



# FRAMEWORK FOR LANDSCAPE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Local Authorities  
Other Statutory and Non-statutory Bodies  
Land Management



# PLANNING AREAS





 **Hounslow**

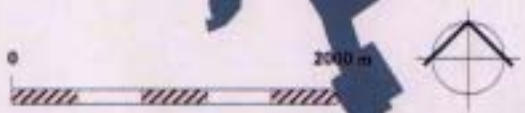
 **LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES**

 **ROYAL KINGSTON**

 **ELMBRIDGE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Plan 14** **LEGEND**

- Borough Boundary 
- 1994 Borough Boundary Changes 
- Metropolitan Open Land (EBC Strategic Open Urban Land) 
- Green Belt 



# AREA OF SPECIAL CHARACTER

## and Significant Sites under Pressure for Redevelopment

Hounslow

Brentford Waterfront & Gas Works

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

Willoughby Road River Bank

Cambridge Park

Meadowbank

Twickenham Baths

Tough's Boatyard

British Aerospace

ROYAL KINGSTON

Kingston Power Station

Hampton Wick corner

Kingston River front

Garage site  
Portsmouth Road

Barge Walk

Hampton Court Station

Ditton Field

Seething Wells

Plan 14

**LEGEND**

Borough Boundary

Plan 14 Overlay

1994 Borough Boundary Changes

Significant sites under pressure for development

Areas of Special Character



## 4. FRAMEWORK FOR LANDSCAPE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

The plethora of statutory agencies and authorities with responsibilities along the river through London results in complicated systems of planning and management. This chapter summarises the framework, within which the Thames Landscape Strategy will operate, looking first at the local authorities, then at other statutory and non-statutory bodies, and finally at landownership and management.

### LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The local authorities are the principal planning authorities in the Strategy area with responsibility for land use planning and building control. The authorities are the:

- **Borough of Elmbridge;**
- **London Borough of Hounslow;**
- **London Borough of Richmond upon Thames; and**
- **Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames.**

The Greater London Development Plan (GLDP) is being superseded by the London Boroughs' Unitary Development Plans (UDPs). Once they are adopted, the Strategy will be set within the context of a London-wide plan-led development system, as envisaged by Section 54A of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. UDPs continue to uphold many of the designations set out in the GLDP which denote London-wide significance; Metropolitan Open Land and Areas of Special Character being the most significant for the Thames and Thames-side. The Greater London Council (GLC) published its *Thames-side Guidelines* in 1985, containing detailed analysis and guidance on elements of the river's character throughout its length; no comparable guidance has until now been produced to supersede this.

Hounslow, Kingston and Richmond have all completed their UDP public inquiries and expect to adopt them in 1994/5. Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) sets out issues which are not adopted policy but which have a material effect on decisions on development control matters. SPG may be published by each borough and would be the most appropriate means of adopting the principles in this Strategy until they can be fully incorporated into the UDP at the first review stage.

Elmbridge Borough Council's Local Plan policies are set in the context of the Structure Plan of Surrey County Council.

#### Protective designations in UDPs and Local Plans

The Thames and its immediate environs are protected by a number of statutory designations, relating to their London-wide significance, explained in the following paragraphs:

- **Green Belt** is designated by the Secretary of State, with the intention of limiting the expansion and coalescence of built-up areas by a presumption against development. There is no Green Belt within the Strategy area, although a proposed extension affects Platt's Eyot and the Middlesex bank at Hampton (to be determined when the Inspector's report on the London Borough of Richmond UDP is published).
- **Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)** is open land which is of significance to London as a whole or to a part of London; it can be either publicly or privately owned, and with or without public access. Originally defined by the GLDP, the criteria for its designation by the Boroughs are now defined in the Secretary of State's Strategic Planning Guidance for London (1989), currently under review and being advised upon by the London Planning Advisory

Committee's (LPAC). In the Borough of Elmbridge, the equivalent of MOL is designated as Strategic Open Urban Land (SOUL). LPAC is advising the Secretary of State that water should be included in MOL.

