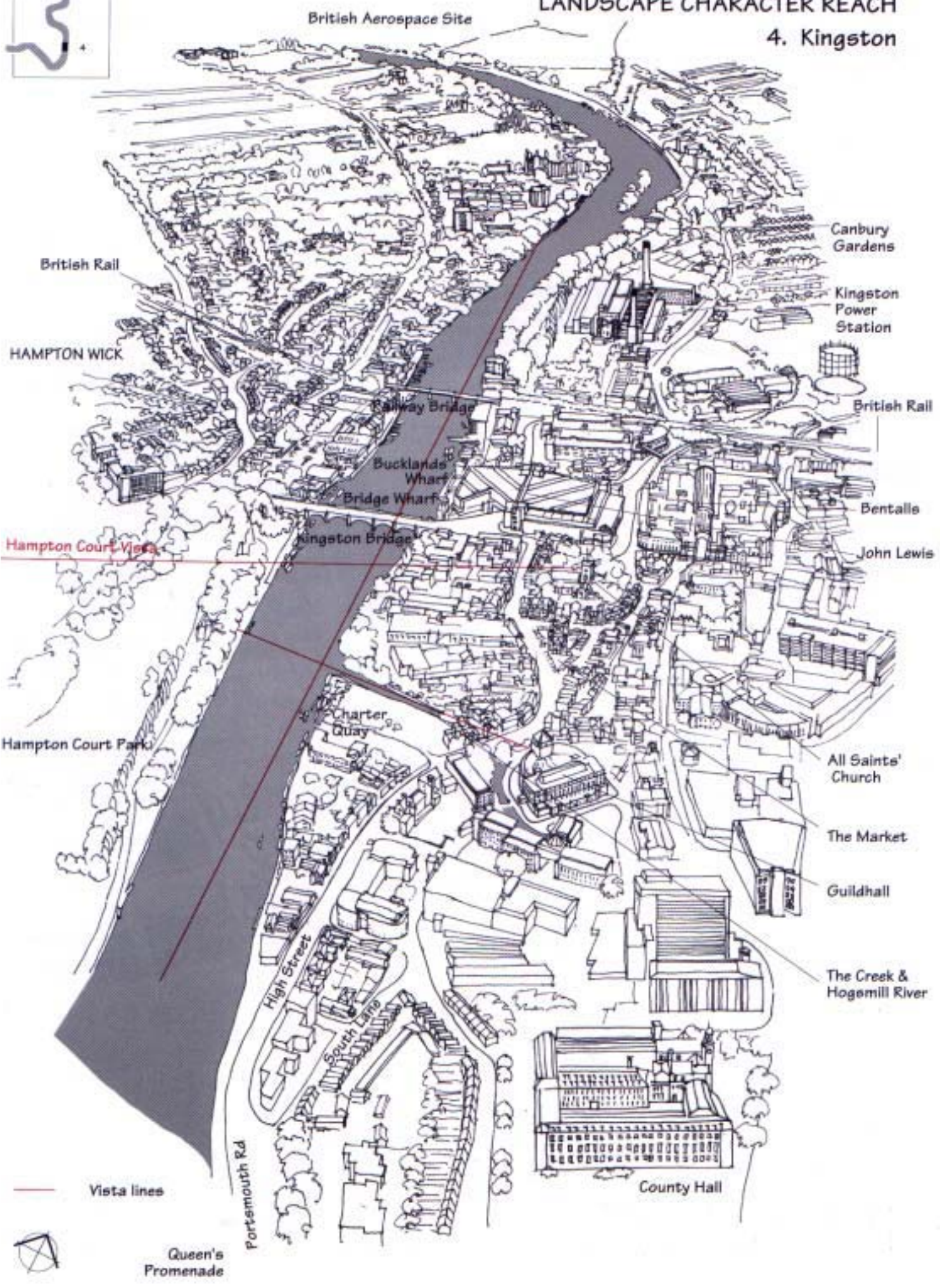


LANDSCAPE CHARACTER REACH

4. Kingston



British Aerospace Site

British Rail

HAMPTON WICK

Hampton Court Vista

Hampton Court Park

Canbury Gardens

Kingston Power Station

British Rail

Bentalls

John Lewis

All Saints' Church

The Market

Guildhall

The Creek & Hogemill River

County Hall

Vista lines

Queen's Promenade

Portsmouth Rd

High Street

South Lane

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The Kingston Reach covers the historic waterfront of the town, running along the Surrey bank from the end of the Queen's Promenade to the Kingston Railway Bridge. On the Middlesex bank, there are two distinct landscapes. South of Kingston Bridge, mature trees and parkland stretch right to the edge of the Barge Walk. Beyond Kingston Bridge, wharves, timber yards, offices and apartment blocks show a complete change of use and character.

At the southern **entrance to Kingston**, the Portsmouth Road swings right down to the river's edge, terminates the Queen's Promenade and becomes the High Street. 4-storey office buildings and a lone young ash tree mark the entrance to the town, contrasting with the row of two-storey houses along South Lane. The vacant garage site and the mature street plane trees mark the end of the sequence of large Portsmouth Road houses and apartments.

Beyond the Queen's Promenade, the **river path** narrows down to a paved strip along the water's edge. In some places the path is only 2 metres wide, while in others, it expands to small raised terraces. Offices, restaurants and boatclubs front directly onto the path, creating a lively, urban edge to the river. The buildings are 3-storeys or less, leaving the view of All Saints' Church unobstructed, and creating a comfortable relationship between building height and path width. There are still a number of vacant or derelict sites and temporary car parks along the water at Charter Quay which interrupt access along the river edge. Occasional trees and remnants of old railings help to provide character and coherence, but there is scope for making much more of the waterfront. The scattered conifers, shrub beds and coloured concrete paving do little to complement the historic character of the waterfront. A number of alleys connect back to the bustling market centre of Kingston. Mostly the alleys are dingy and forbidding, but The Griffin shows how the connections can be made more welcoming, opening off the attractive Creek and Hogsmill River.

