





Historic plan - Environs of London by Davies, 1841 (credit: RBKC Libraries)

## 2 Historic context

### Historic development

Notting Hill Gate has developed along the route of the old Roman road to Silchester and remains a key route linking London to the west. It was the site of a turnpike tollgate until 1864, giving rise to the name Notting Hill Gate.

1868 saw the opening of the Metropolitan Railway (now the Circle and District lines) with a station on the north side, which helped to establish Notting Hill Gate as a popular shopping street. The Central Line followed later, in 1900, with a station on the south side of Notting Hill Gate.

In 1957/58, planning permission was granted for extensive redevelopment of the district centre which dramatically altered the townscape. The proposals included radical modern development and road widening to improve traffic flow, and a combined new station concourse beneath the road.



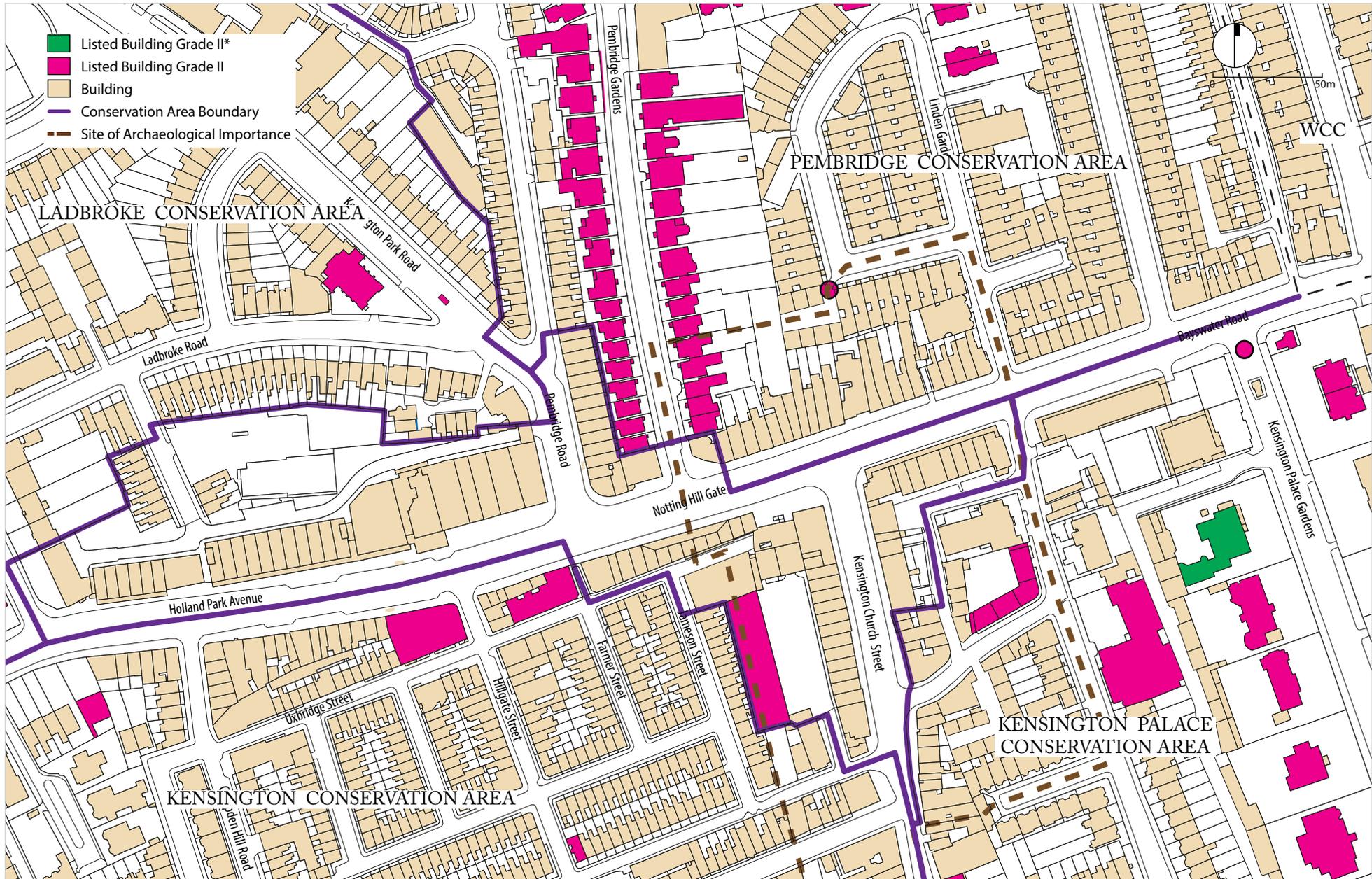
Notting Hill Gate 1920's, looking west (credit: RBKC Libraries)



Notting Hill Gate 1957, looking east from the junction with Hillgate Street (credit: Barbara Deney - Notting Hill and Holland Park past)



Demolition in the 1950's (credit: Barbara Deney - Notting Hill and Holland Park past)



## Heritage assets

The adjacent plan identifies the designated heritage assets in the proximity of the study area including conservation areas and listed buildings.

