

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

KENSINGTON PALACE

Conservation Area
Proposals Statement





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***Foreword by the Chairman,
Planning and Conservation
Committee***

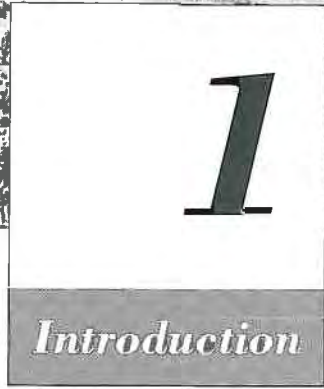
As the Royal Borough's Unitary Development Plan acknowledges, London boasts some of the finest buildings and townscapes anywhere in the world. Many parts of the Borough are special in some ways - the thirty-three Conservation Areas are witness to this - but the part around Kensington Palace and contained within this Conservation Area is undoubtedly of the first rank.

Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park offer unrivalled opportunities for walking, riding and general refreshment; the grand houses of Kensington Palace Gardens match with Kensington Palace in views from the Park; while in the streets behind, elegant stucco terraces are maintained by dedicated residents, backed up by special planning powers exercised by the Council.

This Statement, the latest in a series, assesses the historic context and architectural character of this Area so as to assist the Council in its planning functions, but also in order to underline the need for everyone to co-operate to make sure that its character and appearance is preserved, even enhanced.

I hope that this Proposals Statement is both interesting and useful to everyone with any involvement in this special part of London.

Councillor Desmond Harney OBE



The Kensington skyline and the great houses form the backdrop to Kip's view of Beaufort House

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 obliges local authorities to determine which parts of their areas are of special architectural or historic interest and to designate them as conservation areas. Once designated, Councils are further obliged (Section 71) to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement, to present such proposals for consideration at a public meeting in the Area and to have regard to any views expressed at the meeting concerning such proposals. The Public Meeting to consider this Statement was held in the Small Hall, Kensington Town Hall on 15 February 1996.

It is the general duty of the Council, in the exercise of its planning functions, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of its conservation areas (Section 72).

PLANNING BACKGROUND

The Council is committed by its Unitary Development Plan to the preparation of Proposals Statements for conservation areas. The Plan contains general policies governing the control of development, including policies and standards regarding conservation, design and related matters. Its overall aim is "to maintain and enhance the character and function of the Royal Borough as a residential area and to ensure its continuing role within the metropolitan area as an attractive place in which to live and work". Policies include presumptions against the loss of permanent residential accommodation, the encroachment of inappropriate business activities and the loss of local services which support residential character. Therefore underlying Conservation Area Proposals Statements is a continued resistance to any change of use from residential use in the Area and also to any change which damages residential amenity, for example, extra traffic generation.

The Plan provides that "each Statement identifies the characteristics which contribute to the special nature of the conservation area and includes guidance which ensures its preservation and enhancement. Guidelines for the design of new building work (including extensions and alterations to existing properties), as well as proposals for enhancement work to be carried out by the Council, are also included."

The Plan also indicates that "Statements will set out detailed guidance to interpret and elaborate on development control policies set out in this plan. Such detailed guidance will be applied to all relevant planning applications." Comments in Statements are therefore subsidiary to and should be read in the light of the Council's general restrictive policies as set out in the Unitary Development Plan.

This document presents proposals for the preservation or enhancement of Kensington Palace Conservation Area.

THE PURPOSE AND FORMAT OF THE PROPOSALS STATEMENT

Proposals Statements have three purposes:

1. To identify the particular characteristics of the Area which justify its designation as a conservation area and which should be preserved or enhanced.
2. To provide guidance in respect of any proposed changes:
 - (a) to owners on appropriate action to preserve and enhance their buildings, including advice on changes for which no planning application is required;
 - (b) on the Council's likely response to applications for planning permission.
3. To identify works of improvement, enhancement or other initiatives which could be undertaken by the Council or other agencies.

THE EXTENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

Kensington Palace Conservation Area owes its origin to the designation in 1971 of the Palace itself, its gardens, Kensington Palace Gardens and the terraces around Brunswick Gardens. The late Victorian terraces in Vicarage Gate and Mall Chambers were added in 1978 and 1981 respectively. In 1985 a major additional designation extended the Area south to Kensington High Street. There were further small extensions to the north west of the Area in 1990 and 1995.

With a minor exception, the Conservation Area is bounded by the following Borough conservation areas; Pembridge to the north west, Kensington to the west, and Kensington Square, Kensington Court and De Vere to the south. The Borough boundary with the City of Westminster defines its eastern and north eastern edge: north of Bayswater Road lies part of Westminster's Bayswater Conservation Area.

PROCEDURE

This Proposals Statement for Kensington Palace Conservation Area has been prepared under the direction of Mr French, Executive Director of Planning and Conservation, by the Council's consultants, McCoy Associates, in liaison with the Kensington Society, Royal Agencies, local residents groups and interested parties.

The Statement was written, illustrated and designed by Geoffrey Huntingford BSc(Hons) MRTPI.

Except where credited, historical maps and illustrations were produced by the Council's photographers from originals kindly made available by Kensington Local Studies Library. The assistance of the Council's Local Studies Librarians is gratefully acknowledged.

The map on the cover is an extract from Starling's map of 1822.

THIS PROPOSALS STATEMENT WAS ADOPTED BY THE PLANNING AND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE ON 22 APRIL 1996.

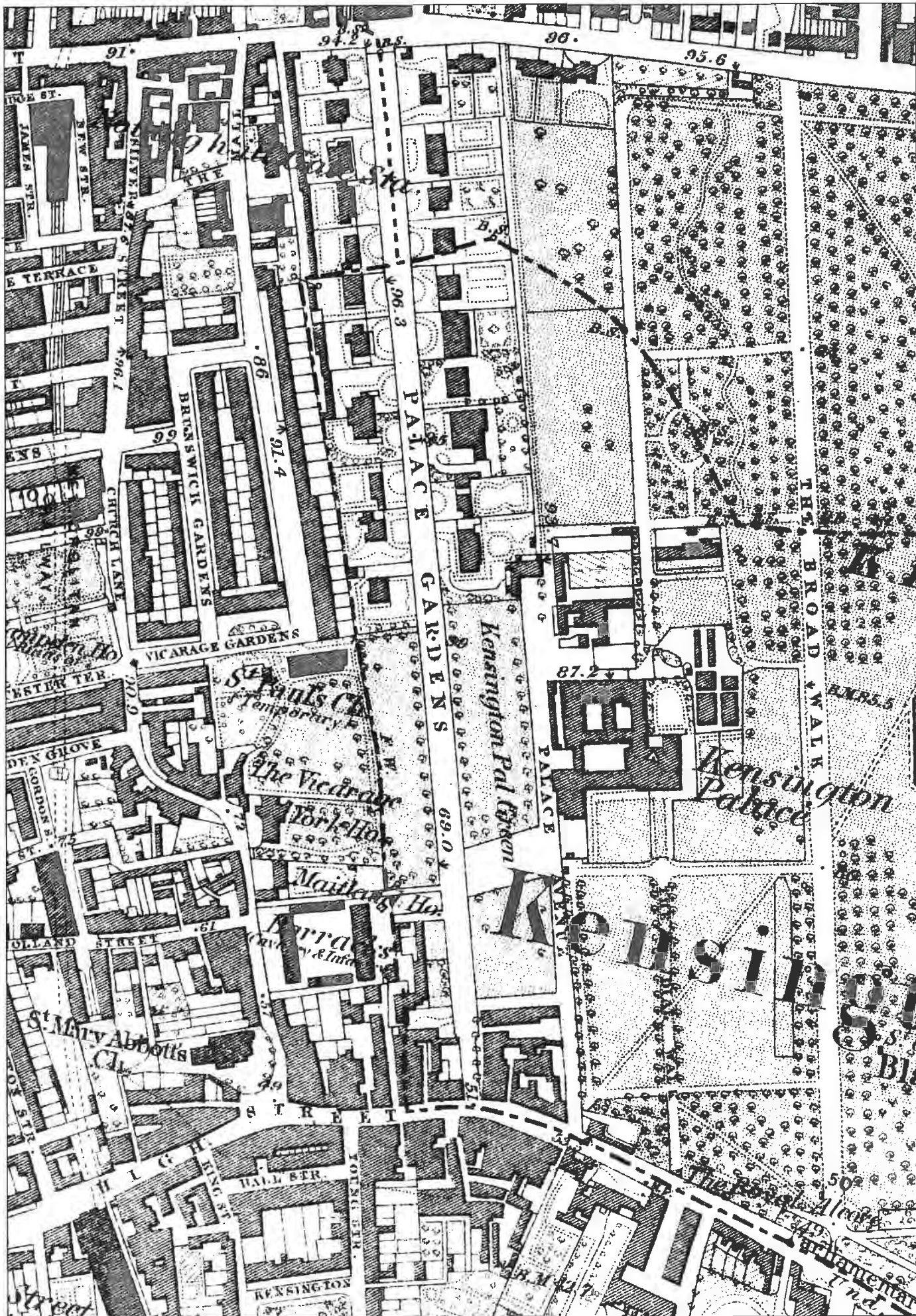
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2 Palace Green



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Kensington Palace Conservation Area covers a considerable area at the foot of the favoured south and west slopes of Campden Hill, five miles (eight kilometres) west of the City of London. Its development began with two tiny medieval settlements astride the old Roman roads from London to the west, now known as Notting Hill Gate and Kensington High Street. Connecting roads running north and south were scarce in this location: one of the most important joined Kensington with its smaller neighbour on Notting Hill Gate and survives as Kensington Church Street.

From Elizabethan times the area had a reputation as a healthy place to

live, with spas and extensive market and nursery gardens. With its pleasant position and proximity to London, Kensington gradually became popular with those who wished to get away from the thickly-populated and occasionally plague-ridden city. Proclamations from 1580 onwards and throughout the next century prohibited all new buildings within specified distances of London but these proved hard to enforce. Pressure for accommodation was met by a continuous yet modest expansion of Kensington village. It was not until Thomas Young's initiative in laying out what is now Kensington Square that speculative developments began to change the face of the area.



KENSINGTON PALACE

An indication of the popularity of Campden Hill can be found in its selection as the site for several substantial houses. The largest of these were Holland House, originally built for Sir Walter Cope in 1605; Campden House, erected or substantially extended by Sir Baptist Hicks in 1612; and, east of Church Street, a smaller house for Sir John Coppin again dating from around 1605 in which the architect John Thorpe may have had a hand. Nothing remains visible of this house with its central hall and symmetrical plan, which passed to Sir Heneage Finch in 1619 and thence to the Earls of Nottingham as Nottingham House.

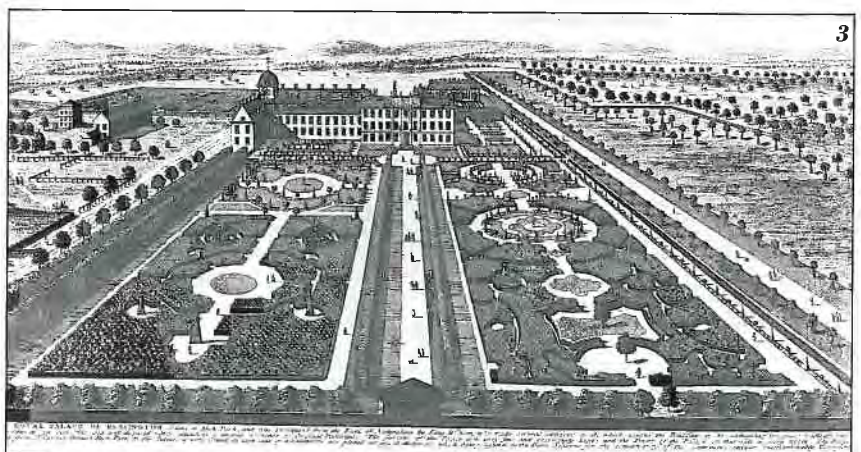
The desirability of the area received a tremendous boost when Nottingham House, already enlarged and improved by Wren, was purchased as a country seat by William III in 1689. Plans were immediately drawn up for its enlargement by the Office of Works under Wren, yet while these proposals were being implemented Queen Mary decided that further extensions were required. After her death in 1694, William made the new house his principal residence. Despite the ingeniously dignified proposals of the Office of Works, what was later to be known as Kensington Palace remained an irregular grouping of structures round three courtyards through the reigns of Anne and George I. "Never did a powerful monarch of the age of Louis XIV build a less ostentatious residence" (Pevsner, who points to the closest parallel in William's own retreat, Het Loo, in the Netherlands).

The most famous view of the Palace is from the south, which takes in some of the earliest work commissioned by William and Mary. The long range to the south of Clock Court dates from around 1690, while the principal south front and the King's Gallery was contrived in 1695. Both parts of this facade exude a quiet dignity in the restrained use of red and brown brick and the relative lack of ornament. Round on the east front, the most prominent feature is the pedimented central bay, part of a more Palladian style of work carried out in 1718-26 under Benson, Wren's successor at the Office of Works. Inside the Palace can be found delightful suites of rooms, notably Queen Mary's apartments with their many contemporary fittings, and the King's, the decoration of which represents one of Kent's earliest commissions. More detailed information on the history and architecture of the Palace can be found in the volumes listed at the end of this chapter, except that the Palace is not yet covered by the Survey of London.

(facing page) An extract from the Ordnance Survey of 1878

2 The east front of Kensington Palace

3 Kip's View of Kensington Palace



THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

By the time Queen Victoria was born in Kensington Palace in 1819 the population of Kensington had reached 12,000. Financial uncertainty around 1825 severely restricted the plans of various developers, schemes by Lord Holland and JWLadbroke elsewhere in the district being affected. However, the population of Kensington doubled during Queen Victoria's childhood and at her death in 1901 there were 176,000 resident in the parish. While some of the population explosion can be credited to better living conditions, higher birth rates and increased life expectancy, the great majority of the increase, four-fifths of the 50,000 in the 1860s for example, came from migration. In Kensington's case this was generally provided by people moving "upward and outward", those with increased wealth looking for an attractive home, in contrast to the "downwards and inwards" migration of the London revealed by Mayhew and Barnardo. The development of the elegant stucco terraces of Kensington Palace Conservation Area on the Sheffield House and Glebe Estates provides a good example of the speculative builder at work.

THE SHEFFIELD HOUSE AND GLEBE ESTATES

Sheffield House stood on the east side of Kensington Church Street opposite Sheffield Terrace: its grounds occupied the strip east to where Brunswick Gardens is now. An earlier house on the site had been part of Sir Walter Cope's holdings: he sold it to Sir George Coppin who in turn sold it on in 1613, presumably when he moved into

the new house later to become Kensington Palace. The mansion was eventually sold or leased to a local builder and a bricklayer in 1744, and was demolished and its grounds used as a brickfield. By 1798 the house had been rebuilt by Thomas Robinson: after his death in 1810 the estate found its way to his nephew, Alexander Ramsay Robinson, who also owned the area now occupied by Bedford Gardens, Campden Street, Peel Street and Edge Street immediately before they were developed. It was his eldest son, another Thomas, who entered into agreements for the final demolition of Sheffield House and the development of the Estate and the adjoining Glebe.

The Glebe occupied the site of Palace Gardens Terrace, Strathmore Gardens and Vicarage Gate. It had belonged to successive vicars of Kensington from at least 1260 and its thirteen acres corresponded quite closely to the half a virgate mentioned in the Domesday Book as the priest's holding in Kensington. Until 1877 the vicarage stood where Vicarage Gate joins Kensington Church Street today: it was demolished to make way for the new road, which never superseded the old, narrow and winding Church Street as many hoped it would. The replacement vicarage was a red-brick house where Hamilton House now stands.