The stone arches of **Kingston Bridge** provide the entrance to the town from the west and the focal centre of the waterfront from the river. The railway bridge beyond is less distinguished and could be improved by a fresh coat of paint and a more imaginative colour scheme.

North of Kingston Bridge, the **John Lewis development** changes the whole scale of the town and river frontage. The quality of the design and the use of materials is exemplary, but the size of the building, in combination with the Bentalls multi-storey car park and the Power Station beyond, has a major impact on the area. Bridge and Bucklands Wharves have become narrow, though well-used, strips and the scale and detail of the remaining boat sheds and the pub along Thames-side have become even more important to the character of the remaining waterfront of landing stages and slipways. The areas of temporary car parking on the water's edge detract from the scene.

Across the river in **Hampton Wick**, the old timber yards and wharves still determine the character of the bank. A Victorian warehouse has been imaginatively converted into offices and two apartment complexes have been built by the railway bridge, but the semi-circular, corrugated roofs of the sheds and the stacked timber and activity on the wharves continue to provide the main focus for the area. The boats are now largely pleasure cruisers and tourist launches rather than working barges, but the water is still full of activity.

There is a great contrast between the industrial waterfront on the north of Kingston Bridge and the tree'd parkland to the south. The **Barge Walk** is lined by a row of mature and rounded horse chestnuts and backed by a rank of columnar poplars. The trees and open parkland beyond create a rare London view from the built-up town waterfront on the opposite bank.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Kingston, set on rising gravelly ground, defended by the river and surrounding marshes, appears to have been settled along the Hogsmill river as early as the Neolithic era. Kingston is first recorded in an Anglo Saxon charter in 838 and then in 946, when it had become the venue for a number of **councils and coronations**, cited by King Edred as *'the royal town where kings were hallowed'*. The Coronation Stone still stands on display outside the present Guildhall.