Some of the development sites lie outside of conservation area boundaries. However, the study area is within the buffer zone of the following conservation areas:

### Kensington Conservation Area

- Notably the sub area of Hillgate Village which has a dense urban grain and uniform layout of two storey terraced streets clearly distinct from the adjacent district centre.

### Ladbroke Conservation Area

- Classical style, carefully designed so that building lines run along contours to avoid stepped development. The Ladbroke Estate was developed around the concept of Ladbroke Grove as an axis with spacious villas around communal gardens.

### Pembridge Conservation Area

- Based around Pembridge Square as the centrepiece of the conservation area. Broadly characterised by tall narrow buildings in the south east e.g. Linden Gardens and Clanricarde Gardens, contrasting with the more spacious villa development to the north.

### Kensington Palace Conservation Area

- Long linear streets reflecting the alignment of Kensington Palace itself. Most notably the grand tree lined street of listed individual properties on Kensington Palace Gardens.

The four conservation areas contain a spread of listed buildings, with two clear concentrations identifiable on the map – along Kensington Palace Gardens to the south of Notting Hill Gate, including the gates at the northern entrance, and Pembridge Gardens to the north.

The Grade II listed Kensington Temple is a key landmark in proximity of the study area. There are also two unique features in the vicinity which are Grade II listed: the cabmen's shelter on Kensington Park Road and the archway to Linden Mews. There are a number of listed buildings within the SPD area: the Gate Cinema with its fine interior, the Coronet with its distinctive cupola and the District and Circle Line Station.

A comprehensive commentary about the area's heritage assets and their significance can be found in the Conservation Area Proposal Statements for each of the above. The View Study undertaken by RBKC identifies 39 views which will be used to assess the townscape impact of future development. The document details the heritage assets and significance in each view.

There is a designated Site of Archaeological Importance in Notting Hill Gate (see plan opposite) which will require liaison with English Heritage and any necessary archaeological investigations prior to development of sites within this area.