As owner of Sheffield House and leaseholder of the Glebe, Thomas Robinson arranged in 1853 with Archdeacon Sinclair, the vicar of St Mary Abbots, to surrender his lease in return for an agreement to develop both holdings. A second agreement in April 1854 granted Robinson a new lease

Palace Gardens Terrace in 1906



of ninety-nine years from March 1854 over the houses he would erect on glebe land. House elevations were to be approved by the architect of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, though there is no evidence that any such approval was sought; indeed, the whole agreement was not put to the Commissioners or the Bishop of London and a more formal agreement followed in 1860.

The layout of the development was probably designed by the architect David Brandon who submitted the applications for over three thousand feet of sewers to serve it. No single architect controlled the appearance of the project, however, so that while the resulting terraced houses are almost entirely of stucco with extensive ornament, there is considerable variety in elevational treatment employed by the various builders and developers. William Lloyd Edwards of Paddington, for example, uses classical ornament in unusual ways, most clearly seen in the doorcases to Inverness Gardens and related properties where Doric friezes sit on Ionic columns and narrow windows are contrived in niches. Elsewhere it is possible to detect stylistic similarities with schemes in other parts of Kensington. The prolific local builder, Jeremiah Little, was responsible, amongst others, for 60-102 Palace Gardens Terrace which are similar to 9-55 Argyll Road built on the Phillimore Estate at roughly the same time. The projecting two-storey bays of the terraces in Strathmore Gardens he constructed between 1868 and 1870 have a strong resemblance to those in Campden

Hill Gardens erected at the end of his career and completed by his son, Alfred, after his death in 1873.

Building began on the site of Sheffield House, Robinson taking the unusual course of selling most of the land to Jeremiah Little who leased much of it to his sons, Henry and William. Courtland Terrace, now 35-49 Brunswick Gardens with 55A Palace Gardens Terrace, were erected by Little under contract to Robinson in 1856. Melon Place was also laid out at this time. The last houses to be built in the first stage of development were 38-46 Brunswick Gardens and 35-43 Palace Gardens Terrace: the 1854 agreement had reserved a space for a permanent church to replace the temporary St Paul's in Vicarage Gate if arrangements could be made in time. These provisions were not in place when Robinson required the land for development, and he obtained the lease by default in 1863.

ST PAUL'S CHURCH, VICARAGE GATE

Archdeacon John Sinclair, MA FRSE (1797-1875), the vicar of St Mary Abbots from 1842 until his death, played a major part in the development of Kensington during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Not only was he the signatory to the various building agreements concerning glebe land, but he was a key player in the decisions resulting in the demolition of the old church and its replacement with one of London's finest parish churches. He also helped to create the chapel-of-ease, St Paul's, which was first erected as a "tin tabernacle" of corrugated galvanised iron in 1855 within the grounds of his vicarage at the southern end of Palace Gardens Terrace.

Thirty years later a permanent replacement was urgently required as the iron church had deteriorated. The then incumbent, the Hon Edward Carr Glyn, recognised that the site was not ideal but that the steep rise in land values to which glebe developments had contributed effectively ruled out any alternative. The land was given to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1886, and the designs of Arthur Baker, a Kensington resident and a former assistant to Sir George Gilbert Scott, were selected after a limited competition. A modified scheme was consecrated in January 1889. The church, of brick with stone dressings under a tiled roof with a prominent copper fleche, was badly damaged in the Second World War and demolished.

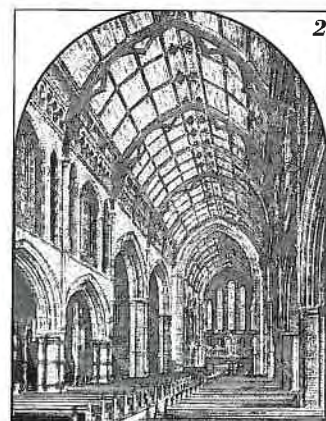


1 Archdeacon Sinclair

2,3 St Paul's Church

4 "Courtland Terrace"

5 5 and 7 Palace Gardens Terrace



(Survey of London)



(Survey of London)





MILLIONAIRES' ROW

"Millionaires' Row" was a popular name for Kensington Palace Gardens, which scheme arose from the recommendation by a Treasury Committee in the late 1830s that there should be an extensive reorganisation of the Royal Gardens, financed by letting some of the land for building. In 1841 a swathe of land which had long formed part of Kensington Palace was transferred to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, predecessors of the Crown Estate Commissioners who are still the ground landlords today. The Commissioners' architects, Thomas Chawner and James Pennethorne, prepared a plan for a broad avenue lined with large detached houses, in an exclusive low-density development to attract suitable neighbours for the Palace. The broad avenue had a width of 70 feet (21.3m) with the requirement that houses should be set back behind a building line a further 60 feet (18.3m) on either side. The leases required the erection of low walls with railings and pairs of entrance gates to retain security without the loss of spacious views.

and replaced by flats by R Seifert and Partners in 1961). Blasfield eventually built three more, of which only no. 24, also by Owen Jones, survives. It is impossible to say how much of this house remains as no original drawings or contemporary illustrations survive and the house was still incomplete at Blasfield's bankruptcy in 1847. Blasfield's two other houses, Italianate villas close to the north gates which he provided at his own expense, were demolished to make way for the Czech Embassy of 1968-69.

Blasfield never intended that he would undertake the entire development himself but initially he was no more successful than the Commissioners in finding other builders. His most notable success was in persuading the building contractors Grissell and Peto to take the plots now occupied by nos. 12, 18, 19 and 20. This firm was at the time a principal contractor for the New Palace of Westminster: they had been responsible for the Reform Club in Pall Mall and it was to the architect of both these schemes, Charles Barry, that they turned. The designs for all four houses were described as "emanating from Mr Barry" which with the attribution of no. 12 to Robert Richardson Banks, a Barry pupil and the architect in charge of Barry's office, suggests that Charles Barry himself was not principally involved. No. 12 itself is in the Italian palazzo style used by Barry at the Reform Club and with which he sounded the death-knell of the Greek Revival style. It was occupied by Sir Samuel Morton Peto who went on to build no. 12A for himself at great expense in 1863-65 to designs by James Murray, not long before the bankruptcy of the firm. No. 12 survives in remarkably good condition, including the superb Moorish-style billiard room added with other alterations by Wyatt in 1864. No. 20 dates from 1845-46 with exterior alterations in 1857-58 while nos. 18 and 19 make a successful composition of two semi-

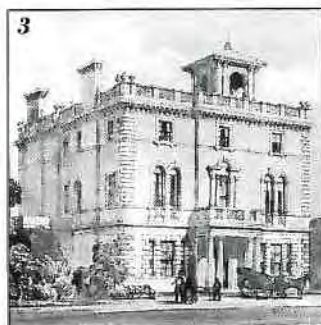
1 The north entrance to Kensington Palace Gardens, engraved in 1846

2 8 Kensington Palace Gardens, since demolished

3 26 Kensington Palace Gardens, since demolished, in 1853



The Commissioners were ready to advertise the plots by 1842, but found the response very poor. Their terms were too high, the only acceptable offers being for minor plots along Bayswater Road where semi-detached houses were planned. Five houses were eventually built here by S W Strickland of Bayswater, the sole survivors being nos. 4 and 5.

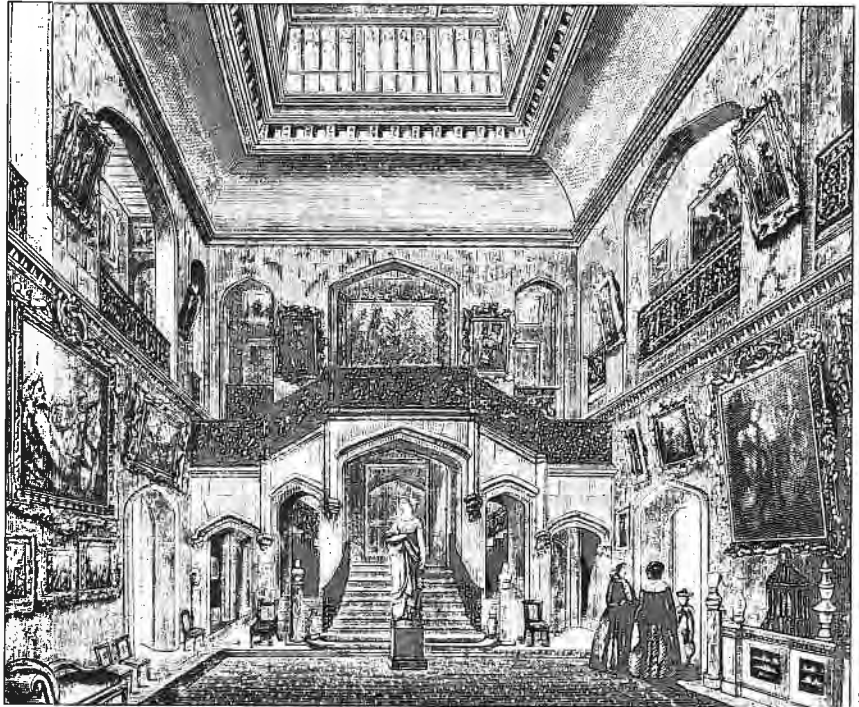


The Commissioners were rescued by John Marriot Blasfield, a manufacturer of inlaid and tessellated pavements in Blackfriars who had been a sculptor with the Coades and who bought the Coade Stone moulds and models after the business closed down around 1836. He took on the sites now occupied by nos. 6-14 and 16-26 in 1843. Before the year was out he had begun his first house (no. 8, designed by Owen Jones

detached properties of different sizes. Grissell and Peto were able to use surplus stone from the Palace of Westminster in their construction.

In order of construction the remaining houses built on Blashfield's land were:

- 6 & 7 by Wyatt and Brandon in 1844-45.
- 21 by Charles Frederick Oldfield in 1845-46.
- 16 by Wyatt and Brandon in 1846-47 with alterations by Halsey Ricardo in 1879 (his first commission) and 1883.
- 10 by Philip Hardwick in 1846-48 with considerable alteration and extension, most obviously the addition of a mansard roof and the rendering of the exterior in 1896.
- 14 by Thomas Cubitt in 1850-51 with considerable extension and alteration in 1887 and exterior remodelling in 1908.
- 22 by Oldfield in 1851-53.
- 13 by C J Richardson in 1851-54 for the Earl of Harrington who insisted on the Gothic style. The roomy but plain interiors were remodelled in 1924.
- 9 by Sydney Smirke in 1852-54.
- 11 by Sydney Smirke in 1852-54 with a roof of 1874 following a fire. Interiors by Alfred Stevens and later by Walter Crane have been lost. The original front railings by Wyatt and Brandon are well preserved.
- 15 by James Knowles senior in 1854 for the lace manufacturer and philanthropist George Moore, who confessed he felt mortified at the extravagance, ostentation and "vain show" of it.
- 15B was originally the stable block to no. 15: it was converted into a separate house in 1937-38.
- 15A by David Brandon in 1854-56.



(Survey of London)

The interior of 13 Kensington Palace Gardens in 1870

ing leases to which he agreed. Thus seven large detached houses were built between 1903 and 1912: 7-10 Palace Green by William Willett and nos. 4-6 to the south by Holloway Brothers. Various architects were involved but the consistent use of red brick with Portland stone dressings in deference to the Palace creates a greater sense of uniformity than is found in the Victorian developments.

Further south again stands no. 2, designed and built for W M Thackeray between 1860-62: he died here in 1863. It is said that Thackeray had a major hand in its design and that its early use of red brick was an important precursor. The plans were however the work of Frederick Hering and contemporary interest in the design was muted.

Further south again at no. 1 is the house Philip Webb designed for the young George Howard, later 9th Earl of Carlisle, and built between 1869 and 1870. The Commissioner's architect rejected the original design though Webb regarded as a compliment the authorities' inability to identify the stylistic sources of his design. Webb eventually compromised and introduced a certain amount of stonework in the elevations. The interiors were decorated to designs by Webb and by artists associated with William Morris, including Walter Crane and Edward Burne-Jones. During the First World War it was used as a furniture store by Barkers and narrowly escaped demolition in 1922. Significant external alterations and the removal of the interior followed its conversion to flats in the late Fifties.

Trees were first planted in the avenue around 1870. Kensington Palace and most of Kensington Palace Gardens were for a long time within the "Liberty of the City of Westminster". An old boundary stone can be seen by the left-hand entrance to no. 22.

Land to the south of these villas remained undeveloped for 50 years, not because the Commissioners' fund-raising objectives had been achieved but apparently to comply with Queen Victoria's wish that building should not continue opposite the Palace. Not long after his accession, Edward VII was sounded for his views on further build-



1 *Properties on Kensington Church Street opposite St Mary Abbots, from a mid-Victorian photograph*

2 *Winchester Court*

3 *26-40 Kensington High Street*

THE SOUTH WESTERN CORNER

While the Victorian developments of Kensington Palace Gardens and the Sheffield and Glebe estates have remained with generally little alteration since their inception, the earliest buildings in the Area, those associated with the frontages to what are now Kensington's High Street and Church Street, have been redeveloped, sometimes more than once. Commercial pressure is in part to blame, frontage properties extending to capitalise on enhanced land values: the other culprit is London's traffic, though the motor car is not necessarily the 'villain of the piece', as the first highway widening scheme in the vicinity involved the setting-back of what is now the Barkers frontage in 1868-71.

At this time, the facing frontage now within Kensington Palace Conservation Area was the usual mixture of shops and public houses concealing a warren of short closes, some with small dwellings crammed onto tiny plots. The frontage returned up Church Street with a terrace, of which no. 12 may be the only, though much altered, survivor. This tightly-knit enclave was isolated from its neighbours by the Palace kitchen garden and by houses and the old Barracks on Palace Green.

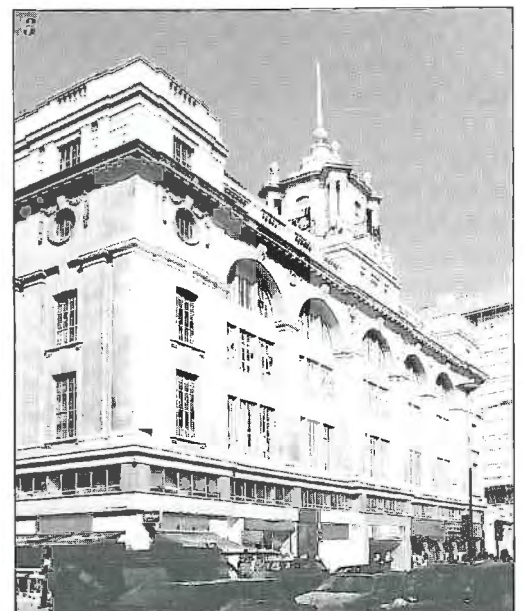
As the century progressed, more and more land was built upon. Clarence Mews, serving a row of houses and a Wesleyan Chapel off the High Street, was punched through to Church Street where Old Court Place emerges today. The kitchen garden gave way

to new Barracks in 1856-58, probably to designs by Colonel Frederick Chapman, and it was a requirement that the elevations were to be "in a plain but good style of architecture as shall not ... be unsightly or in any use detrimental to the houses on each side of [Palace Green]". The Barracks ceased operation in 1972 and Lancer Square now stands on the site.