A bridge has existed at Kingston since at least the 12th century, and until Putney Bridge opened in 1729 only London Bridge crossed the Thames below Kingston. The town's strategic importance as a key river crossing has meant that it has featured prominently in military campaigns until after the Civil War.

Although Kingston was never a great ceremonial centre after the Saxon period, it retained considerable status. The bishops of Winchester built a hall here in the early 13th century and King John, who granted the town its earliest charter, is also believed to have built a residence at Kingston (the 13th century column outside the library is reputed to come from the building). Merton Priory also had a substantial estate in Kingston including, by 1450, tofts and a large dovecote.

Despite the John Lewis block which has covered Old Bridge Street, Kingston still retains much of the street pattern of a **mediaeval riverside town**, with Church Street, the church, the market place, High Street and Thames Street comprising the best preserved such pattern in Greater London. The Clattern Bridge over the Hogsmill River is one of the oldest in Britain. The 12th-century structure is still intact despite various widenings.

Henry VIII's arrival at Hampton Court meant that Kingston became a favoured residence for many of his courtiers and the connections continued under Elizabeth. Wolsey had already linked Kingston to Hampton Court by virtue of his elaborate conduit system bringing spring water from Combe Hill to the palace. In 1989 English Heritage restored one of the three surviving conduit houses which are now all in private grounds.

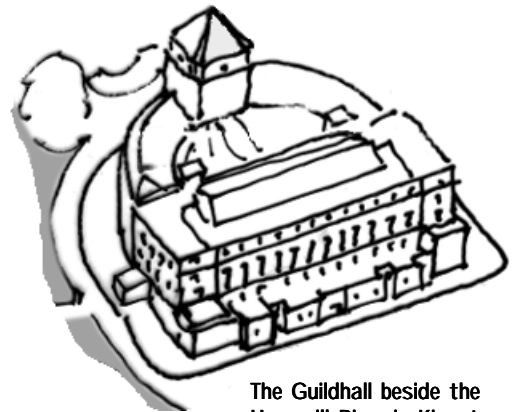
It was only after the Civil War in which the town suffered for its support for the Royalist cause, that Kingston's royal importance declined. But Kingston had always had a prominent function in the local economy quite apart from its ceremonial and social functions. As well as its **market** and horse fair serving the surrounding countryside - Celia Fiennes noted in the 1690s that Kingston was a *'great Market for Corne ... great quantity's of Corn and Malt sold'* - the town had a thriving industrial base. As early as 1264-68 Kingston bailiffs supplied 3,800 pitchers to royal residences from the pottery works here. After the bishops had removed to Esher in the 14th century, their residence became Kingston's tannery. It was destroyed by fire in 1963. Bark for tanning was in ready supply given the timber traffic from the wharves; the river made transport of hides a simple matter and by the 19th century, a third of the country's leather was processed in Kingston and other Surrey centres.

High Street formerly known as West-by-Thames was the **industrial heart** of the town. Behind the crowded street on the river there were malt, corn and coal wharves until the mid-19th century, and other industries included distilling, brewing, boat building and iron smelting. Turk's, the most famous of Kingston's boatyards, remains on the site where Richard Turk opened his business in 1740. *Three Men in a Boat* set out from Turk's. The iron posts on the Middlesex approach to the bridge came from Harris's iron foundry, which operated at 66 High Street and Harris' crest can still be discerned on each post. Building materials for the suburban expansion around Kingston continued to come in via these wharves until well into this century.

At the turn of the century, Kingston was a great centre for **pleasure boating**. The 'Amateur' Regatta, which began in 1829, is one of the oldest in the country. There were fashionable riverside gardens at Nuthall's Restaurant and the Sun Hotel - the former is now occupied by the Gazebo pub, although the two Victorian gazebos still survive. The grandiose facade of Nuthalls can still be seen above the Millets shopfront.

'I wonder why one instinctively feels that one is complimenting Kingston absurdly in saying that it is like a foreign town.'