District and Circle Line Station



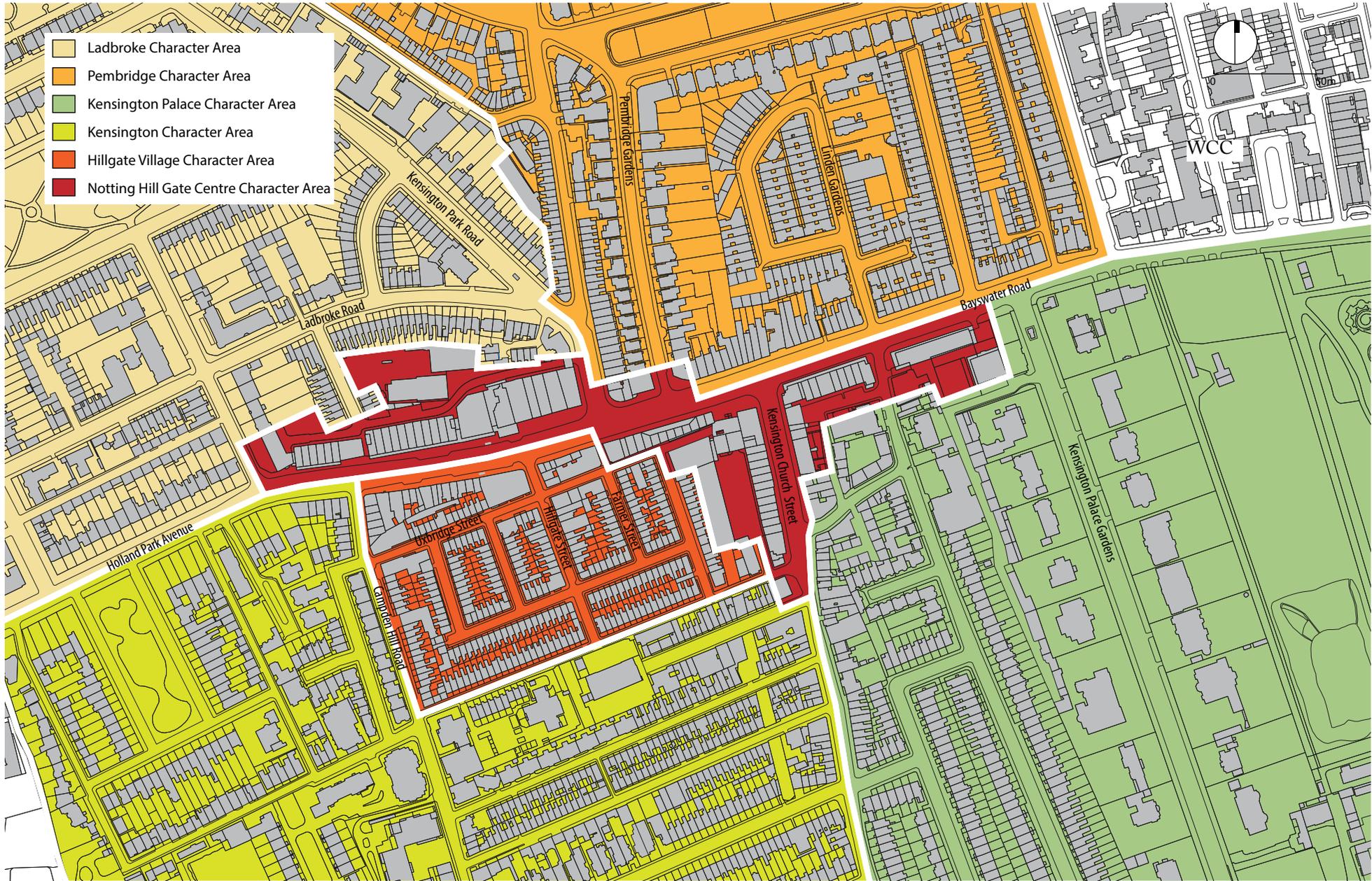
Cabmen's shelter, Kensington Park Road



Coronet Cinema, Notting Hill Gate



Gate Cinema, Notting Hill Gate



Character areas plan

## Character areas

A number of character areas can be identified which relate to the study area. These have been defined by their distinct characteristics including building use, scale, date and style, urban structure, street and block pattern. This is not to imply that future development should replicate established character areas, more that they should be considered when assessing the impact of proposed development and key design principles should be applied to facilitate the integration of old and new.

A number of the areas are covered by Conservation Area Proposal Statements, which provide a comprehensive character assessment to supplement this report.

The 6 character areas are:

### Notting Hill Gate Centre

This area contains a large proportion of the district centre. Its characteristic mix of uses and high level of activity differentiate it from its surroundings. The area is defined by the east-west arterial route flanked by modern development of the 1950's and 1960's. The legacy left by this redevelopment and road widening scheme has created a traffic dominated centre. The building footprints, height and massing are typically larger than the predominant historic urban grain found across much of the Borough.



Notting Hill Gate

### Kensington Palace

The area between Kensington Church Street and Kensington Gardens is visibly more spacious than the other character areas. Its centrepiece is Kensington Palace, bounded on the east by the open space of Kensington Gardens. To the west of Kensington Palace is a clear pattern of long parallel streets aligned north-south. The most notable is the broad tree lined Kensington Palace Gardens which is unique in its large plot sizes and individual properties, many of which are Grade II and Grade II\* listed.



Kensington Palace

### Ladbroke

This area is unified by Victorian classical architecture, despite multiple architects being involved in the development of the estate in the 19th century. Ladbroke Grove forms a strong axis and Ladbroke Square Garden is a dominant feature of the plan layout. Long vistas into the estate are guided by grand sweeping crescents and vistas out of the estate are terminated by landmark buildings. The character area is bounded by Portobello Road which can be identified as a sub area in its own right due to the unique character afforded by its widely recognised associations with the street market, antiques, bohemian and multicultural influences. At its southern edge, the area has an abrupt interface with the rear of properties on Notting Hill Gate e.g. Ivy Lodge.



Kensington Temple, Ladbroke CA

### Pembridge

There are a variety of building types in this character area which can be broadly classified into two groups. These are: the detached villas to the north (which has a spacious feel where buildings are set back from the road) and tall narrow terraces found in the area around Linden Gardens. Pembridge Square separates the two areas and forms a feature of the character area. Development predominantly dates back to the mid 19th century, similar to the Ladbroke area, with some mid 20th century additions, typically larger blocks containing flats. A linear strip along the south and west boundaries can be identified as a sub area, characterised by the independent shops and busy pedestrian and vehicle routes which bring a different kind of activity and vibe to the north side of Notting Hill Gate, Pembridge Road and up to Portobello Road.



Linden Gardens, Pembridge CA

### Hillgate Village

Hillgate Village is within Kensington Conservation Area but has its own distinct identity. Its strong visual coherence is derived from the uniform grid of two storey brick and stucco terraces. Its compact nature gives the area a strong sense of enclosure. The buildings are personalised with a variety of pastel painted facades.



Farm Place, Hillgate Village, Kensington CA

## Kensington

The area largely consists of straight, uniform terraced streets. The layout of houses in the north west of the character area break the pattern, with their arrangement set around Campden Hill Square. Elsewhere, the streets are predominantly aligned east-west with two main north-south routes: Campden Hill Road and Kensington Church Street. Buildings are predominantly 3 storeys, or 4-5 storeys along Campden Hill Road.

A key challenge in the redevelopment of Notting Hill Gate will be the creation of a coherent townscape given the juxtaposition between Notting Hill Gate Centre and the historic character areas, particularly Hillgate Village. Further details of key views and the heritage assets within them are addressed in the Views Study for Notting Hill Gate.



Campden Hill, Kensington CA

## Key issues

Appraisal of the historic context around Notting Hill Gate identifies the following issues that any policy, guidance or scheme must address:

- **That the redevelopment of the 1950's buildings is a huge opportunity to improve the quality of the environment at Notting Hill Gate**
- **That the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas is preserved or enhanced, and that proper assessment takes place of any archaeological assets, and their preservation is ensured.**