There have been considerable changes since the turn of the century. Old Court Mansions, designed by Philip Pilditch and erected for Barkers on the north side of the High Street, marks the beginning of the consolidation of these commercial frontages into larger single blocks following the wholesale widening of the High Street in 1902-5. This also led to the formation of the southern area of Old Court Place linking to Clarence Mews, graced with the Fire Station of 1903, a typically lively design by London County Council architects under the direction of W E Riley. 26-40 Kensington High Street next to the entrance to Palace Green followed in 1924, also for John Barker and Co. Designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield and H L Cabuche, it also respected the amenities of Palace Green and "steps down" most effectively to the side.

Road widening also affected Church Street frontages: nos. 14-28 were rebuilt or possibly refronted in 1913 in a mid-18th century style and on a slightly different alignment to eradicate a relative "pinch-point" just north of St Mary Abbots Church.

Further north, three houses used to dominate the scene. Maitland House and York House stood side-by-side behind impressive forecourts: Princess Sophia, daughter



of George III, lived in York House between 1839 and 1848. Their combined gardens provide the boundaries of the present York House, designed by Durward Brown in 1904-5, and of the developments on the Church Street frontage. Here a pleasant neo-Georgian building, designed by H Austen Hall in 1924-26, contrasts strongly with Church Close, a block of flats and shops designed around a courtyard by Yates, Cook and Derbyshire in 1927-28. The Tudor style is carried through to some very convincing chimneys.

Beyond these houses, the road originally turned sharply left and dwindled into Vicarage Place in front of the third house, the Vicarage. As already recounted, this was relocated when Vicarage Gate was taken through to Robinson's developments: some properties were demolished to widen what became Church Street throughout its length, while two substantial terraces and an isolated group of brick-and-stucco houses were built, served by the new road. These alone remain, as the Church Street properties have been redeveloped a second time and two large inter-war mansion blocks flank the southern entrance to Vicarage Gate. The most noteworthy, Winchester Court with its lower floors faced in a rather aggressive black faience, was described on its construction in 1935 as "decidedly the most meritorious building to appear in this district for a long time".

THE NORTHERN BOUNDARY

A rectangular area on the south east corner at the northern end of Kensington Church Street, or Silver Street as it was then known, was already quite densely developed at the turn of the 19th century. Many varied properties fronted the main roads and The Mall running behind, with Rabbit Row and West Mall serving properties within the rectangle.

As the century progressed this relatively isolated group became surrounded by building activity with the physical connection via Palace Gardens Terrace to Robinson's schemes as well as the speculative development of Kensington Palace Gardens and, across Silver Street, the laying out of what is now Hillgate Village from around 1850 onwards. The tiny sliver of property now known as 150 Kensington Church Street is a relic of the sometimes disorganised process of land assembly prior to building. At the same time, the Baptists built a Union Chapel, later the Christian Science Church, near the junction with The Mall, to be replaced in 1921-26 to designs by T S Tait of Sir John Burnet, Tait and Lorne. It was joined in 1886-87 by the Unitarian Chapel on the site of a pleasant old house: this building has itself been replaced to designs by Morgan and Branch in 1976-77.

One of the most interesting buildings in the Area is Mall Chambers, built in 1865-68 to designs by John Murray, who was also responsible for the opulent 12A Kensington Palace Gardens for Sir Samuel Morton Peto MP. Peto's stables were nearby in Rabbit Row. Mall Chambers themselves were "improved dwellings intended for a class somewhat above ordinary mechanics and labourers" as the Building News put it at the time. Early residents included a surgeon, a stockbroker's clerk and a librarian as well as plumbers, porters and printers (Denny). Their description as listed buildings considers them "extremely well-preserved".

Opposite, Lucerne Mews was built in 1850 with charming brick details including unusual cornice-work. Another striking building of its kind is Broadwalk Court to the north of Mall Chambers, designed by Robert Atkinson and built in a restrained Deco style in 1934-5.



1 Mall Chambers

2 Lucerne Mews

3 The old house on the site of the Unitarian Church

4 The frontage to 144-148 Kensington Church Street makes a unique contribution to the character of the Area. Any future alterations would need to be sensitively designed

5 Broadwalk Court



Of the many royal and distinguished personages who lived in Kensington Palace, the following are of particular interest:

William III, Mary II and Anne made the Palace their main residence, dying here in 1702, 1694 and 1714 respectively. George I and George II also lived here, and George II's queen, Caroline of Ansbach, died in the Palace in 1737. George III did not favour the Palace and reigning monarchs have not lived here since his accession in 1760.

Princess Caroline of Brunswick (1768-1821), niece to George III, married George IV when Prince of Wales in 1795. Estranged from him, she lived in Kensington Palace from 1808 to 1814.

Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex (1773-1843) was Queen Victoria's uncle and built up a famous library at the Palace. He was President of the Society of Arts, a reformer and supporter of Caroline and a noted eccentric.

Queen Victoria was born in the Palace as the daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Kent on 24 May 1819.

Princess Louise, daughter of Queen Victoria, moved into the Palace with her husband the Marquess of Lorne, later Duke of Argyll, in 1873. She lived at the Palace until her death in 1939. An artist and sculptress, she was responsible for the Jubilee Statue of her mother presented by the people of Kensington and unveiled on the Broad Walk by Queen Victoria on 28 June 1893.

Princess Beatrice (1857-1944), Victoria's youngest and last surviving daughter, moved to Kensington Palace during the First World War. She heavily edited her mother's letters and diaries over a period of 30 years and burnt the originals.

Prince Francis of Teck and his wife Princess Mary Adelaide of Cambridge lived at the Palace between 1867 and 1870. Their daughter Princess May, later Queen Mary, wife of George V, was born in the Palace on 28 May 1867.

Her brother, Prince Alexander, was created Earl of Athlone and married Princess Alice, daughter of Leopold, Queen Victoria's fourth son. Princess Alice lived at Kensington Palace and took a great interest in Kensington, being a founder member of The Kensington Society. She died in 1981.

Her Royal Highness Princess Marina, daughter of Prince Nicholas of Greece and Denmark, mar-

ried Prince George, Duke of Kent (1902-1942) in 1934. A well-known and much-loved resident of Kensington, she helped restore the Palace after the last war and died in 1968.

Other notable residents include:

Beerbohm, Sir Max (1872-1956), artist and writer, was born at 57 Palace Gardens Terrace.

Canziani, Louise Starr (1845-1909), portrait and figure painter, lived at 3 Palace Green from 1885 until she died. Her daughter Estella (1888-1965), a talented amateur painter known as "the Bird Lady of Kensington", spent all her life at no 3.

Carlisle, George James Howard MP, 9th Earl of (1843-1911), patron of the arts, lived in the house he commissioned from Philip Webb at 1 Palace Green from 1870.

Clementi, Muzio (1752-1832), composer, lived at what is now 128 Kensington Church Street.

Harrington, Leicester Fitzgerald Charles Stanhope CB, 5th Earl of (1784-1862), owner of an extensive South Kensington estate, lived at 13 Kensington Palace Gardens from 1853. His widow Elizabeth remained there until her death in 1898.

Heywood, James MP FRS (1810-1897), library pioneer, founded the Free Public Library at 106 Notting Hill Gate which he donated as Kensington's first public library. He lived at 26 Kensington Palace Gardens from 1858 until his death.

Horsley, William (1774-1858), composer, moved to 128 Kensington Church Street in 1823. His son John Calcott Horsley (1817-1903), artist, spent his life there.

Maxwell, James Clerk (1831-79), physicist, lived at 16 Palace Gardens Terrace.

Peto, Sir Samuel Morton (1809-1889), building and railway contractor and politician, lived at 12 and 12a Kensington Palace Gardens between 1854 and 1866.

de Reuter, Baron Julius, (1852-1899), founder and director of the international news agency, lived at 18 Kensington Palace Gardens from 1868 until his death.

Thackeray, William Makepeace (1811-63), author of 'Vanity Fair', spent the last two years of his life in the house he built at 2 Palace Green.

Wyndham-Lewis, Percy (1882-1957), painter and writer, lived at 61 Palace Gardens Terrace.

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Famous residents

References

KENSINGTON PALACE

The Palace originally stood in substantial ornamental grounds. While its setting has been considerably altered, it is still set apart from its neighbours with only incidental relationships to them and to surrounding streets. Thus the restraint noted by Pevsner in the buildings is matched by the diffident role the Palace plays in its wider context. The only formal, axial views are of the south front from Dial Walk and, more diffusely, of the east front across Round Pond. In all other respects, the Palace exudes a quiet dignity from those limited viewpoints from where it can be taken in.

Dial Walk itself is a fine open space, an important transition between the built development of Kensington and the larger reaches of Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park. Neighbouring buildings on the west and south reflect the scale and colouring of Kensington Palace with the notable exception of the Royal Garden Hotel which is too massive in this analysis.

The eastern edge of the Conservation Area, and the Borough boundary, are provided by the Broad Walk which separates off a small area of Kensington Gardens within the Borough. Once again the open space is defined largely by surrounding buildings, which are of a consistent and appropriate height. The backs of the distinguished Victorian houses on the east side of Kensington Palace Gardens form a fascinating sequence though one might say that the Gardens and Kensington Palace itself would have been better served if these neighbouring houses had faced eastwards. In this context the retention of Palace Green undeveloped is of great significance to the setting of the Palace.

The north-eastern corner of the Conservation Area is formed by the Gardens frontage with Bayswater Road. Two private curtilages provide some enclosure. Black Lion Gate House is a low, unassuming property in a Lutyens style with a sweeping roof of green Westmorland slate. Further west, North and South Lodge are neat, uncomplicated designs, which look less substantial than perhaps is called for in this location. The liberal use of white cladding makes them unduly prominent and emphasises the simplicity of their design.

The remaining strip adjoining Kensington Palace Gardens consists of Perks Field and the NCP car and coach park. Perks Field

with its rough grass, pavilion and shrubs contributes to the character of the Area because of its openness and apparent extension of the park. However, its landscape qualities could be improved. While the car park no doubt fulfils a great need, its poor condition and the lack of screening are great disappointments in townscape terms.

KENSINGTON PALACE GARDENS AND PALACE GREEN

This remarkable and unique London street runs wide and straight for a little over half-a-mile between its sets of entrance gates. It succeeds in townscape terms not so much because of the wealth of large residences on display – which as an architectural banquet is somewhat “over-egged” – but because the scale of the street itself, its mature trees and the limited level of traffic provide an attractive setting for them. A considerable slope towards the northern half of the street is also useful in dividing it into two distinct portions, roughly equivalent to the early Victorian development on high level ground in the northern half and later Victorian developments and the Edwardian houses on or at the foot of the slope in the southern half.

The early Victorian scheme is nowadays unified by the road, fringed with mature plane trees and bounded by stuccoed gate piers often supporting elaborate and attractive iron railings. Behind the frontages and a fair degree of incidental planting stand the houses, all with two exceptions the originals on their sites, though often much altered or extended.

In considering those altered or extended, it is surprising how modest some of the original houses were. For example, no.10, originally of two storeys, has received major roof alterations including a quite overbearing pedimented gable on its west front, though it remains well-proportioned to the Gardens. No.17 has been extended sideways rather than upwards and is dull.

Of the generally unextended buildings, nos. 21, 22 and 23 look positively homely in this context. At the other end of the scale, the magnificence of the elevations to no.15 are a delight, matched only if not exceeded by the slightly more concentrated design of no.12. The Jacobean towers of nos.18 and 19 remain imposing, though the presence of two unequal houses in this design has been obvious with the variety in facade treatment and in the control of creeper.

3

*The character
and
appearance
of the
Conservation
Area*



1 *The porch to 10 Palace Green, pictured in 1907*

2 *Looking south from Brunswick Gardens to St Mary Abbots*

On the two modern replacements the tall window panels at either end of the facade of no.8 add some interest to an otherwise unexceptional design. The Czech Embassy on the other hand with its powerful abstraction and its strong air of detachment is a worthy neighbour in this Victorian street.

Over the brow of the hill, the character of the street changes. The slope puts the foliage much more prominently into long views southwards while views open up across Palace Green. Although street trees have recently been planted on the eastern verge, the mature tree screen is found behind the simple and elegant Palace railings giving additional apparent width to the street itself.

On the west side, attractive pairs of brick and stone piers with opulent stone finials give access to the Edwardian houses. Most of these have large, symmetrical facades with little hint of the internal plan form behind the substantial porches; they are like the Victorian houses in this respect. Only two, nos. 8 and 9, utilise the greater freedom and picturesque grouping that was such an important feature of house design round the turn of the century. Instead of being forced behind symmetrical facades, house plans themselves helped generate varied and inventive elevations. Nos. 8 and 9 both contain tall, well-lit halls slung between projecting gables and behind porches purposely dark and low to increase contrast and the sense of space within the house. From outside appearances it seems likely that J J Stevenson's design at no.9 is the more striking and successful.

At the foot of the slope the remaining houses are now rather overwhelmed by neighbouring commercial developments. Only Webb's house at no.1 has architectural presence, at the time of writing compromised by alterations and by work in progress. No.2 for all its supposed significance is like no.3 too low and reticent to create effective townscape. One is again left with the scale of the street, its majestic trees and its relative calm as the main elements.

THE STUCCO TERRACES

The housing developments masterminded by Thomas Robinson on his own Sheffield House Estate and on glebe land today present an attractive and dignified face to the world. With the most obvious through-route from Kensington Mall southwards closed off, the broad streets are relatively quiet in traffic terms and their scale and mature planting keep the lines of parked cars subservient in visual terms. The terrace facades and the inter-relationships between them therefore still play the most significant role in defining the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.

The sharing-out of the developer's responsibility by Robinson, and the absence of a detailed master plan, has meant that the terraces, though consistent in many respects, exhibit differences in architectural detailing as well as in bulk. This variety is an important part of the character and appearance of the estate and should not be compromised by major building operations, nor by minor alterations. The grandeur of the original scheme is probably best experienced today in Brunswick Gardens. The eastern side consists of a formidable terrace, the centrepiece of which comprises eight houses of four storeys with basements. Paired porticos and a projecting balcony support elegant facades with nicely-judged window surrounds appropriately accentuating the principal first floor rooms. To either side, facades have greater modelling with bay windows rising through three storeys. Those bay windows at the northern end alternate with strongly-modelled porticos which have the unusual Ionic/Doric mixture noted above, while the houses at the southern end step down slightly in height being



of three storeys above half-basements. Entrances are paired within an Ionic/Doric composition including a central niche, to which the paired entrance steps with copious balustrading add considerable grandeur.

It is interesting to remember that a new church was planned for part of this terrace (the site of nos. 38 to 46, immediately north of the centre part of the terrace, and of 35-43 Palace Gardens Terrace behind). The lack of complete formality on the development was evidently of little or no concern to the developers, and indeed usefully concealed such major alterations to the scheme as it progressed.

Opposite is a terrace of ten three-storey houses with single-storey bays. Their wider, "double-fronted" facades conceal a shallower plan-form behind. While the eastern side has the larger street trees, the western terrace benefits with the lack of basement "areas" from mature planting in front gardens.

The street is attractively closed by a similar terrace at the northern end and the spire of St Mary Abbots down a considerable incline at the southern end. The existence of "areas" in front of the eastern terrace has ensured the retention of the front boundary railings in this case, though the quirky circular corner piers in stucco have sprouted some odd coping shapes over the years, particularly at the northern end. Front boundary treatment is more variable on the western side, some examples not achieving a dignity suited to the original conception. Other detracting features include excessive pipework on frontages, the use of red tiles on entrance steps, and the occasional loss of stucco detail, notably

cornices. The isolated masonry roof extension at no. 30 is of considerable age and cannot be taken to set a precedent today. Original Kensington pattern lamp-posts complement the attractive scene.