Virginia Woolf



The Guildhall beside the Hogsmill River in Kingston



Turk's boatyard still survives, though it has seen better days



The Clattern Bridge over the Hogsmill River

Given the industry and commerce in the town, it is not surprising that the grander 18th- and 19th-century houses were located outside the town, particularly on the **Coombe and Kingston Hills**. A number survive, such as Combe Hurst built in 1835 and now part of Kingston University. The mature planting in the grounds of these houses still provides the town with a fine backdrop.

NATURE CONSERVATION

Hampton Court Park provides a good natural green edge to the river bank, contrasting with the urban waterfront on the Kingston side where the solid edge has virtually no vegetation³⁴. The Hogsmill River flows in to the Thames here, creating opportunities for greening the Thames' edge and the Hogsmill's banks. The National Rivers Authority is undertaking a corridor study of the Hogsmill River.

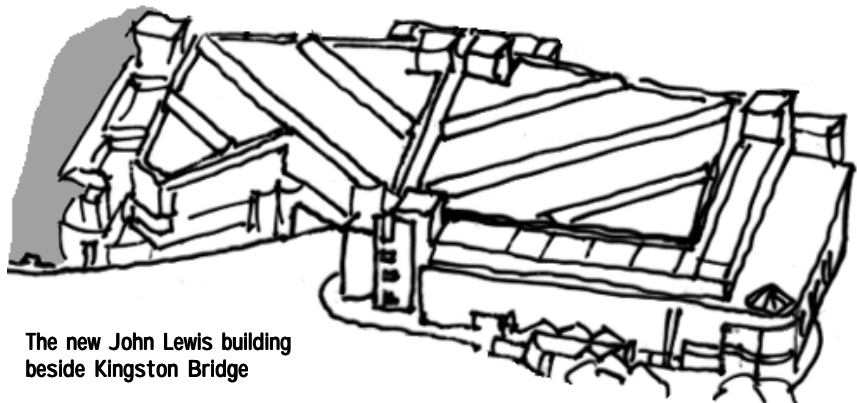
PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

Public access links through the Charter Quay area are part of the planning conditions for redevelopment. Once these links are completed, there will be continuous river edge access along the Kingston waterfront and up the Hogsmill River, combined with a series of pubs, cafes and restaurants. On the Middlesex bank, the towpath and Barge Walk start to the south of Kingston Bridge. North of the Bridge the waterfront is occupied by wharves. There are pedestrian links under the Bridge on both banks.

The Kingston waterfront is well-served by landing stages, slipways and steps. In addition to the Turk's Boats landing stages, the Royal Borough of Kingston is promoting the use of the landing stage at the John Lewis development for the tourist launches from Westminster Pier.

There are railway stations on both sides of the river at Kingston and Hampton Wick.

Sailing clubs are based on both banks of the river and Kingston wharves and landing stages are popular with fishermen.



The new John Lewis building beside Kingston Bridge

Boatyards: RJ Turk & Son

Water recreation: Hampton Court Sailing Club
Minima Yacht Club
Steadfast Sea Cadets
Turk's Boat Hire

Land recreation: Barge Walk
Kingston Museum
Kingston Waterfront Fishing
Thames Path
The Queen's Promenade
Hampton Court Park

Royal Parks
RBKuT
RBKuT
RBKuT
Grade I
Historic Royal Palaces

Refreshment: Calendars
Chez Lalee
El Canal
Farmhouse
John Lewis restaurant
Pizza Express
Riverside Vegetaria
The Bishop out of Residence
The Dining Hall
The Gazebo
The Outrigger
The Ram
The Kingston Mill
The Royal Barge
The Water's Edge Wine Bar

Landmarks: All Saints' Church, Kingston
Clattern Bridge, Kingston
Coronation Stone
County Hall, Kingston
Guildhall, Kingston
Kingston Bridge
Kingston Railway Bridge
The Market House, Kingston

