its background by virtue of height, size, archaeology or other aspect of heritage and design. Landmarks assist in wayfinding by creating distinct visual orientation points and providing a sense of location to the observer within the larger townscape. They may also act as markers of other elements, often unintentionally.

Layout

The way buildings, routes and open spaces are placed in relation to each other.

Legibility

The degree to which a place can be easily understood, remembered, described and above all moved through.

Listed Building

A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II* or II with grade I being the highest. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building, and any buildings or permanent structures (e.g. wells within its curtilage). English Heritage is responsible for designating buildings for listing in England. Statutory listed buildings are those designated under the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as being of special architectural or historic interest.

Local distinctiveness

The positive features of a place and its communities which contribute to its special character and sense of place.

Local Listing

Locally important building valued for contribution to local scene or for local historical situations but not meriting listed building status. Also known as a Building of Local Importance.

Local Nature Reserve

Non-statutory habitats of local significance designated by local authorities where protection and public understanding of nature conservation is encouraged. See also Site of Nature Conservation Importance.

Local Plan

The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community.

Local Planning Authority

The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area.

Local road

In a functional road hierarchy, a local road provides direct access to adjacent lands and serves neighbourhood travel to and from distributor or arterial roads.

London Plan

The London Plan is the name given to the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy for London covering a twenty year period. It has been produced to provide a strategic framework for the London Boroughs' Local Plans.

M

Maisonette

A dwelling unit of more than one storey in a building of more than two storeys. Can also refer to a single storey unit (flat) in a two storey semi-detached house-style building.

Massing

The combined effect of the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings. Also known as bulk.

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)

Land which is predominantly open in character and which has significance due to its size and catchment area. There is a presumption against inappropriate development within Metropolitan Open Land.

Microclimate

A local atmospheric zone in which the climate differs from the surrounding area. The zone may be as small as a few square metres or as large as many square kilometres. Microclimates may result from proximity to water bodies which may cool the local atmosphere, and proximity to brick, concrete and asphalt which absorb the sun's energy and heat the local atmosphere. Tall buildings create microclimates by overshadowing large areas and by channelling strong winds to ground level.

Mixed use

The provision of a mix of complementary uses, such as residential, community and leisure uses within a building, on a site or within a particular area. 'Horizontal' mixed uses are side by side, usually in different buildings. 'Vertical' mixed uses are on different floors of the same building.

Movement

People and vehicles going to and passing through buildings and spaces.

N

Natural surveillance

The discouragement of crime and anti-social behaviour by the presence of activity in streets and spaces and overlooking from buildings adjacent to streets and spaces. Natural surveillance limits the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour by taking steps to increase the perception that potential offenders can be seen. Also known as passive surveillance.

Node

Nodes are points of intensive activity, which provide a focus to public life, such as a market place or community centre, and are usually created at the convergence of important paths. Nodes are often signified by distinctive urban design characteristics relative to the surrounding area or district, such as the inclusion of a landmark building.

Noise

Noise is unwanted or nuisance sound.

Glossary

O

Open space

All space of public value, including not just land but also areas of water, which offer important opportunities for, for example, recreation and can act as a visual amenity. It excludes individual private gardens, which do not serve a wider open space function, yards, roads and car parks.

P

Passive surveillance

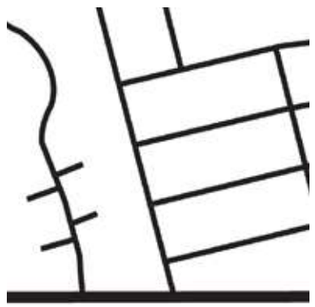
see Natural surveillance.

Perimeter block

An urban block which is built up on all sides surrounding a central space. It may contain a mixture of uses, with commercial or retail on the ground floor. Perimeter blocks are common to European cities and allow very high densities to be achieved without recourse to tall buildings.

Permeability

Permeability describes the extent to which urban forms permit (or restrict) movement of people or vehicles within, across and around an area. Permeability is generally considered a positive attribute of a place, as it permits ease of movement and avoids severing neighbourhoods. However, movement in a highly permeable area may not always be pleasant, convenient and safe. Urban forms which lack permeability, e.g. those severed by arterial roads, or with many long cul-de-sacs, are considered to discourage movement on foot and encourage longer journeys by car. Also known as Connectivity.



Place

The result of a complex interplay of different elements, including the cultural and social factors which have combined to create identity, the physical or built elements that make up the place, and the people associated with it through memories, association and activity.

Place-making

Recognising the distinctiveness of individual locations in plans, policies and proposals, and responding accordingly.

Plot

Land occupied by a building and its external private space.

Public art

Permanent or temporary physical works of art visible to the general public, whether part of the building or free-standing: can include sculpture, lighting effects, street furniture, paving, railings and signs.

Public Open Space

Urban space, designated by a council, where public access may or may not be formally established, but which fulfils or can fulfil a recreational or non-recreational role (for example, amenity, ecological, educational, social or cultural usages).

Public realm

The parts of a village, town or city that are available, without charge, for everyone to use, including streets, squares and parks.

Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTALs)

Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTALs) are claimed to be a detailed and accurate measure of the accessibility of any point to the public transport network, taking into account walk access time and service availability. The method is essentially a way of measuring the density of the public transport network at any location.

R

Regeneration

The economic, social and environmental renewal and improvement of rural and urban areas.

Ribbon development

Development, usually residential, extending along one or both sides of a road but not extended in depth.

Glossary

S

Scale

The impression of a building when seen in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building or its detailing, particularly as experienced in relation to the size of a person. Sometimes it is the total dimensions of a building which give it its sense of scale, at other times it is the size of the elements and the way they combine. See also Human scale.

Scheduled Ancient Monument

Nationally important monuments, usually archaeological remains, that enjoy greater protection against inappropriate development through the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

Section

A drawing showing a slice through a building or site.

Setback

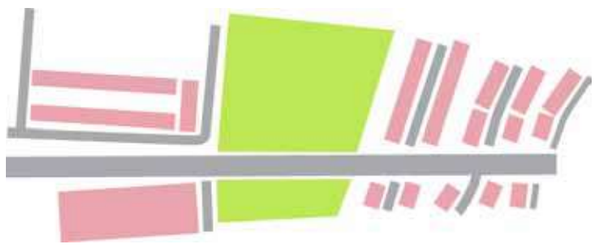
The distance which a building or other structure is set back from a street or road, or the space between a building or other structure and its plot boundary with the highway.

Settlement pattern

The distinctive way that routes, spaces and buildings are laid out in a particular place.

Severance

The separation and division of areas and communities by, usually, linear barriers to movement such as waterways, railways and major roads. May be as much perceptual as physical and often come to delimit and define new areas and communities.



Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI)

Locally important sites of nature conservation adopted by local authorities for planning purposes. Alternatively Site of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC). See also Local Nature Reserve).

Street furniture

Structures in and adjacent to the highway which contribute to the street scene, such as bus shelters, litter bins, seating lighting, railings and signs. May cause ‘clutter’.

SUDS

Sustainable (Urban) Drainage Systems, e.g. swales, planted filter strips and permeable paving.

Superstore

A self-service store selling mainly food, or food and non-food goods, usually of more than 2,500 square metres (0.25ha) of trading floor space, with a large car park.

Sustainable communities

Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.

Sustainable development

Defined by the Brundtland Commission (1987) as “Development that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to achieve their own needs and aspirations”.

T

Tall building

Buildings which are significantly taller than their neighbours and/or which recognisably change the skyline. There is no general minimum height for defining a tall building though such a height may be proposed for a specific area or context.

Topography

A description, or visual representation on a map, of natural surface features of a region, often expressed in contours.

Townscape

The general appearance of a built-up area, from a street to a town or a city.

Transect

A broad, generalised section through an urban area intended to show the range of building heights and their relationship to open spaces, routes and topography.

Typology

Generally, classification according to type. In the urban context, the classification of characteristics commonly found in buildings and urban places, according to their association with different categories, such as architectural style, period of development, intensity of development, street and block layout, use and movement structure.

U

Urban Design Framework

A document which informs the preparation of development plan policies, or sets out in detail how they are to be implemented in a particular area where there is a need to control, guide and promote change. Urban design frameworks are also called a variety of other names, including Urban Design Strategies, Area Development Frameworks, Spatial Masterplans, and Planning & Urban Design Frameworks.

Urban design

The collaborative and multi-disciplinary practice of making places. Urban design involves the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces and landscapes, in villages, towns and cities, and the establishment of frameworks and processes which facilitate successful development.

Urban form

Urban form is the physical expression of urban design and It influences the pattern of uses, activity and movement in a place, and the experiences of those who visit, live or work there. The most important aspects of form together define the overall layout of the place (in terms of its routes and building blocks), its scale (in terms of building height and massing), its appearance (as expressed in details and use of materials), and its landscape (including all the public realm, built and green spaces).

Urban fringe

The urban fringe is the transitional area between urban areas and the countryside. It can provide a valuable resource for the provision of sport and recreation, particularly in situations where there is an absence of land within urban areas to meet provision.

Glossary

Urban grain

The pattern of the arrangement and size of buildings and their plots in a settlement and the degree to which an area's pattern of buildings, plots, streets and blocks and street junctions is respectively small and frequent (fine) or large and infrequent (coarse). Well represented by a figure-ground plan.





Urban intensification

Sustainable urban development which advocates compact, high density, public transport-oriented, walkable, cycle-friendly land use, including local schools, traditional streets and mixed-use development with a range of housing choices.

Urban morphology

The study of the form of villages, towns and cities, and the processes of their formation and evolution. Most common graphical tool is the figure-ground plan.

Urban regeneration

Making an urban area develop or grow strong again through means such as job creation and environmental renewal.

Urban sprawl

The uncontrolled or unplanned extension of urban areas into the countryside.

Use

The way in which land or buildings are used.

V

Vernacular

The way in which ordinary buildings were built in a particular place, making use of local styles, techniques and materials and responding to local environmental, economic and social conditions. The construction of new buildings in such a manner is known as neo-vernacular.