Brunswick Gardens is completed by two separate groups at the northern end. Nos. 21-33 is a basically symmetrical composition which no. 33 delightfully compromises by breaking forward with prominent urn finials. Its continuous cast iron balcony at first floor level assists the very elegant appearance of this group, marred only by an old roof extension and some disruption to the blocking course above the pretty cornice. Round the corner, nos. 35-49 with 55A Palace Gardens Terrace, originally "Courtland Terrace", presents an attractively-modelled facade. Above ground-floor bay windows rise tiers of triple windows with curved heads echoed by blind niches in the spaces. Unusual proportions are obtained by fitting all top-floor windows precisely between the main cornice and the parapet. Mature planting fills the front gardens behind a mixture of generally attractive boundary treatments.

In an area where prominent end elevations are usually given appropriate architectural treatment, the blank side of 55A Palace Gardens Terrace, above an attractive closed portico, is puzzling and visually unsatisfactory. This prominent corner property also suffers from the loss of all but the plinth of its balustraded front boundary wall.

Two short roads connect Brunswick Gardens with Kensington Church Street, then as now the main thoroughfare. 8-11 Berkeley Gardens form a symmetrical three-storey group with very similar details to those at 21-33 Brunswick Gardens around the cor-

1 8-11 Berkeley Gardens

2 21-33 Brunswick Gardens

3 Urbane stucco facades in Brunswick Gardens

"The introduction of oil paint for walls and porticos, which occurred in London about 1840, and the abandonment of the fake jointing both favoured those broad, 'picturesque' architectural effects in the attainment of which stucco is surely the ideal substance. Especially when it has been freshly painted - and the smoother and glossier the paint the better - there is no English building material which is so light-hearted, so urbane, so well-mannered." (Alec Clifton-Taylor, "The Pattern of English Building", Faber 1972.)



ner. Facing it, the terrace formed by 4-7 Berkeley Gardens picks up the details of its adjacent Brunswick Gardens block though the rhythm of bay windows set up by those three-bayed houses is subtly altered to fit the more common two-bay format in Berkeley Gardens. The parapet line is more consistent though the cornice details have disappeared. The view down Berkeley Gardens from Kensington Church Street presents a powerful display of Victorian speculative domestic architecture.

This view is framed on the north by a taller block of brick with stucco details which forms an effective transition from the residential enclave to the busy main road, and with the brick-fronted commercial terrace which will be discussed in a later section. On the south side, the balancing tall corner block is of stucco - in sadly poor condition, with a riot of external piping and other shortcomings - leading round to the Area's most consistent formal composition, 68-102 Kensington Church Street, originally "Sheffield Gardens". This is a fine composition with well-proportioned facades behind a remarkably complete and unusually-detailed stuccoed front boundary. In the centre, Doric porticos support first floor windows with segmental heads, while a string course connects the second-floor window sills below a cornice and a mansard roof with dormers. Four properties at each end are of four masonry storeys with triangular pedimented heads to the first floor windows. Though time has taken its toll of details such as cornice enrichment, first floor balustrading and upper floor window frames (the last-named in particular at the southern end) this terrace is a fine element in townscape. Perhaps its greatest problem is that it faces a major road and is not part of the comparative serenity of the streets to its rear.

1 Part of "Sheffield Terrace",
68-102 Kensington Church
Street

2 Brunswick Gardens in 1900

3 9-16 Vicarage Gardens



At the southern end of this terrace is the second short connecting street, Vicarage Gardens. A tall, stuccoed corner block is again the link between the busy road and the residential enclave, but in this case the four-storey height is continued further to include the first three properties on the north side, nos. 2-4. The remaining properties are of three storeys but they retain the two-storey bay windows. A prominent mansard extension to no. 4 accentuates this change in height. No. 2 retains its cornice enrichment but its window details are unfortunately hidden behind ornate metal grilles. Opposite, a terrace of similar length is entirely of three storeys with single-storey bay windows. The slight projection given to the principal bay of each property is more prominent here than opposite. The ends of the terrace are of some interest and concern. That at the east end is of plain brick, in strong contrast to the side elevation of no. 7 with its full complement of real and blind windows in stucco surrounds. This can



only be because the original intention must have been to continue along the south side of what was originally laid out as Vicarage Gardens and connect up with Palace Gardens Terrace. In the event, Vicarage Gate was driven through to Brunswick Gardens and all subsequent development was named as Vicarage Gate. (This is also the reason why Inverness Gardens has retained its name while other separately-named terraces have lost theirs). At the other end, the poorly-maintained no. 16 has an unfortunate side elevation shorn of some details and painted a chocolate colour. This with replacement windows of an unsympathetic pattern and the unimaginative treatment of the side and rear boundaries gives rise to considerable visual disruption in this prominent location.

Inverness Gardens, as well as retaining its original name, has the distinction of its own vehicular access set within stuccoed walls and behind a small, mature and attractive garden. Basements are half-sunk behind the slight ramp of the vehicular access, and front doors are paired in the Mannerist treatment noted above and set in dignified fashion above entrance steps. The important side elevations are beautifully handled with rustication, cornices, window surrounds and swags carried round. Apart from these, the front elevations are a disappointment. The odd pediments are not enough to add distinction or grace to the bay windows of the properties at either end, and the lack of a strong blocking course above the parapet gives the terrace a curiously unfinished appearance. Any additional storey would, however, have an overbearing effect on properties to the rear.

Almost the full range of the above styles can be seen as the stucco terraces step down

the hill on both sides of Palace Gardens Terrace. The symmetry within the block occupied by nos. 2-40 for example, with a centrepiece of four houses and end pieces each of three houses, all with a single triple window on each floor, separated by wings of two-bayed houses, is almost incidental given the variety of classical ornament, the generally excellent maintenance of original stuccoed frontage walls and the maturity of planting provided by street trees and by front gardens where they exist. Other notable features are the way the frontage walls step forward in two locations, the handling of part of the rear elevation of 8 Inverness Gardens and the varied skyline of properties at the southern end of the eastern terraces, nos. 2-44, where roof alterations have occurred with varying success. The western terrace generally retains its parapet lines intact. As elsewhere, properties have lost decorative enrichment while the unmitigated demands of modern lifestyles have led to a profusion of pipework in some locations, particularly intrusively round cornices and dormer windows.

While the height of the western terrace is maintained to the corner with Brunswick Gardens, the eastern terrace drops with the ground levels and in the scale of building as it proceeds northwards. Strathmore Gardens, built between 1868 and 1870, re-establishes the more dominant four-storey scale behind cast-iron front boundary railings. These set-piece terraces are completed by similar buildings on Palace Gardens Terrace opposite and, at the far end of Strathmore Gardens, by an individual three-storey house. This displays a full-height projecting bay surprisingly reminiscent of Jacobean work such as the entrance to the former Campden House.



1 59-69 Palace Gardens Terrace

2 Strathmore Gardens

3 Inverness Gardens in 1906





THE SOUTH WESTERN CORNER

This part of the Conservation Area is dominated by the commercial character of two of London's principal shopping streets, Kensington High Street and Kensington Church Street. The tendency is for tall island blocks not only in commercial use but also mirrored in residential property such as Winchester Court and Vicarage Court. Some Victorian developments like the substantial terraces of Vicarage Gate, six storeys including basement and mansard attic, match the size of these formidable buildings. Others do not and one feature of this location is an occasional strong contrast in scale. Two good examples can be found in the junction between Vicarage Court and Church Close, and further up Vicarage Gate where the steeply-pitched French Renaissance roof of no. 15/16 only reaches the floor of the attic storey of no. 17.



1,2 Changes in scale: (1) Church Close and Vicarage Court and (2) 15/16 and 17 Vicarage Gate

3 26-40 Kensington High Street steps down to Palace Green

4 42-74 Kensington High Street

5 2-10 Kensington Church Street

One of the Area's most prominent buildings must be the property on the corner between High Street and Church Street. So many Victorian and Edwardian buildings turn corners well, and this is no exception, with substantial stone bays in Jacobean style supporting large Tudor gables in a steeply-pitched roof. The restaurant fascia is a good example of a well-known house style fitted neatly into an existing building.

Along the High Street frontage stand three blocks with symmetrical classical frontages of increasing size. The first continues the Jacobean style of the corner block with decorative stone gable finials comprising shells and obelisks either side of an attractively-modelled cupola clad entirely in lead. This interesting skyline is rather dwarfed by the tall Dutch-style block next door, the two-storey shopfronts of which work well in their own terms but which give an uneasy proportion to the frontage as a whole. The shopfronts themselves are admirably

restrained in general. The corner dome is the best feature of this block. It makes an attractive sequence with the larger cupola behind at 26-40 High Street, a powerful display of 20th century classical architecture emphasised by the grand orders separating vertical strips of windows within arches under a generous cornice. The one-and-a-half storey height of the shopfront level is better proportioned than its neighbour, but the effect is compromised by the unkempt appearance of the mezzanine floor windows and the indifferent quality of the shopfronts themselves. This building is symmetrical to the High Street, but most of the right-hand half is relatively shallow, providing a strong presence on the street while screening a stepped facade to Palace Green. The blind arcading to the side elevation at ground floor level is a particularly pleasing feature.

The Royal Garden Hotel has emerged from its facelift with crisp well-modelled facades exhibiting proportion and rhythm. The crowning cornice is simple but looks sufficient to terminate the reworked elevations. The consistency of the cladding and the sharpness of detail makes it a strong element in views from the Church Street corner but a rather uneasy neighbour to the traditional and weathered detail of nos. 26-40.

Behind these large facades lies Old Court Place, relatively canyon-like given the scale of its neighbours. Apart from the robust Fire Station there is little of visual interest while street furniture and surfaces need further consideration.

Old Court Place connects with Kensington Church Street to the north of the remains of one of the earliest terraces in the Area. As the historical analysis showed, it is difficult to be precise about what has been retained of 2-28 Church Street: it now presents a more varied appearance than its neighbour north of St Mary Abbots but complements



it in the scale of the frontages and in the variety and general interest of the shopfronts. The least satisfactory elements are at either end. Immediately north of the corner with the High Street there is a two-storey modern block of an extremely dull design: the propping of the taller adjacent gables is all too visible. This site requires redevelopment to restore the roofline. The four properties north of this are an attractively varied group. At the junction with Old Court Place the corner building and particularly its side elevation are lacking in interest. Once again, its redevelopment to provide an appropriate termination to this interesting group might be considered.

Lancer Square and the block to the rear make a significant contribution to the appearance of the Area by virtue of the variety in all aspects of elevational treatment, the handling of external elements such as gates and walls and in the quality of maintenance of buildings and spaces.

Further north the buildings are all individual and of some note. No. 30 presents a dignified classical face to Church Street and contributes to the unfortunately congested space between it and the substantial and vigorous detailing of York Buildings. The contrast with Church Close is striking. Excellent shopfronts are contained below a bold stone string course, there is Jacobean swagger in the decorative brick chimneys, and the building begins to turn the corner well; but it remains rather an oddity in the street scene and its quiet internal courtyard is surprisingly marred by a profusion of pipework and ducting.

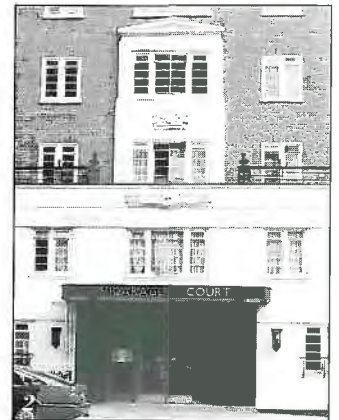
Winchester Court and Vicarage Court stand sentinel at the entrance to Vicarage Gate. While Vicarage Court is well-detailed but unadventurous, Winchester Court exhibits a boldly-layered facade deeply modelled to provide an entrance bay towards Vicarage Gate rising from the black faience base

which is still striking after the passage of years. The powerful scale continues with the Victorian terraces of Vicarage Gate, though the property immediately north of Winchester Court is a poor neighbour in design terms. Turning into the cul-de-sac of Vicarage Gate the exuberant arcaded top floor of the Victorian terrace contrasts well with the simplicity of Vicarage Court with substantial street trees holding the middle ground. These trees are probably the best part of any view of the unexceptional Hamilton House. At the far end of the cul-de-sac stands St Mary Abbots Church Hall and Vicarage, the centre part of which is a dignified yet restrained Classical block screening houses on Palace Green. The Church Hall to the north has a monumental simplicity. The view back down the street to Winchester Court provides yet another startling contrast.

The continuation of the Church Street frontage beyond Winchester Court contains its own contrasts, though on a smaller scale than any of those noted above. Both buildings on the inside of the corner are relatively incidental in townscape, given their bland design and the fact that one can only gain glancing views of them. The first, nos. 40-44A, Marquee Court, is the earlier and the better design, the windows of the upper two floors being grouped within a concrete framed panel. Next door the virtually unrelieved grid of precast units makes a restless and unfinished job of Olaf Court, nos. 46-56. Both of these properties would benefit in visual terms from a better defined cornice and parapet arrangement and a suitably detailed roof extension. They are, however, typical of their age, as is the cheerful brick and stone block at nos. 58-60, dating from the turn of the century and, once again with a change in scale, the three-storey blocks flanking Melon Place.



1 Old Court Place



2 Vicarage Court

3 30 Kensington Church Street from York House

4 St Mary Abbots Church Hall and Vicarage

5 Olaf Court, 46-56 Kensington Church Street



THE NORTHERN BOUNDARY

While the scale of development is generally considerably less than at the southern end of Church Street, there are several substantial buildings in this part of the Area.

The most prominent is the Czech centre on Notting Hill Gate, quite attractively proportioned in more distant three-quarter views but suffering somewhat from a more repellent aspect at closer hand. Its short return elevation to Kensington Mall is not resolved at ground floor level while the gap created in the street by the entrance to its underground car park and by the demolition of nos. 134-138 has never been made good. The area forecourts to two of these long-removed properties still exist by the bus stop; the black and white tiles mark the former dairy at no. 138.

Immediately south the buildings have much less immediate impact. "The Ark" restaurant with its tiny forecourt gives way to the Unitarian Church, the interesting design of which is understated and nowadays well-hidden behind mature planting. Half of a robust Victorian semi-detached pair separates this from its more obvious neighbour, the powerful Christian Science Church with its meticulous detailing and the strong contrast between its garden forecourt and the prominent bulk of the Church itself. Mature trees form an important element in the street scene. The Church also forms an effective and uncompromising end-stop to the stucco terrace to the south, and helps to define the streets of stucco houses.

Opposite stands Broadwalk Court, the substantial bulk of which is mitigated by its simple lines, strong modelling and restrained decoration. Next door, Mall Chambers is an agreeably elegant building given its origins and worthy purpose. Particularly well-handled are the relationships between solid and void, between window and plain walling and between solid masonry and the Italianate arcading to the staircase bays. Enrichment to cornice and to window surrounds adds to the quality of these facades. The Mall Tavern, a typically exuberant Victorian corner pub, completes an attractive group. Unexceptional and rather forlorn 19th century properties join the Mall Tavern to Lucerne Mews, which is unusual not only for its decorative brick detailing but because the style is carried round to a substantial building on the main frontage at no. 7. The mews itself is happily little altered and represents a quiet

backwater away from the traffic in Kensington Mall.

Finally there remains to be considered the properties fronting Kensington Church Street north of Berkeley Gardens. Nos. 108 - 122, despite considerable variety in surface treatment, work well as a relatively consistent terrace. Recent renovation work at nos. 118 - 120 has ensured the retention of the cornice along the whole length of the terrace. No. 124 provides an architectural bookend attractive in views down Campden Street; beyond this all the buildings show great variety. No. 128 has a prominent central bay rising from the back edge of the footpath. The southern flank of this projection and the relatively modern adjacent facade are unfortunately lost behind a great deal of pipework while the roof extension has a windbreak and screening at odds with the historic character of the building. 132-134 adjacent has an attractive stuccoed facade above a fascinating shopfront until recently retaining shuttering and other original fittings.