Grade I
Grade I
Grade I
Grade II
Grade II
Grade II*
Grade II*

Church Comm.
RBKuT
RBKuT
SCC
RBKuT
RBKuT
British Rail
RBKuT

LOCAL INTEREST GROUPS:

Amenity and Local History:

Friends of Kingston Museum
Hampton Wick Association
Kingston Society
River Thames Society (Teddington-Windsor)
Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society

Nature Conservation:

London Wildlife Trust
Richmond & Twickenham Friends
of the Earth



Timber yards still survive on the Hampton Wick waterfront opposite Kingston

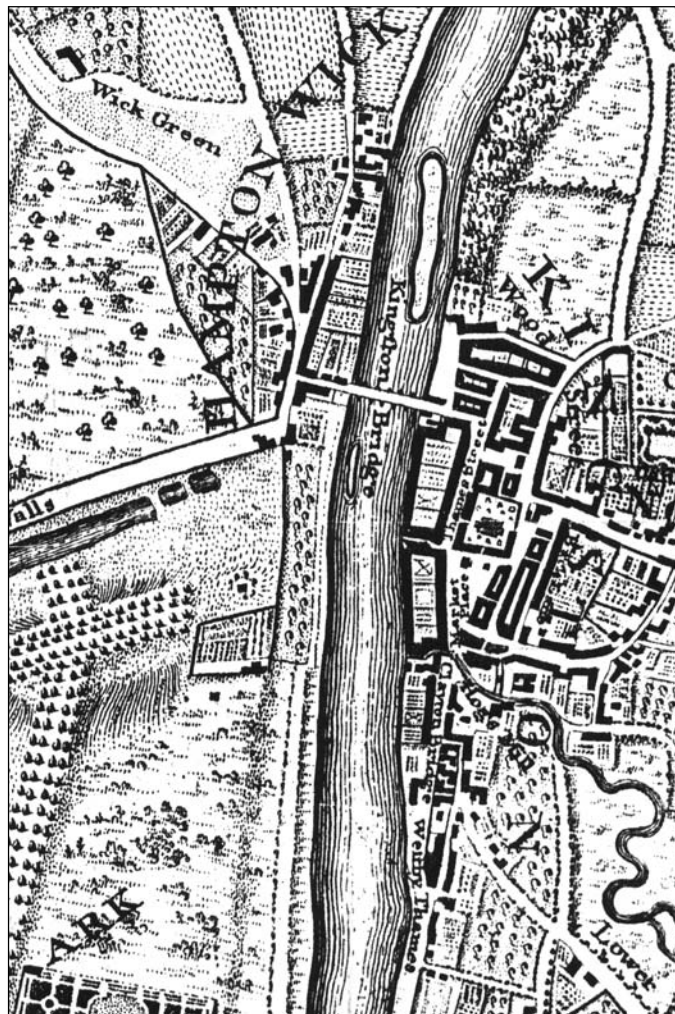
PRINCIPAL LAND USES

The Kingston Waterfront is mainly devoted to retail and commercial uses, with some areas of dereliction used for car parking or awaiting re-development. The waterfront is well-served by pubs and restaurants, as well as wharves and landing stages for public use.

The Middlesex bank is divided; south of the Bridge is Hampton Court Park while to the north offices, apartments and the timber yards and warehouses line the wharf frontage.

SIGNIFICANT SITES UNDER PRESSURE FOR RE-DEVELOPMENT:

<i>Sites</i>	<i>Main landscape factors for consideration</i>
Kingston Waterfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - views into site from Hampton Court Park and Palace - need to link public access along the river front from Kingston Bridge to the Queen's Promenade - the scale, set backs and materials of the historic town waterfront - public access to the river itself via steps and landing stages - pedestrian connection across the mouth of the Creek leading to the Hogsmill River
Portsmouth Road Garage site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - importance of mature plane trees - need to keep any development low to retain the contrast between the South Lane row of 2-storey houses and the 4-storey office buildings which mark the entrance to Kingston