Vista

An distant enclosed view, such as of a hilltop seen along a narrow street.

Visual clutter

The uncoordinated arrangement of street furniture, signs and other features.

W

Ward

A small sub-area of a local authority district, used for political, administrative and statistical purposes.

Production notes

Photography

The study recognises and encourages its users to recognise the following from Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment, Landscape Institute Advice 01/11:

- Two-dimensional photographic images and photomontages alone cannot capture or reflect the complexity underlying the visual experience, and should therefore be considered an approximation of the three-dimensional visual experiences that an observer would receive in the field;
- As part of a technical process, impact assessment and considered judgements using photographs and/or photomontages can only be reached by way of a visit to the location from which the photographs were taken.

The vast majority of the photographic images used in this study were produced specifically for it. With a few exceptions, mostly in the Urban Types section, the images attempt to conform to a set of conventions, with the intention of replicating, as far as is reasonably possible in a two-dimensional representation, the visual experience of the observer:

- The images are made in landscape/horizontal format
- The camera is positioned at the eye level of an adult pedestrian of average height
- The camera is kept level and not tilted upwards or downwards
- The human field of visual awareness is approximated by using a moderate wide-angle lens (equivalent to 28mm focal length on 35mm film format)
- The images are made in bright and dry weather conditions
- The images are as far as possible neutral representations of their subjects

Most of the images are street scenes and are composed to include as much relevant information as possible, such as use, building type, boundary treatment, street condition, activity, parking, street furniture and clutter, green space and vegetation, scale, height and massing and architectural detailing and materials, in short, as many aspects of urban form and quality as can be reasonably reproduced in one summary image.

Where necessary digital manipulation has been used in order to improve detail in the shadows and highlights, as in the example below.



Before



After

Cartography

In most cases the maps used in this study are based upon an enhanced form of figure ground plan, with added green open space, waterways and bodies and roads and railway lines. In a few cases, where more appropriate, they are based upon a similarly enhanced form of block pattern plan. In some cases users of the study will find it useful to use the maps in conjunction with existing street and Ordnance Survey maps to provide orientation and additional information.

The uses shown are the dominant and/or ground floor uses. In the traditional town centres/high streets and shopping parades this use is for the most part retail, but it may be reasonably expected that upper floor uses are commercial (office) and/or residential (flats).

Areas are shown as mixed use where there is a significant number of storeys of upper floor residential use above commercial and/or retail lower floor uses as in many urban type 5 (Urban Renaissance) developments.

Residential is shown as unshaded grey building footprint in the figure ground plan.

All base maps and aerial views: Crown copyright. All rights reserved. London Borough of Hounslow 100019263 2014.

Uses

For the purposes of this study:

- Retail includes hotels, since they generate similar kinds and degrees of public realm activity as pubs and restaurants
- Community covers private recreation and large institutional and utility uses such as HMP Feltham and Mogden Sewage Works
- Mixed use describes developments where there is a significant number of storeys of upper floor residential use above commercial and/or retail lower floor uses as in many urban type 5 (Urban Renaissance) developments.
- Opportunity Sites are primarily vacant or derelict brownfield sites observed during the survey and do not necessarily coincide with or relate to the Local Plan Site Allocations

Production notes

Periodisation

For the purposes of this study the date ranges of the periods used are as follows:

- Georgian - early 18th century to 1830s
- Victorian - 1830s to 1900
- Edwardian - 1900 to 1910
- Prewar - 1900 to mid 1910s
- Interwar - mid 1910s to 1940
- Early postwar - 1945 to 1960
- Late postwar - 1960 to 1980
- Late 20th century - 1980 to 2000
- Early 21st century - 2000 to present

Developments which were planned in the late 1930s but were not completed until the late 1940s, due to the hiatus in construction during World War Two, are periodised as transwar.

Resources

This document and other related material can be found on the London Borough of Hounslow Environment and Planning web pages, at

http://www.hounslow.gov.uk/index/environment_and_planning.htm

The Greater London-wide London Plan can be found at

https://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/london-plan

and the Shaping Neighourhoods: Character and Context SPG can be found at

https://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/publications/shaping-neighbourhoods-character-and-context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) can be found at

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

By Design can be found at

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/urban-design-in-the-planning-system-towards-better-practice

The Urban Design Compendium can be found at

http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/urban-design-compendium?page_id=&page=1

Roles and responsibilities

The study was instigated by principal planning officer Adrian Lee, design and conservation officer Maggie Urquhart and urban design project officer Rachel Bagenal. It was produced in-house by urban design project officers Neil Double and Sam Appleby, with history and heritage assets contributions from Maggie Urquhart, cartographic support from GIS officer Vinesh Govind and general assistance from planning officer Hannah Butterfield. The later stages of the study, particularly with regard to liaison with Development Management, were project-managed by interim planning policy team leader Michael Thornton.

Historic images were provided by James Marshall and his team at Hounslow Library Local Studies Service.

Title page photographs are by Sam Appleby, except Section 3: Study Areas: Hanworth by Maggie Urquhart.

© London Borough of Hounslow August 2014

London Borough
of Hounslow