The first floor windows of both nos. 136 and 138 appear to have been lengthened: no. 138 retains much of its original reticence as an attractive mid-Georgian house though no. 136 is much more altered with a prominent roof extension. Nos. 140 - 142 is in many respects an interesting reworking of the Georgian tradition, as thought has been given to the relationship between horizontal and vertical elements, the upper floors are topped with cornices producing a strong shadow-line, and the facade lines through satisfactorily with the excellent and characterful property next door at nos. 144 - 148. Here the central entry between property shopfronts, an arrangement clearly visible on the 1860's Ordnance Survey Map, support an attractively-proportioned upper floor with prominent advertising, its character and appearance entirely in keeping with the property.

Further north, a varied group of properties line Church Street to the Kensington Mall corner. All are well-mannered though some, such as the tiny no. 150 and its neighbour at no. 152 with an original cast iron canopied balcony, are particularly distinctive. Shopfronts are generally of a high quality. Carnie Court and Campden Mansions on either side of Kensington Mall are cheerful mansion blocks, while nos. 182-188 are more humble survivals which deserve detailed consideration.



- 1 134-138 Palace Gardens Terrace in 1964
- 2 The same view in 1995
- 3 1-5 Kensington Mall
- 4 Part of the terrace at 106-122 Kensington Church Street



The following section attempts to provide general guidance on what the Royal Borough considers to be sensitive and prudent practice in the maintenance and the minor improvement of property in the Conservation Area. In a location distinguished by the set-piece terraces that characterise so many parts of the Borough, and where older surviving buildings have been the subject of almost continuous change throughout their history, the appropriate approach or range of approaches for any maintenance or improvement programme will vary considerably. Given the historic interest of the Conservation Area the Council recommends that as many sources as possible are consulted if work is contemplated: particularly valuable are the technical pamphlets published by The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the guides prepared by The Georgian Group and the Victorian Society and English Heritage's listed buildings guidance leaflets. Information on how to obtain these can be found at the end of this section.

action may anyway hide structural defects, lock in moisture and accelerate decay, while the attractive patina these natural materials achieve over time is lost. It is usually sufficient to keep walling properly pointed - removing ledges and cracks where water may sit and penetrate - and give some consideration to reducing the build-up of dirt.

Pointing is a skilled operation and experienced professionals should be employed. A match in colour and profile with existing appropriate work should be achieved, with flush or slightly recessed joints particularly for fine 'ashlar' or 'rubble' stonework: mortar should never be visually more prominent than the stone or brick itself. Neither should it ever be stronger than the masonry or else frost, evaporation or movement damage will be concentrated in the brickwork or stonework. Pliable lime mortars are thus preferable to hard cement mortars. Tuck pointing for brickwork should be reinstated on properties where it was originally employed. Red sand and coloured mortars should generally be avoided unless used for blending mortar to brickwork during tuck pointing. Modern struck joints, which by their sharpness detract from the mellow quality of the masonry, should not be used.

If new masonry is required, it should match its surroundings in colour, texture, shape and size. Patterned brickwork should be repeated where it occurs. The bedding planes of stone (the 'grain' of sedimentary rocks) must be taken into account as this also affects its resistance to weathering.

The cleaning of masonry may result in a patchy or streaked surface while piecemeal work may have a visually jarring result. The protective outer surface which bricks receive on firing and which develops in stone after quarrying can be damaged by excessive or inappropriate methods, exposing the softer material underneath to weathering and decay. Cleaning should thus only be undertaken when specialist advice reveals that a major aesthetic or structural problem requires solution in this manner: method and choice of cleaning agents must be left to experts.

Stucco

Originally, stucco was used as a substitute for stone and was either left unpainted or colour-washed to resemble Bath stone. The main value of stucco decoration, especially in terraces which are of a formal composition, is to emphasise the continuity

Much of what follows may fall outside the definition of "development" or else be permitted development so that a specific grant of planning permission may not be required. Regardless of the need for planning permission, listed building consent will be required for any of the operations noted in this section if the Council considers that the character or appearance of a listed building will be affected. The Department of Planning Services should be contacted at the Town Hall at the earliest opportunity to establish the need for the various consents.

Masonry - Brickwork and Stonework

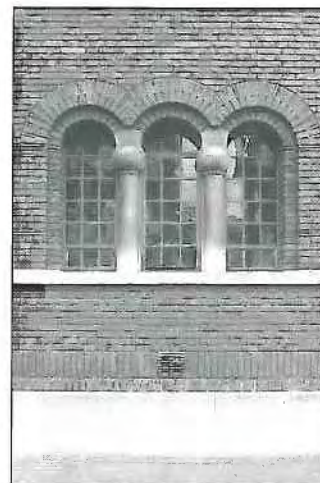
While both brick and stone are "natural" materials, bricks are of course processed from appropriate clays to produce a robust product for building while naturally-occurring stone is quarried and chosen for its decorative capabilities and its durability. Furthermore, though bricks are generally manufactured to cope with exposure, the natural processes of dissolving, leaching, chemical change and frost and water action are magnified when stone is quarried and used in building. Despite these differences in origin and make-up, brick and stone masonry have similar requirements in terms of building maintenance.

In general, masonry performs best and lasts longest when it is kept as clean and as dry as practicable. It is rarely necessary to paint or to render brickwork or stonework: such

4

Building maintenance and minor works

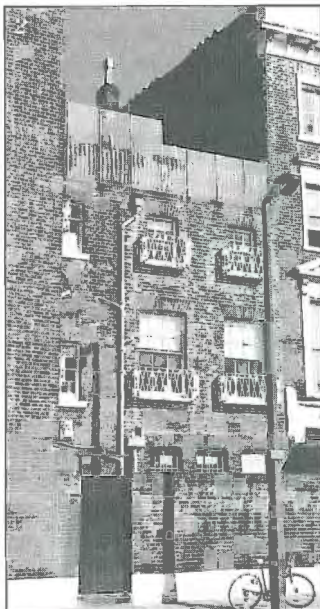
Expressive detailing of brick and stone at the Christian Science Church, Palace Gardens Terrace





1 *Stucco and cast iron combine elegantly in Inverness Gardens*

2 *The treatment of the roof terrace at 128 Kensington Church Street is visually discordant in the street scene*



of a building group through the line of the cornice and through the repetition of features such as window architraves, especially where it is possible to view a terrace in its entirety.

Stucco rendering and cornices have an important practical function as well as being visually attractive. The stucco acts as the weatherproof skin to the building and the cornice throws rain away from the wall. The deterioration of stucco is a continuous process and regular maintenance is required to keep it in good order. Prompt attention to stucco repairs will save expensive reinstatements which would be necessary if the stucco were left to decay. It is essential that the upper surface of projecting features is well waterproofed, especially where impermeable gloss paint is used on the lower surfaces.

Cornices are key stucco elements. The type of cornice is dependent on the type and scale of the property and any reintroduction should match the original work. The possibility of group reintroduction schemes, complete with repainting, is recommended to derive maximum visual benefit while reducing unit costs.

A good example of a group scheme would be the repair of parapets. The "blocking course" which commonly forms the actual parapet above a decorative cornice is frequently cut to allow new dormers a view of the street, with a damaging effect on the integrity of the terrace as a whole. Examples of the damage done can be seen at 2-7 Berkeley Gardens and at 21-33 Brunswick Gardens.

Stucco front boundary walls, with bottle balustrading between substantial piers, are an important feature of many parts of the Area. Consideration should be given to the restoration of bottle balustrades where they are decayed, as at 7 Berkeley Gardens, where they have been lost (such as at 55A Palace Gardens Terrace) or where replaced either with solid walling (8 Vicarage Gardens) or with alternative styles (21-29 Brunswick Gardens, for example). Extreme care should be taken with replacement: there are a number of otherwise excellent schemes in the Borough where the wrong spacing or an inappropriate shape of baluster has had unsatisfactory results.

A list of firms specialising in the repair of stucco work is available from the Council's Planning Information Office.

Roofs

In many cases, perhaps a majority of cases generally, the layout of roofs and the finishes used are the result of expediency in using available materials in the simplest, cheapest or most efficient way. The appropriate approaches for works to decorative details and dormer windows are set out below: in general terms, however, it is vital to the continuing character and appearance of the Conservation Area that repair and restoration of roof shapes is carried out in the original materials and to the original pattern. 110 Palace Gardens Terrace and 128 Kensington Church Street are striking examples of the problems associated with incremental and poorly designed work to roofs.

Painting

Much of the charm and character of the buildings in the Conservation Area comes from the visual integrity of the buildings and from their limited palette of colours in particular. Most groups of buildings in the Area benefit from this relative uniformity. Indeed, the white-painted terraces are a delight. Article 4 directions have been made to ensure that a consistent white-painted finish is maintained in these properties (see Appendix 3, page 43).

In all cases textured paints are wholly unacceptable as their thick coating obscures ornamental details, masks the sharpness of mouldings and in general forms an unattractive surface which attracts dirt.

Painting masonry and masonry ornament obscures the subtle texture and patina of brick and stone. Unpainted masonry should never be painted.

Decorative Detail

Character-forming detail such as door and window surrounds, copings, string courses and quoins, chimney pots and ridge tiles are similarly integral to the overall quality of the buildings in the Area. It is expected that special care will be taken during repairs or cleaning work to preserve these attractive items. Their restoration where missing would add considerably to the charm of the Area: lost items such as the urns atop 21-33 Brunswick Gardens and the finials on the piers in front of Inverness Gardens are immediate examples.

Doorways

Many doors within the Conservation Area are original and in their size and ornateness they closely reflect the architecture of the buildings to which they belong. Doors are proportioned to emphasise the verticality of the openings and the colour chosen should complement or contrast pleasantly with any colours elsewhere on the front facade. The stripping of doors and subsequent varnishing is not recommended as the exposing of timber grain gives too rural an effect and some varnishes suffer from damp and sunlight. Older door furniture, such as letter boxes, door knockers and handles should never be discarded while still functional. Where ill-advised changes, damage or decay have made replacement unavoidable, sympathetic designs should be chosen carefully. In all cases the continuing repair and maintenance of original doors and their furniture will be cheaper in the long run while helping to preserve the character of the Area.

When a property has been subdivided and there is a need for several doorbells or an entryphone, these should be contained in a single brass fitting of simple, neat design.

Fanlights are an integral part of many doorways. Additional glass panels within doors should generally be avoided since they do not respect the function of existing fanlights and can destroy the elegance of the doorway. Modern doors with integral fanlights are always inappropriate.

Windows

Windows, and in particular the pattern and colour of their glazing bars, make a significant contribution to the appearance of the elevations of an individual building; variations can destroy the character of a group. In Stuart, Georgian and early Victorian properties the subdivision of casement or sash windows emphasised their vertical



proportions. The fenestration of later Victorian terraces retained this verticality but, with the introduction of plate glass, windows had a much simpler glazing pattern with fewer glazing bars and larger panes. More recent developments exhibit more individual glazing patterns and casement windows have again become common. There is a wide range of patterns in the Conservation Area and the pattern that is historically 'correct' will vary between building groups. Care is needed, therefore, in choosing a suitable example to follow if restoration or replacement is intended.

Replacement window frames should match the original materials. Painted window frames have for long provided an agreeable intermediate texture between walling materials and the hard shiny surface of window glass. Aluminium and plastic frames are totally out of place on historic properties, particularly as the proportions and cross-sections of the individual members are so different from those of the originals.

Original glazing bars in timber are often so slender that hardwood may be the only realistic answer in restoration. Purpose-made windows correctly reproducing the original designs may not be much more expensive than off-the-peg equivalents as the latter tend to have too many glazing bars: this falseness adds needlessly to the expense of fabrication, glazing and maintenance.

Fitting double glazing presents further problems, particularly to internal fixtures such as shutters, and great care must be taken to avoid compromising character and quality. Attempts to retain the established pattern by fitting units with false glazing bars between the panes are unacceptable.

Urns have disappeared from frontage walls in Inverness Gardens: compare with the historic photograph on page 19

Generally, timber window frames should be painted white or cream since this emphasises their proportions in a pleasing way. Painting them a dark colour, though not necessarily out of character, renders the glazing pattern less visible and the proportions of the building or group suffer as a result.

The Area exhibits dormer windows in a wide range of shapes and sizes: repair must be carried out in a scholarly manner while the replacement of plain modern versions with original patterns will be welcomed.

Alterations to the doors and windows of listed properties will be expected to be historically accurate.

Ironwork

Cast iron railings and balconies are essential features of some parts of the Area. The variety of railings accentuates the attractively varied facades and in most cases they complement their complex histories.

It is important to preserve the repetitive geometry of railings. Even one or two missing heads or a broken spear can spoil their unifying effect on a group of buildings or a garden enclosure, and should be repaired or reinstated. Painting railings and balconies in a variety of colours creates unsightly breaks in continuity, diminishing their effectiveness as a townscape feature. Railings and balconies should only be painted gloss black. A leaflet, "Ironwork and Salvaged Fittings, Specialist Suppliers", is available from the Town Hall.

Lettering and Numbering

Buildings in Kensington Palace Conservation Area display a variety of lettering and numbering styles. It is expected that existing historic examples will be cherished. In contrast, cheap standard components for numbering and lettering and for items such as entry phone systems are so obviously at variance with the character of the Area that they should be avoided in every case.

Impedimenta

The appearance of even the most attractive buildings which are in a good state of repair and decoration can be spoiled by the incremental accumulation of pipes, wires, aerials and flues, particularly where properties have been subdivided. Plumbing or wires should normally be routed internally; any which cannot be so accommodated should be routed down a rear or side elevation and not on principal elevations.



Wires are particularly intrusive when there are few architectural features to hide them, and on stucco facades where they are visible against a background of a different colour. This is emphasised where the wires cross the cornice line, destroying its continuity. The colour contrast may be due to the wire not matching the facade or to the attraction of dirt. All wires are particularly unsightly when they trail unfixed across the frontage.

If wires have to be fixed on front elevations their detrimental effect may be minimised by running them vertically along the lines of downpipes and horizontally along gutters and string courses and by matching cable colour to the background. Wires are rarely obtrusive if fixed securely. Tidying wires as suggested is cheap and quick and brings immediate benefits to the appearance of properties.

Where aerials are placed on the roof they should be as far to the rear as possible, behind the parapet line on low pitched roofs and on the rear slope of pitched roofs so that they are screened from the street.

Particularly complex controls apply to the installation of satellite dishes depending on who installs them and whether they are installed on single family residences or elsewhere. Further guidance should be sought from the Council's planning staff. If a dish is acceptable in principle, the Council will use its available powers to ensure that it will be sited and installed to minimise its visual impact, particularly where operational considerations allow a range of locations.

Cable Television is being installed throughout the Royal Borough. In conservation

areas the junction cabinets are sited according to guidelines drawn up by the Council to minimize their visual effect. The cable system has the visual advantage that the greater viewing choice provided by satellite broadcasting can be obtained without a proliferation of individual dishes. When choosing between satellite dish and cable, consideration should be given to their relative impact on the townscape.

Many residents consider that burglar alarms are one of the most intrusive of modern features; the brightly coloured boxes are usually displayed prominently as a deterrent. Placing the same boxes above cornices or on the sides of houses and painting them to match the elevation does much to camouflage and nullify their intrusiveness.