Kingston in 1745 by John Rocque

The following proposals have been identified as part of the survey and analysis of the Thames Landscape Strategy. The policy proposals amplify the issues raised in Chapter 2 to be included in Supplementary Planning Guidance. The project and management proposals are recommended for incorporation into national agency and local government work programmes, co-ordinated by a Project Officer and Officers' Steering Committee (see Chapter 5). All proposals would require full consultation before implementation:

Policy Proposals

	<i>Policy</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Pol 4.1	Conserve the character of the Kingston waterfront either side of the bridge, with the parkland, timber yards and wharves opposite.	RBKuT:STR 15, UD 1 LBRuT
Pol 4.2	Protect the visual links between: Hampton Court Palace and All Saints' Church tower, Kingston The Thames and the Guildhall tower up the Hogsmill River	LBRuT: RIV 1, ENV 2 RBKuT: STR 12,15, UD 1
Pol 4.3	Prevent any further high buildings which would encroach into the view from Hampton Court Park.	LBRuT: 13.53 (5) RBKuT: STR 12,15, UD 1
Pol 4.4	Conserve the building height and use contrast between the Portsmouth Road and the entrance to Kingston at South Lane.	RBKuT: UD 1,19
Pol 4.5	Conserve and enhance the nature conservation interest of the river and its corridor, with particular attention to the outflow of the Hogsmill river.	RBKuT:STR 15
Pol 4.6	Conserve and increase the number of landing stages and steps providing access to the river.	RBKuT:OL 17,18
Pol 4.7	Eliminate visible car parking from the Kingston Waterfront.	RBKuT: UD 1
Pol 4.8	Keep the river edge buildings to the south of Kingston Bridge under 4 storeys.	RBKuT: UD 19
Pol 4.9	Encourage the retention of the remaining river-related industry in Hampton Wick and resist their replacement by uses not functionally related to the river.	LBRuT: RIV 8
Pol 4.10	Ensure that the eventual redevelopment of Kingston Bridge House is of a height and design which complements the rest of Hampton Wick and no longer intrudes into Hampton Court Park or the river landscape.	LBRuT: ENV 10, 21 LBRuT: 13.53 (5/9)