- **Areas of Special Character (ASC)** are extensive areas of mainly open land with historic, landscape or nature conservation value whose preservation is essential to retain the character of London as a whole. Most ASC is also designated as MOL, Conservation Area, or Area of Nature Conservation Interest. ASC criteria are also set out in LPAC's Advice and in UDPs. LPAC proposes that the River Thames and appropriate areas of Thames-side should be identified in UDPs as London's Premier ASC and, where it is adjacent to or links areas of MOL, it should be included in that designation.<sup>35</sup>

Further categories of protection affect areas of borough-wide significance:

- **Conservation Areas** are areas of architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Although Conservation Area designation is usually associated with the built environment, and the built-up areas of the riverside are almost all protected by this designation, it can also be used for open land. Within its boundaries, Richmond has designated all the major historic open spaces, including much riverside land, as Conservation Areas. The Victorian Society is campaigning for the strengthening of Conservation Area legislation and the justification of initial designations.
- **Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest**, designated in the English Heritage Register, are identified for particular conservation and enhancement policies.
- **Public Open Space** gives public access to open land, which may or may not have another designation in addition.
- **Open Land of Townscape Importance** may not necessarily have public access or even be publicly owned, but opens views, generally in otherwise built up areas. Private sports fields, for example, usually have this designation.
- **Green Chains** are closely related open spaces of land (or water), linked together with way-marked footpaths and other pedestrian routes. They may connect across borough boundaries. The Thames, its associated open spaces and the towpaths are among the most significant green chains.
- **Green Corridors** are near continuous areas of open space that link nature conservation sites and act as conduits for plants and animals and which might also serve amenity, landscape and access roles. The Thames is the major green corridor.

Nature conservation designations, explained in detail on page 48, include:

- **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**
- **Sites of Metropolitan Importance**
- **Sites of Borough Importance**
- **Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance**
- **Local Nature Reserve**

### **Local Plan Projects**

Local plans contain projects as well as policies, to be carried out either by the local authority on its own land, by other agencies or by private owners. With careful budgeting and a phased work programme, many environmental improvements can be made. Other opportunities, such as grant aid, may contribute to project implementation.

A number of river-related initiatives have already been taken by the Boroughs; for example the London Borough of Richmond and the Royal Borough of Kingston have each set up an inter-departmental River Forum to co-ordinate the responsibilities of different departments of the Council and to produce a management plan in liaison with the local community. Richmond also has its Boat

Project, a floating barge converted as a study centre for use by schools and other organisations, and the Environment Centre in Richmond town centre. Hounslow has its Brentford Initiative and a particular interest in the promotion of green chains to improve walking links through and out of the borough.

### **London-wide local authority liaison**

The need for liaison between the London boroughs, and for advice on specialist issues, is fulfilled by associations of members of boroughs with political links and by an officer-level association. All these have an input into regional planning guidance and other London-wide issues through LPAC and through direct consultation with government departments on White Papers.

The member-level associations are the:

- **London Boroughs Association**
- **Association of London Authorities;**

and the 'chief officer' level bodies are the:

- **Association of London Borough Planning Officers**
- **London Chief Leisure Officers.**

## **OTHER STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY BODIES**

Working with the local authorities are many other bodies which also offer advice, some controls and grant aid. The most relevant for the Strategy are listed alphabetically below:

The **Association of Gardens Trusts** is a national movement for the conservation and restoration of parks and gardens of national, regional and local importance and for the creation of new gardens. The London Historic Parks and Gardens Trust and the Surrey Gardens Trust are members of the Association with direct interest in the Thames between Hampton and Kew.

The **British Tourist Authority**, set up in 1969, promotes and advises on tourism. It has a particular interest in access to the Thames visitor attractions such as the parks, royal palaces and historic houses.

**British Waterways** owns and manages 2,000 miles of the inland waterway canal and river network in Britain. Within this area it has particular management, navigational, leisure and development interests around the Grand Union Canal at Brentford.

The **Countryside Commission** is a statutory agency which promotes the conservation and enhancement of landscape beauty in England. It encourages the provision and improvement of facilities in the countryside and works to secure access for open air recreation.

The Commission has always regarded the town and country planning system as crucial in conserving the landscape. Its publication *Planning for a Greener Countryside* sets out the Commission's policies and recommendations on how best to plan for an attractive countryside. The Commission has recently emphasised to local authorities that it will be working at a strategic level, not commenting on development casework. The involvement of the Commission in the Thames Landscape Strategy is an example of the Commission and local authorities working at a strategic level which the Commission hopes will be used as a model elsewhere.

The Countryside Commission grant aids landscape and access management. The Thames Path is the newest of the Commission's national trails. London Boroughs' UDPs identify where gaps in the route can gradually be linked up. The Path is being way-marked by the local authorities with grant aid from the Commission. A Public Art Strategy for the Thames Path has also been initiated. With its interest in working at a strategic level, the Commission is keen to fund a co-ordinating officer to assist the implementation of the Thames Landscape Strategy.