Window grilles are increasingly prevalent as a deterrent to burglars. As with burglar alarms, their prominent display can detract from the appearance of the building. It is most appropriate, if window grilles are to be fitted, that they are installed inside the building - with due regard to original internal fittings such as shutters - and painted a dark colour if possible to lessen their impact from outside. Even with these corrective measures, alarm boxes and window grilles will be obvious enough to those with an interest in them.

Security cameras are similarly being used in greater numbers and are normally subject to planning control. The Council expects those pursuing the installation of security cameras to show due consideration to the character and appearance of their building in selecting equipment and choosing locations.

Balanced flue terminals and external meter boxes are signs of modern services and lifestyles which proliferate particularly where properties are in multiple occupation. They are often prominently located. Care in location, installation and maintenance will limit their intrusiveness on period properties.

A little extra consideration in the choice and exact positioning of any of these modern impedimenta can go a long way towards making them unobtrusive. Even greater care is required for listed buildings because of the need to respect their architectural and historic interest. Listed building consent will almost certainly be required for any of the above and will not be forthcoming for incremental or insensitive proposals.

Further information:

Listed Building Guidance Leaflets:
from English Heritage (London Region),
Chesham House, 29-30 Warwick Street,
London W1R 6RD: 0171-973 3746.

Georgian Group Guides:
from The Georgian Group, 37 Spital Square,
London E1 6DY: 0171-377 1722.

SPAB Technical Pamphlets:
from SPAB, 37 Spital Square,
London E1 6DY: 0171-377 1644.

Victorian Society:
"Care for Victorian Houses" leaflets,
from 1 Priory Gardens, Bedford Park,
London W4 1TT: 0181-994 1019.

Survey of London, Volume XXXVII
"Northern Kensington", 1973.



1 The prominent satellite dish and dormer at 10 Berkeley Gardens

2 Window grilles obscure original detail at 2 Vicarage Gardens

5

Control of physical change

Policies for the control of development will be found in the Council's Unitary Development Plan adopted on 28 August 1995. They may be subject to change and the most up-to-date version of the Plan should be referred to.

This chapter defines more closely how the Council's policies affect physical changes in this part of the Royal Borough. The Council in exercising its powers needs to consider whether development proposed in this Conservation Area would preserve or enhance its character or appearance: what follows reflects this duty.

Demolition

A considerable number of properties in the Area are listed, many for their group value as well as their individual contribution to the character of the Area. Council policy is to resist the demolition of listed buildings in whole or in part, or the removal or modification of features of interest.

The remaining buildings in the Area generally have their own individual or group value essential to the overall character and quality of the Area. Council policy is to resist their total or partial demolition unless the actual structure affected does not make a contribution to the character of the Area or is in a condition that precludes refurbishment, and if a satisfactory scheme for redevelopment has been approved.

The Council's Unitary Development Plan should be consulted for the precise wording and justification of these policies.

Alterations

Age, wear and tear and weathering may make it necessary to repair or replace parts of a building and earlier chapters have set out why such operations can have a very significant impact upon the local scene.

WHERE PARTS OF A BUILDING'S EXTERIOR SUCH AS DOORS AND WINDOWS NEED TO BE REPLACED AND PLANNING PERMISSION IS REQUIRED IT WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR DEPARTURES FROM THE ORIGINAL DESIGN AND MATERIALS.

Works to Roofs

In such a densely developed area there is often a temptation to propose extending buildings upwards to gain more space. As well as the historical and architectural questions raised by such significant additions to existing fabric, roof extensions can by their

bulk and shadowing affect neighbours' proper enjoyment of their homes, a particularly vital consideration where the relationships between properties on the one hand and public or private open space on the other is so important yet so subtle. There is also the potential for conflict with other policies relating, for example, to residential densities and car parking standards.

For these reasons, the Council normally resists proposals for additional storeys. Existing roof profiles and details are to be retained in the Area unless specifically identified below as suitable for alteration.

The search for space to expand also generates proposals to bring attics into more regular use. In most cases roofs will be relatively unaltered from the original designs which carefully balanced the simple massing of roof shapes with skilfully contrived ornamental features. Even where each individual proposal is minimal, perhaps a single rooflight or an attic room may erode the character of the terraces by adding clutter to the historic skylines. Alternatively, where alteration to the shape of the roof is proposed, a simplification of the original form may be involved which would also detract from the Area's character for the opposite reason.

The problems noted above are compounded when the fabric, appearance or setting of listed buildings is involved.

WORKS TO THE ROOFS OF LISTED BUILDINGS, OTHER THAN STRICT REPAIR, WILL NORMALLY BE RESISTED UNLESS THEY ARE SMALL-SCALE ENHANCEMENTS.

IN DETERMINING APPLICATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL STOREYS IN KENSINGTON PALACE CONSERVATION AREA, THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND TO THE CATEGORIES SET OUT BELOW AS APPLIED TO THE BUILDINGS IN THE CONSERVATION AREA BY THE PROPOSALS MAP ACCOMPANYING THIS STATEMENT.

These categories cover the appropriateness of roof alterations to buildings in the Conservation Area. They are not primarily concerned with enhancement, restoration or repair.

CATEGORY 1

No additional storeys: improvements only to existing roof profiles

Buildings in this category possess rooflines, generally original, which are an important element in the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and which therefore require to be protected from alteration. This does not rule out appropriate minor improvements, such as the restoration of original features (for example, the original pattern of glazing bars in dormer windows or the original roof covering) or the rationalisation of incidental elements such as pipework and water tanks.

CATEGORY 2

No additional storeys: rationalisation, improvement or adaptation of existing roof profiles

This category covers properties where additional storeys would be inappropriate but where existing top floors are sufficiently varied for alterations leading to significant improvements to be contemplated. This might mean the removal of whole storeys, dormers, skylights or roof terraces added to the original design or their improvement. It also allows for the adaptation of existing roof spaces with skylights or dormers of appropriate design in suitable locations. Adaptations which alter the profile of the roof are not acceptable under this category and will be treated as additional storeys by the Council.

CATEGORY 3

Additional storeys might be acceptable

Additional storeys might be acceptable for properties in this category, to be judged on their merits within the constraints of the Council's usual restrictive policies, especially as to design details. Buildings in this category are generally found where the uniformity of roofline has been lost and the character of a terrace or group has been compromised by a variety of roof extensions. Carefully-designed roof additions to remaining properties may help reunite the terrace or group.

CATEGORY 4

Each application will be dealt with on its merits

All the buildings in this category are individual and defy general policy, or represent minor structures to which the other three categories do not necessarily apply. There

is a presumption against change; proposals for roof additions will be acceptable in principle and in detail only if the Council is satisfied that they will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Rear Extensions, Conservatories and Roof Terraces

The Area is particularly sensitive to the impact of rear extensions, conservatories and roof terraces because the potential reduction in garden space and the loss of residential amenity through overlooking would conflict with its essential residential character. It is highly unlikely that such proposals can contribute to the Conservation Area by preserving or enhancing its character. In individual cases there may be scope for small conservatories at the rear at garden level, extending no further than reasonable nearby examples. A number of properties are notable for their roof terraces. These may be a valuable resource for occupants but also a serious intrusion into neighbours' privacy and amenity. The existence of unsatisfactory examples cannot be taken as valid precedents for the future.

PROPOSALS FOR REAR EXTENSIONS, CONSERVATORIES AND ROOF TERRACES WILL BE ASSESSED AGAINST THE COUNCIL'S RESTRICTIVE CRITERIA AND JUDGED WITH RESPECT TO THE PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND THE ESSENTIAL RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF KENSINGTON PALACE CONSERVATION AREA.

Side Extensions

The Conservation Area contains many fine terraces, while a significant proportion of buildings are designed as detached, or paired, or in small groups. The gaps between buildings is thus an essential characteristic of the Area, the importance of which is amplified by the pleasant glimpses afforded through the gaps to mature planting in communal or individual gardens.

The Unitary Development Plan indicates that Conservation Area Proposals Statements will, where appropriate, identify important gaps and vistas where infilling would be inappropriate. In this particular Area, where most building sequences have been designed, the resulting gaps are an essential part of its character. Side extensions filling these gaps would compromise the original designs, disturb the rhythm of the streetscape and remove these informal views which soften the dense urban fabric.

1 The old roof extension at 30 Brunswick Gardens cannot be taken as a precedent for further alterations to this terrace

2 Appropriate roof alterations would restore consistency at the southern end of Palace Gardens Terrace

3 Rear extensions of suitable scale often allow attractive glimpses of mature rear gardens



Important gaps and vistas are thus impossible to map because they are the rule rather than an exceptional case.

SIDE EXTENSIONS WHICH IN THE COUNCIL'S VIEW WOULD COMPROMISE THE BUILT CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA OR FILL A GAP IMPORTANT TO THE APPEARANCE OF THE AREA WILL BE RESISTED IN LINE WITH UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY.

Single Family Dwellinghouses

The survival of single family dwellings is fundamental to the character and appearance of Kensington Palace Conservation Area. Taken with the principal aim of the Unitary Development Plan it is clear that the Council regards it as a duty to maintain this state of affairs for the benefit of residents and the continuing preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

THE CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR RESIDENTIAL CONVERSIONS WILL TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS TO THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA.

Gardens

Gardens make a vital contribution to the character of the Borough as a whole and thus to the promotion of the Council's principal planning aim. Some semi-private spaces are sufficiently substantial to contain large mature trees which are a splendid foil to the Area's varied buildings. Elsewhere, private gardens individually and in sequence provide opportunities for quiet relaxation which are essential to the continuing amenity of the Area's residents.

PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD IN ANY WAY IMPAIR OR LIMIT THE USE OR ENJOYMENT OF ANY GARDEN, OR THE CONTRIBUTION IT MAKES TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF

THE CONSERVATION AREA, WILL BE RESISTED.

Forecourts

The Council's policy as set out in the Unitary Development Plan is normally to resist parking in forecourts and gardens where harm would be caused to the character and appearance of buildings and streets or to residential amenity.

It will be clear from this Statement that forecourts, front gardens and their boundaries are an integral part of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and of the amenity properly enjoyed by its residents.

THE COUNCIL WILL RESIST CAR PARKING IN FORECOURTS AND GARDENS AND WILL ENCOURAGE THE REINSTATEMENT OF ORIGINAL OR OTHERWISE APPROPRIATE FORECOURT AND GARDEN ARRANGEMENTS AND BOUNDARY TREATMENTS.

Binstores

Properties in terraces, especially those in multiple occupation, may require special arrangements so that dustbins are easily accessible for emptying. If bins have to be accommodated in front gardens or forecourts it is preferable that some form of store is provided for them.

There is such a variety of locations and design treatments that it is impossible for design guidance to be specific. On occasions, such structures may be inappropriate and out of character with the Area and its architecture.

Enquiries should be made to the Directorate of Planning Services regarding the need for planning permission or listed building consent. Reference should also be made to the Directorate of Cleansing and Recycling's Code of Practice for Refuse Storage and Collection.

1 *Impressive balustraded front walls in Palace Gardens Terrace are a fundamental aspect of the character of the street*

2 *This binstore has been treated to imitate channelled stucco*



6

Shopfronts and Advertising

The Council has published a Borough-wide guide to shopfronts and advertising entitled "Design and Conservation of Shopfronts and Shopping Streets". This gives a detailed interpretation of UDP policies and has been issued as Supplementary Planning Guidance. It should be referred to in relation to the general design of shopfronts and advertising in this conservation area. Copies of the publication are available from the Planning Information Office.

Illustrations of good and bad practice as described in the guide are illustrated on page 33. In addition, more specific advice is set out below for the shops in Kensington Church Street which has a special character which the Council seeks to maintain and enhance.

Kensington High Street and Notting Hill Gate

The Council has prepared separate guidelines for commercial properties on or associated with these shopping areas. Reference should thus be made to these documents as well as the above advice.

Kensington Church Street

Kensington Church Street, together with small groups of shops on side roads closely associated with it, has a distinctive character which deserves some individual analysis. In the Council's opinion its shopfronts make a significant contribution to the character or appearance of Kensington Conservation Area and of Kensington Palace Conservation Area. The preservation of this character and where possible its enhancement will be assisted by general recognition of those features which together establish the Areas' special identity.

Design guidance for both sides of Kensington Church Street was commissioned as part of the Proposals Statement for Kensington Conservation Area adopted on 9 January 1995. Publication of the Kensington Palace Conservation Area Proposals Statement is being taken as an opportunity to reinforce this guidance.

The strong personality of this shopping centre derives from developments of very different periods. Some buildings survive from the first half of the 18th century, and a range of 20th century styles are represented as well as examples of intervening periods. A striking feature is the dominant presence from the Carmelite Church northwards of antique dealers, fine arts establishments and others retailing items of aesthetic interest.

The street generally displays the benefits of shop surrounds which remain consistent within terraces or groups, creating coherent shopping parades to the mutual benefit of all traders. These surrounds perform the role of design frameworks, and are most evident in the best Victorian terraces and at the well-articulated modern facade of Lancer Square, within which shopfronts with a high degree of individuality can be satisfactorily contained.

Detailed characteristics which can be observed are:

- the use of dark colours in the shopfront designs, most striking when seen below light-coloured stucco;
- the celebration of the skills of sign writers;
- the scarcity of internally-illuminated signs of any sort;
- the relatively few projecting signs to be found.

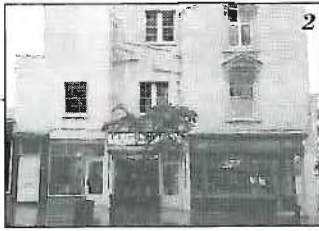


1 Church Close provides a consistent framework for shopfronts

2 A wider range of shopfront and projecting sign styles at the foot of Kensington Church Street



1 *Category B shopfronts in the Lancer Square development*



2 *Category C shopfronts at 66 Kensington Church Street*

All of these combine to create shopfronts which appeal to the taste and discernment of the shopper. Dark-toned, reticent shopfronts provide the ideal framework for the imaginative display of goods. Proposals which reinforce these characteristics will therefore be encouraged. Proposals will be expected to incorporate fascias the proportions of which respect those of neighbouring properties. The temptation to make fascias deeper than neighbouring ones will be resisted. Highly-reflective materials are likely to be unacceptable in all but very few situations.

If canopies, awnings and blinds are proposed where they do not now exist they will be expected to be retractable. Their boxes should be integrated with the shopfront design and not appear as an ad-hoc addition. In some groups, for example nos. 36-56, "Dutch blinds" have become a consistent feature, but rigid versions there or elsewhere, and glossy covering materials, are unlikely to contribute positively to the street's special character or appearance. Clear display of the street number of each shop is a requirement of Council policy.

With the exception of public houses there is very little advertising at firstfloor level or above: the Council will continue to resist the introduction of such advertisements. Independent access to upper floors will be encouraged and protected, particularly where the upper floors are in residential use.

Three broad categories of shopfronts can be identified in Kensington Church Street:

Category A

Those in 18th or 19th century terraces the historic character of which is sufficiently strong to require changes to be designed in a scholarly fashion applying appropriate historical principles. In many instances the merit of the present shopfronts will lead the Council to expect them to be restored and retained, using the same limited palette of traditional materials and finishes.

Nos. 67-81 (odd) demonstrate how well shopfronts can complement such terraces as a whole, and if no. 67 were to introduce the cast-iron cresting seen at first floor level elsewhere it would be a great enhancement. By contrast, nos. 29-39 (odd) illustrate the less attractive consequences when too little regard is paid to the building as a whole when changing shopfronts.

No. 99 is regarded as an exemplar of what should be expected at historic buildings. No. 6 (Crabtree & Evelyn) is seen as a high-quality recent design which enhances rather than ignores the qualities of the building of which it is part.