Project Proposals

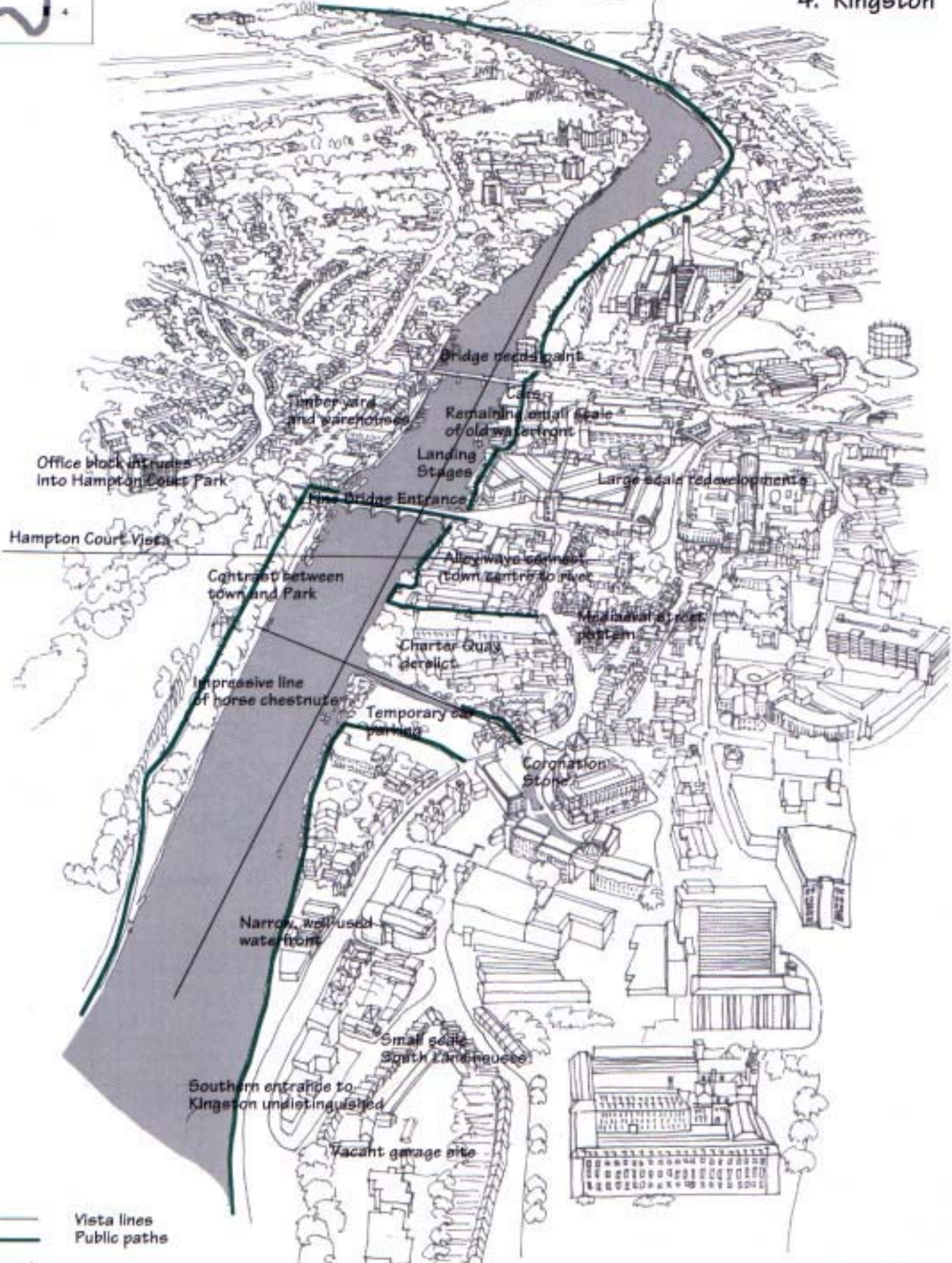
	<i>Project</i>	<i>Initiative</i>
Proj 4.1	Plant more street trees at southern end of High Street to frame the entrance to Kingston.	RBKuT: UD 11
Proj 4.2	Bridge The Creek leading to the Hogsmill River for pedestrians walking along the Kingston riverfront.	RBKuT: UD 32,OL15
Proj 4.3	Make the final links through Kingston to the Hogsmill Path.	RBKuT: UD 32,OL15
Proj 4.4	Design the Kingston waterfront path as a continuous public space, co-ordinating materials, planting, seating and signing.	RBKuT: UD 31
Proj 4.5	Improve the quality and safety of pedestrian connections between the Market and the river.	RBKuT: UD 32,OL15 Private landowner
Proj 4.6	Re-develop the Charter Quay waterfront with public and commercial facilities and continuous public access along the edge of the river.	RBKuT: UD 32,OL15 Private landowner
Proj 4.7	Re-develop the garage site in scale with the South Lane houses, retaining the mature plane trees.	RBKuT: UD 19 Private landowner
Proj 4.8	Re-paint Kingston Railway Bridge.	RBKuT: UD 33, British Rail

Management Proposals

	<i>Management</i>	<i>Initiative</i>
Mng 4.1	Manage the outflow of The Creek/Hogsmill River for nature conservation in line with the Hogsmill Catchment Management Plan and objectives for restoration of the Hogsmill River.	RBKuT NRA
Mng 4.2	Manage the mature Horse Chestnuts on the Barge Walk to retain the important line of trees along the water's edge.	LBRuT
Mng 4.3	Manage the walls and river wall along the town centre waterfront to enhance the nature conservation value.	RBKuT

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER REACH

4. Kingston



— Vista lines
— Public paths



ANALYSIS