Category B

Those in 20th century blocks where, subject to respect for proportions and use of materials harmonious with those existing, there is much more scope for innovative designs.

The new building at Lancer Square shows a strong design purposefully mastering the requirements and preferences of individual retailers while allowing their window displays to speak for themselves. Failure to respect this design framework would all too readily destroy this effect.

Category C

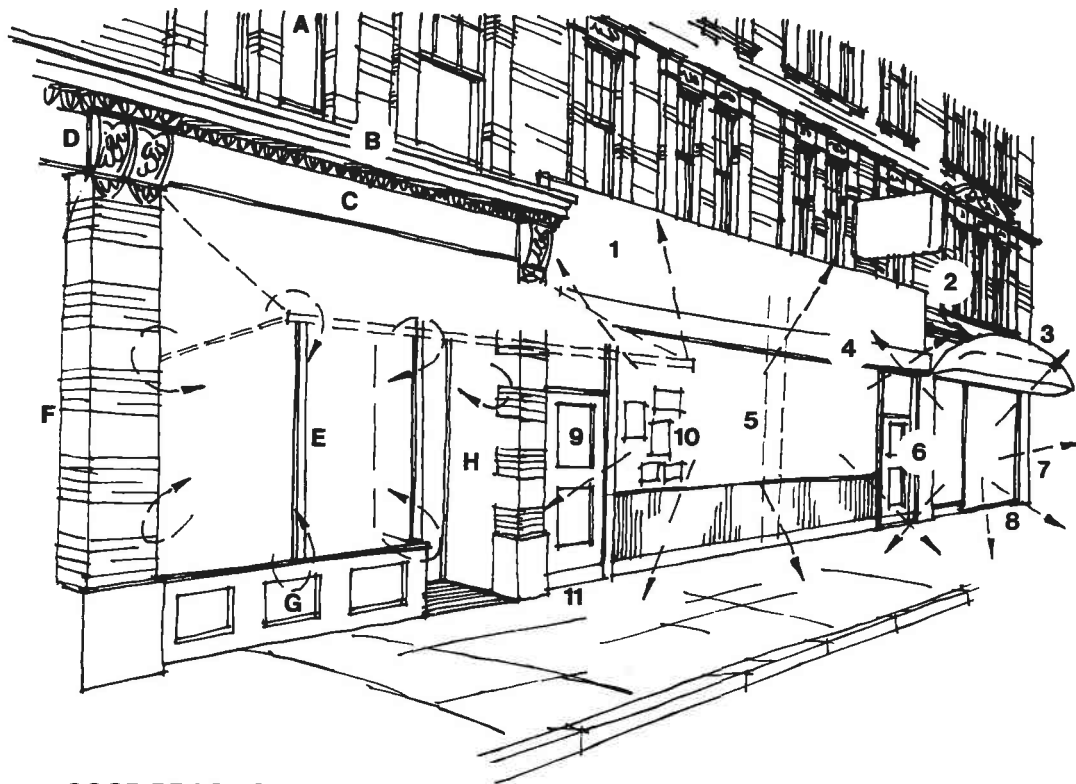
Those generally isolated instances where the retail units are not comfortably integrated within buildings as they were originally designed require special care within these guidelines and with reference to the general "good practice" points if the shopfronts are to assume the elegance of proportion of so many of their neighbours.

Nos. 66-66a and nos. 104-104a are the most pronounced examples of such development, undertaken a long time ago with little respect for the form and character of the terraces at the end of which they are located. Nos. 97a, 97b and 97c are less discordant introductions: their details frame the display area much more appropriately.

Nos. 25-27 are individual units where there is considerable scope for beneficial change.

Over much of Kensington Church Street it is noticeable how the prominence of well-lit displays within the shops is increased by the absence of illuminated signs and fascias externally. Internally illuminated signs are particularly incongruous and obtrusive and so will not be permitted.

Where the retail frontages return into the predominantly residential side streets (and at the few commercial frontages in the centre of the Conservation Area) what matters most is that their smaller scale should continue to be emphasised as a means of respecting the domestic function of the side street. The substantial advertising hoarding on the north side of Campden Street conflicts with this principle.



GOOD PRACTICE

Shoppers' attention concentrated

BAD PRACTICE

Shoppers' attention dissipated

A Shopowners should take a keen interest in the character and good appearance of upper floors. Access to upper floors should be retained.

B Important junction between shopfront and upper floors: projecting cornice provides satisfying visual capping to shopfront and visually appropriate foundation for upper floors.

C Fascia of traditional scale forms part of attention-retaining frame and provides more than ample room for signwriting to identify shop and indicate quality. The design can incorporate a projecting hand-painted sign, a retractable traditional awning or blind and possibly external illumination by spotlights.

D Retained ornament matches elaboration of rest of façade and increases shopfront's appeal. Although often of classical derivation, ornament does not have to copy classical forms.

E Vertical emphasis of glazing pattern matches that of upper floors and arrests the eye while leaving an imaginative window display unimpeded.

F Robust pilasters form part of attention-retaining frame and provide visually-appropriate support for upper floors.

G Stallriser is sufficiently large and robust to be easy to maintain and keep clean. Visually it provides suitably substantial base for whole façade.

H Traditional recessed entry provides opportunity for more attractive ornament, increases effective length of shop window and enhances penetrability of shopfront. The whole shopfront should be constructed of wood, which is inherently attractive and approachable.

1 Large flat fascia often obscures attractive first floor window detail, fails to provide suitable foundation for upper floors and competes with any window display. Large internally-illuminated box fascias are in any event unacceptable.

2 Projecting sign above fascia level increases visual clutter, conflicts with rhythm of façade and is not acceptable.

3 'Dutch Blinds' are not acceptable.

4 Solid roller shutters are not acceptable, particularly if housed in protruding boxes.

5 Removal of pilasters in combined shopfronts destroys attractive rhythm of arcade. With removal of all other vertical emphasis, shopfront fails to retain attention and invite shopper.

6 Adjoining shopfronts fight one another unnecessarily for attention.

7 Minimal pilasters may be structurally sound but look too insubstantial to hold up façade above.

8 Removal of stallriser robs façade of visual stability and creates unnecessary problems in cleaning and maintenance.

9 Flush door constitutes greater visual barrier. Standard modern shopfitting materials such as anodised aluminium are in any event unattractive if not visually repellent.

10 Window clutter detracts from the appearance of the shop and the character of the street.

11 Consideration not given to access for the disabled.

7

Views and vistas

Any walk through Kensington Palace Conservation Area produces a sequence of vistas, long and short, accidental or contrived, more or less attractive. Important vistas, worthy of special mention here as requiring coordinated effort to preserve or enhance, are to some extent an artificial designation because all development should be judged by its effect on the character and appearance of the Area as a whole. However, the retention of certain views is considered particularly important.

THE LIKELY DAMAGING OR ENHANCING EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENT ON A VISTA IN THE CONSERVATION AREA WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BY THE COUNCIL IN EXERCISING ITS PLANNING POWERS, PARTICULARLY IN RELATION TO THE VISTAS SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT CHAPTER OF THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

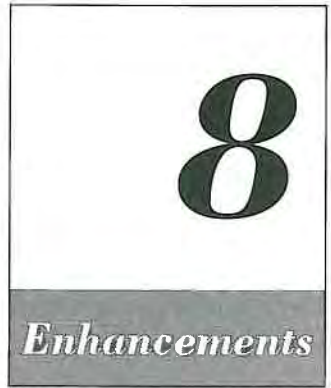
Kensington Gardens provide many of the fine vistas identified in the Conservation Area



The Conservation Area is generally free of buildings and locations which could form the subject of major enhancement schemes. With a few exceptions, properties in the Area simply require the care and attention to detail suggested in the chapter on Building Maintenance and Minor Works.

The following locations would however benefit from a more comprehensive approach. They can be found with their reference numbers on the Proposals Map on page 39.

PROPERTY ENHANCEMENTS: BUILDINGS



B1: 92-102 Kensington Church Street
Properties at the north end of this fine terrace have lost the continuous bottle balustrades at first floor level and over the porticos. Their replacement with solid masonry parapets diminishes the Area's most complete architectural composition. The reinstatement of the bottle balustrades would be a significant enhancement.

At the same time, the wrought ironwork at no. 82, though elegant, represents a significant deviation from the original design which it would be appropriate to remedy.

B2: 66 Kensington Church Street
A two-storey bay window has been removed from this property, presumably



when the shopfront was first installed. While the shopfront is attractive in its own right, the sash window replacing the bay at first floor level lacks the decorative surround or the coupling with other openings to reflect the importance of first floor fenestration in this kind of property and retain the building's proportions.

The property would further benefit from regular redecoration and the removal of external pipework.

B3: 16 Vicarage Gardens
This prominent property, with front, side and rear elevations open to view from Kensington Church Street, is the most notable exception to the generally high standards of maintenance and consistency of finish among the Victorian stuccoed terraces in the Area. The brown stucco, the variety of inappropriate windows and the loss of the main cornice are all regrettable items, the improvement of which would enhance the Conservation Area.

Improvements are also possible to the side and rear wall of the gardens: see C2.

B4: 18 Vicarage Gate
No. 18 sits between Winchester Court and a remaining Victorian terraced house at no. 17, its utilitarian brick facade displaying none of the exuberance of the latter or the panache of the former. A replacement could be devised which would be a better neighbour and an enhancement of the Area.



B4



B5: 2 Kensington Church Street

The raising in height of this property to fol-

low more closely the height of the adjacent property in Kensington Church Street would improve its appearance, restore consistency to cornices and rooflines, mask the backs and sides of adjacent property and remove the need for prominent shoring.

B6: Old Court Place: see E2.

B7: 26-40 Kensington High Street

The unfortunate effect of the mezzanine floor above the shopfronts in this block is compounded by the current state of one or two of the shop units. Sales on the forecourt of one particular unit have given rise to complaints.

This block is identified by the UDP as an integral part of the core shopping frontage of Kensington High Street. It deserves careful consideration in terms of its appearance and operation appropriate to this status and to the aims of the Conservation Area.

PROPERTY ENHANCEMENTS: CURTILAGES

C1: Czech Centre

The overhanging end elevation of the Czech Centre unfortunately leaves nothing of interest for the passer-by. Furthermore, the rest of the Centre's frontage to Palace Gardens Terrace has never been satisfactorily resolved in visual terms since nos. 134-138 were demolished. This short section of road is thus one which has to be endured rather than enjoyed. The improvement of the Centre's end elevation is being considered as part of the programme for the enhancement of Notting Hill Gate but the whole frontage could well be considered with the footpaths and the bus stop to introduce a little delight and human scale.

accidental note at odds with the discipline of the surrounding architecture. Screening could be improved for the benefit both of occupants and of passers-by and could easily be made acceptable in visual terms.

C2: Broadwalk Court, Palace Gardens Terrace

This prominent block of flats, a recent addition to the Conservation Area, has a generally neat forecourt. The elevation to Rabbit Row, however, has Paladin bins very much in evidence: their screening or otherwise appropriate accommodation would improve the appearance of the Court from all viewpoints.



C3: 16 Vicarage Gardens

The side and rear garden frontage of this property are prominent features of Kensington High Street. While the ball finials to the rear gates are attractive, the gates themselves are rather utilitarian and the garden fencing strikes a suburban and



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS



E1: Palace Gardens Terrace

The partial closure at the junction of Palace Gardens Terrace and Kensington Mall does much to preserve the serenity of a large part of the Conservation Area. The closure itself is neatly but unimaginatively carried out: more could be made of this small but significant feature.

A large bush or a tree of appropriate type could be planted to improve the appearance of the closure, enhance its visual significance and deter drivers from going against the permitted flow by restricting their vision.

E2: Old Court Place

Old Court Place has accumulated street furniture so that there is now a variety of bollards, kerbing and paving treatments on display. The publication of this Statement provides an opportunity to reconsider the street and paving surfaces and street furniture in a comprehensive manner with due regard to the street's functions and the way it operates.

At the same time, consideration could be

given to improving the ground floor treatment of both the hostel to the Royal Garden Hotel and the block opposite, to enhance the street as a whole. If these modern buildings had more appeal, the "service yard" appearance of Old Court Place might be mitigated and its more positive qualities emphasised.

E3: NCP Bus park, Kensington Gardens, and Bayswater Road frontage

The bus park serves an undoubtedly useful purpose but its entrances, surfaces and boundaries have a scruffy, accidental air at variance with its highly organised and distinguished surroundings. In the short term, better screening of the coaches from the park would be a welcome feature. An appropriate long-term solution to the development of this site would be welcomed.

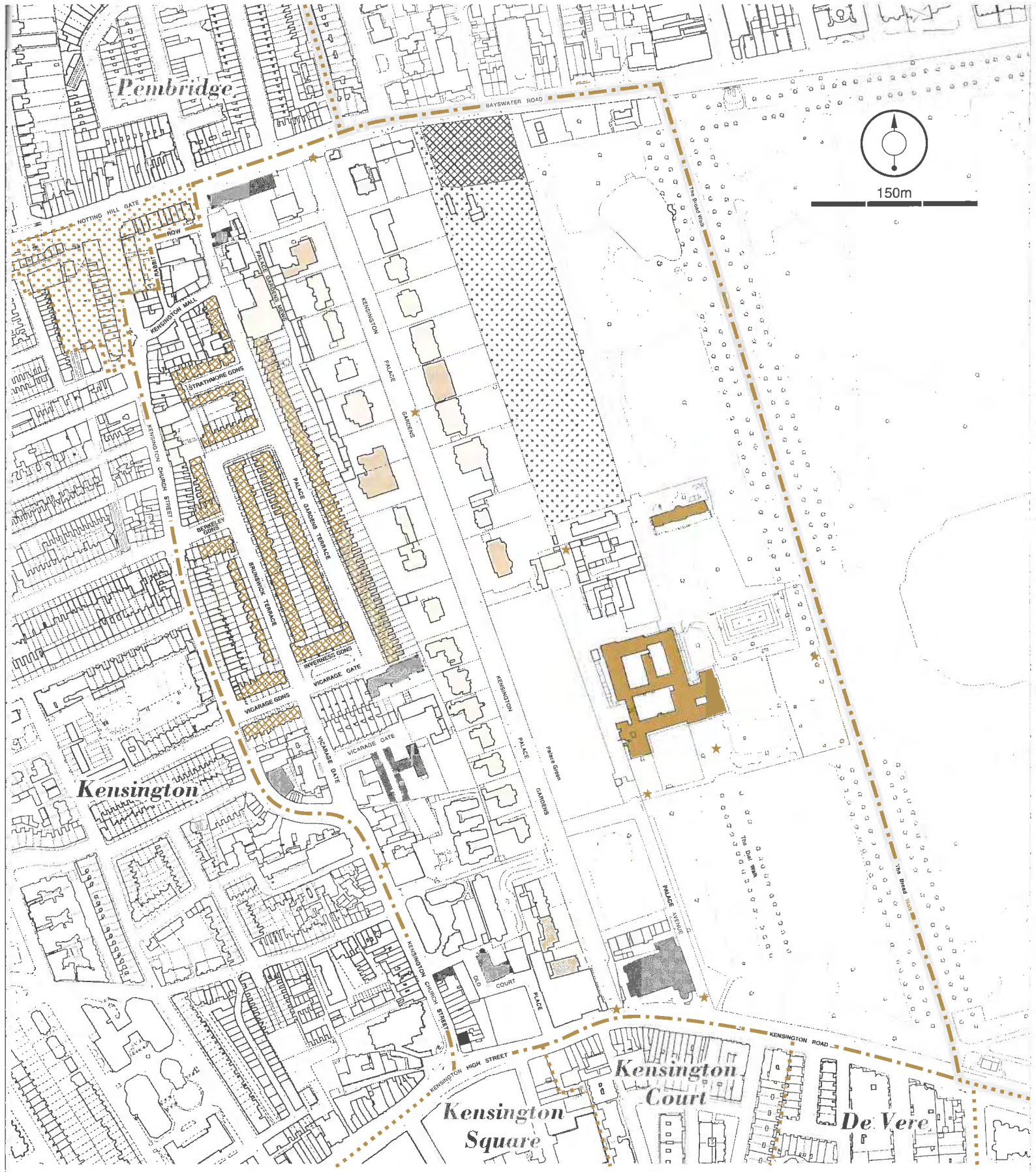
The Bayswater Road boundary is equally prominent and important. Indeed, the whole frontage along to Kensington Palace Gardens, including the grounds of the Russian Federation Embassy, require more attention to maintenance and the careful siting of signs, services and equipment.

E4: Kensington Palace Gardens

This remarkable street derives a great deal of its character from the scale and quality of the roadway itself. With this in mind, two enhancements are suggested. The first is that the tarmac footways might be resurfaced in a more noble material, such as a good quality paving slab. Secondly, the current entry arrangements have an insubstantial and accidental character and could be replaced with a more tidy and substantial arrangement.

The demarcation of the entrances themselves with strips of granite pavers might also be considered.





THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

KENSINGTON PALACE

Conservation Area Proposals Statement

Townscape analysis

BOUNDARIES

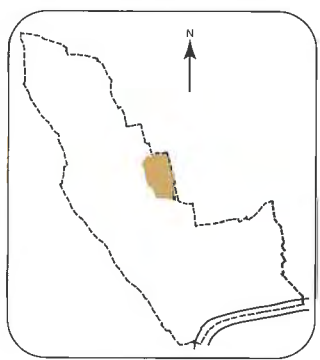
- Borough
- Conservation Area
- Adjacent Conservation Area
- Not in Conservation Area

SPECIAL CONTROLS

- Grade I listed
- Grade II* listed
- Grade II listed
- Article 4 direction

AREA APPRAISAL

- Detracting buildings
- Neutral buildings
- Detracting Areas
- Neutral Areas



ROOF ALTERATIONS (pp28-29)	ENHANCEMENTS (pp35-37)
Category 1	Property Enhancements-Buildings
Category 2	Property Enhancements-Curtilages
Category 3	Environmental Improvements
Everything else is Category 4	Conservation Area Boundary
Views and Vistas (p34)	Borough Boundary

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

KENSINGTON PALACE

Conservation Area
Proposals Statement

Proposals Map

Page 40 Blank

1 List of properties in the Conservation Area

9

Appendices

Berkeley Gardens: All
Brunswick Gardens: All
Inverness Gardens: All
Kensington Church Street: 2-34,
Church Close, 36-188
Kensington High Street: Royal Garden
Hotel, 26-74
Kensington Mall: All
Kensington Palace Gardens: All
Lancer Square: All
Lucerne Mews: All
Melon Place: All
Notting Hill Gate: Czech Centre
Old Court Place: All
Palace Avenue: All including Kensington
Palace, Black Lion Gate Lodge, North
Lodge, South Lodge
Palace Gardens Mews: All
Palace Gardens Terrace: All
Palace Green: All
Rabbit Row: 1-5, 2-16
Strathmore Gardens: All
Vicarage Gardens : All
Vicarage Gate: All
York House Place: All



1 Vicarage Gate

2 Palace Gardens Terrace

3 Berkeley Gardens

4 Melon Place

2

Listed buildings in the Conservation Area



1 *The Orangery, Kensington Palace*

2 *Kensington Palace in 1851*

	Grade	Date listed if known
Kensington Church Street		
128; 132 and 134; 136 and 138	II	—
Pair of telephone kiosks outside no. 30	II	1987
Kensington Mall		
Mall Chambers	II	—
Kensington Palace		
Kensington Palace; Orangery	I	1969
Entrance Gates; Old Barrack Block; Garden Temple; Statue of Queen Victoria; Statue of William III;	II	1969
Upper Stables; Gatepiers and wall to right of Upper Stables	II	—
Kensington Palace Gardens		
North Lodge; Two gateways; 6 & 7; 9; 10; 11	II	1969
12	II*	1969
12A; 13; 14	II	1969
15	II*	1969
15B (Cope House)	II	1984
15A; 16; 17	II	1969
18 & 19	II*	1969
20; 21; 22; 23	II	1969
24	II*	1969
Pillar Box outside no. 12	II	—
Old Court Place		
Fire Station	II	1991
Palace Gardens Terrace		
Second Church of Christ Scientist	II	1982
Palace Green		
1; 2	II*	1969
4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10; Gates and gatepiers	II	—



3

List of properties covered by Article 4 directions in the Conservation Area

Berkeley Gardens	3-11 (consec)
Brunswick Gardens	All
Inverness Gardens	All
Kensington Church Street	66
Palace Gardens Terrace	1-69, Mall Tavern, 2-102
Strathmore Gardens	All
Vicarage Gardens	All

The Government exempts various minor forms of development from the requirement that a specific grant of planning permission should be obtained from the local planning authority - in this case, the Council. The Council can revoke these "permitted development rights" by "Article 4 directions" with Government approval if it considers that the

best interests of the locality would be served by bringing specified classes of development under local planning control. The above properties do not therefore possess all their permitted development rights; householders should contact the Council if building work is being considered.

4

Sources of grant aid for buildings of architectural and townscape importance

Grants are available from the Council for the restoration of many ornamental features such as boundary railings, piers and balustrades, porches, window and door surrounds and stucco cornices.

Because this kind of work is much more valuable if carried out to more than one property in a group, the Council will only consider grant aid:

- 1) Where the property concerned is the only one, or one of the only two, in a clearly-defined group which is missing the particular feature to be restored; or
- 2) Where the owners of three or more properties in a clearly-defined group are doing similar work at the same time.

In either case, the properties concerned

must be within a conservation area. They need not be listed.

Further information and application forms can be obtained from the Town Planning Information Office in the Town Hall.

English Heritage give grants for repairs to outstanding listed buildings; to buildings in selected conservation areas, whether listed or not, along with associated environmental works; and in London to historic buildings identified as at risk from neglect.

Further information is available from the West London casework officer responsible for the Kensington and Chelsea area at English Heritage (London Region), Chesham House, 30 Warwick Street, London W1R 6RD, tel: 0171-973 3000.

5 Trees

Trees, whether they be in front or rear gardens or in the street, lift the spirit and add immeasurably to the character and appearance of Kensington Palace Conservation Area. Because they are living and growing they need care and attention at various stages throughout their lives. Owners are responsible for their trees but assistance is available from the Council's arboricultural officers and via the Arboricultural Association. Tree surgery offered on the doorstep may be unnecessary and costly and may lead to irrevocable damage. In contrast, the Council can offer skilled advice in general terms or in the event of an emergency, including the rights and liabilities of tree owners, and maintains a list of contractors approved by the Arboricultural Association.

Tree Preservation Orders

If a tree is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order it is an offence to damage or destroy it wilfully, or to fell, top, lop or uproot it, without the written consent of the Council. The owner is also required by law to plant another tree of appropriate size and species at the same place as soon as is reasonable.

Trees in Conservation Areas

The Council must be given six weeks' notice of any proposal to fell, lop, top or uproot trees in a conservation area, other than those already covered by a Tree Preservation Order. It is an offence to carry out the work within that period without consent. Exemptions include trees with trunks less than 75mm in diameter at 1.5 metres above ground level.

The best interests of the Conservation Area do not always demand the retention of every tree for as long as possible. The characteristics of some species can mean that they become unsuitable for their location before maturity. Replacement with a younger specimen or different species is then appropriate. Phased replacement ensures continuing cover within groups.

Street Trees

Street trees and trees on publicly owned land represent a vital and enhancing resource and are managed by the Council

which is aware of their great visual value. Its arboriculturalists are willing to investigate reasonable requests and proposals for additional street trees in appropriate locations.

Obstruction to Public Highway (Highways Act 1980: Section 154)

Many trees and shrubs growing in private gardens constitute a hazard to users of the public highway, particularly the blind and infirm. Low-growing twigs and overhanging branches should be cut back to boundary walls to create a clearance of 2.5m from pavement level. Branches obscuring street lamps, traffic lights or road signs should be pruned or removed.

All such work should be carried out at the earliest opportunity and may be executed without the prior consent of the Council. However, where further work is required beyond the minimum necessary to clear the obstruction the Council advises residents to contact the Town Hall to establish whether the trees are subject to a Tree Preservation Order or any other restriction.

Emergency Work

The Council's arboriculturalists will be pleased to provide advice if work to a dead, dying or dangerous tree is needed urgently.

Penalties for unauthorised works and damage

If in contravention of an Order a tree is cut down, uprooted or wilfully destroyed or if wilfully damaged, topped, or lopped in a manner likely to destroy it, the person responsible is guilty of an absolute offence and shall be liable to a fine of up to £20,000 on summary conviction, or an unlimited fine on conviction on indictment. There is also a fine for other contraventions. The same penalties apply to unauthorised works or damage to trees in conservation areas.

Further Information

The Council's Arboricultural Section (0171-361 2767/3249) should be contacted in order to ascertain whether a tree is protected or is in a conservation area, or in the event of any query concerning the procedural aspects of work to trees.

Hamilton House, Vicarage Gate



6

General notes on interiors

Whilst this Proposals Statement is largely concerned with the exteriors of buildings, the interiors are at very much greater risk. Fashions for interior decoration change even faster than those for the exterior. It is not so much a matter of modern furnishings not looking well in a period interior, more that decorative fashion has in the past dictated the removal of such items as fireplaces and decorative plasterwork in search of the more stylised fashions of the twentieth century: gas light fittings removed in the '20s, dados and picture rails in the '30s and fireplaces removed or blocked up probably in the 1950s. These fashions were developed in smaller modern houses and were normally less appropriate when imposed on period interiors.

The original features which suffer most from the swings of fashion are those which are easily removed without affecting the structure of the building. Internal panelled doors are frequently removed to open up doorways, because they are unfashionable or because of the need to improve their fire resistance. A properly stripped and repainted or polished door will retain its original style. English Heritage, London Region, can give advice if the fire resistance of panelled wood doors is required to be raised.

Door furniture, such as door knobs and finger plates, is often discarded. Where it is necessary to renew an entire door the transfer of door handles and bolts will retain an air of originality with their solid appearance. Replacing door furniture with modern reproductions has the disadvantage that the reproductions are largely made to fit modern doors. The occasionally clumsy but robust original locks often had a long 'throw' of the bolt and it is necessary to place reproduction door handles closer to the edge of the door because of the shorter throw of the lock bolt.

Fireplaces were frequently destroyed in post-war years to remove a source of draughts as alternative heating methods became fashionable. It is increasingly recognised that appropriate period fireplaces and mantles, if retained or installed

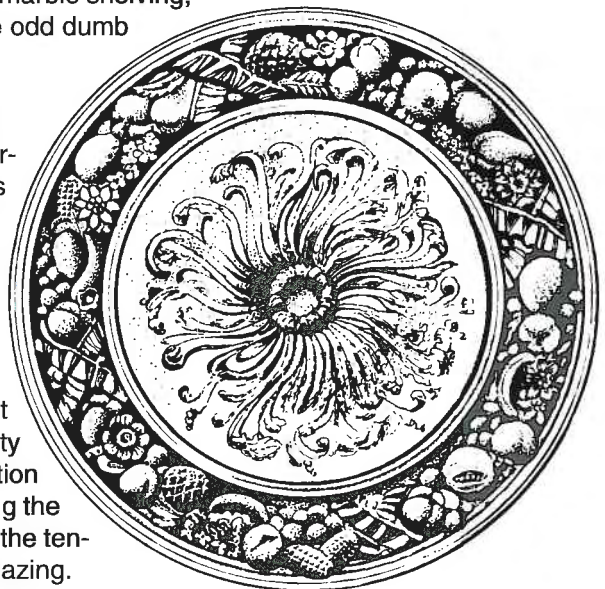
as the setting for modern heat sources with suitable remedial works to chimneys, can provide a more satisfactory focus for decorative and lighting effects.

Iron or wood banisters are occasionally removed because of a few broken balusters or because paint has built up to such a depth that it obscures the mould work. It invariably looks better to employ a craftsman to repair and reinstate the original than to install a modern replacement.

Delicate plasterwork is easily clogged by layers of paint and may need hours of painstaking work to clean. Many ceiling roses have been removed for this reason, yet the cleaning and repair of these and other decorative features, either by a dedicated home owner or a competent craftsman, is often rewarded with magnificent results.

There are many other internal details which may have survived and which, with the present enthusiasm for period furniture, will be much prized by owners. A few houses may still have Lincrusta dados up the stairs, stained glass stair windows, built-in kitchen dressers, laundry coppers and embossed ceiling papers. Basements seem immune from the ravages of fashion and there are surviving examples of the compact and useful arrangements of sculleries, walk-through larders with marble shelving, and maybe even the odd dumb waiter and external WC.

The re-use of the internal window shutter is a modern idea, but some are nailed up and painted over to such a degree that their owners may not be aware of them. Their use must add welcome security and thermal insulation without compromising the glazing pattern as is the tendency with double glazing.



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KENSINGTON PALACE CONSERVATION AREA

Kensington has been the location for a Royal Palace since King William III acquired Nottingham House and made it his main residence. Though George II was the last British sovereign to make it his home, Queen Victoria was born here in 1819, and it was here on 20 June 1837 that she learnt from the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Conyngham of the death of William IV and of her accession to the throne. The title "Royal Borough" was granted to the newly-formed Kensington Council in 1901 in recognition of her birthplace, and graciously conferred on the present borough within a month of its incorporation, on 7 April 1964.

Kensington Palace and Kensington Gardens together form one of the finest urban landscapes of any city in the world. In recognising this quality, the Council have also designated in this Conservation Area the unique Victorian and Edwardian residences of Kensington Palace Gardens, the elegant stucco terraces largely built on glebe lands in the middle of the last century and the wide variety of properties fronting the commercial bustle of Kensington's High Street and Church Street.

That so well-known a location continues to offer a wealth of good housing underlines the Council's overall aim to maintain and enhance the character and function of the Royal Borough as a residential area and to ensure that it remains an attractive place to live and work.

THE PROPOSALS STATEMENT

The initial chapters describes the Area's historic, visual and architectural background to define the character and appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The remainder provides conservation guidance, outlines enhancement proposals and lists the Council's criteria for dealing with new developments and any other matters concerning the character and appearance of the Area.

CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENTS NOW COVER: Kensington Palace; Kensington; Kensington Square; Chelsea Park/Carlyle; Holland Park; Sloane Square; Oxford Gardens/St. Quintin; Ladbroke; Queen's Gate; Brompton; Earl's Court Village; Earl's Court Square; Courtfield; Chelsea; De Vere, Kensington Court and Cornwall; Sloane Stanley; Royal Hospital; The Billings; Cheyne; Thames; Norland; Pembridge; Edwardes Square; Scarsdale and Abingdon; Thurloe/Smith's Charity; The Boltons.

Proposals Statements will be produced for all the conservation areas in the Borough.

THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (UDP) sets out the Council's policies and proposals for the whole Borough and is available from the Planning Information Office.

URBAN CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC BUILDINGS - LISTS AND MAPS; a handy booklet scheduling all the Borough's listed buildings and conservation areas. A new edition is in preparation.

MAPS OF EACH CONSERVATION AREA are available from the Planning Information Office.



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