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- 5.6** The Council will support the improvement of the environment of conservation areas through street works and the upkeep of open spaces. Many conservation areas are cluttered by street furniture such as lamp-posts and signs and, where possible, the Council will reduce unnecessary elements. The Council will pay particular attention to the design and location of street furniture in conservation areas.

Demolition

- 5.7** The architectural quality of a building and its contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area may be severely compromised by partial demolition, and this will be taken into account when the Council considers any proposals. It is considered that a building's contribution to the character of a conservation area stems not only from its street frontage but also the side and rear elevations. The historic plan form and integrity of the buildings also make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation areas. Redevelopment behind a retained front facade therefore is generally not acceptable.

CD51 TO RESIST DEMOLITION OR PARTIAL DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS IN CONSERVATION AREAS UNLESS:

- (a) THE BUILDING OR PART OF THE BUILDING STRUCTURE MAKES NO POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE AREA; OR
- (b) THE CONDITION OF THE BUILDING IS PROVED TO BE SUCH THAT REFURBISHMENT IS NOT POSSIBLE; AND
- (c) A SATISFACTORY SCHEME FOR REDEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN APPROVED.

- 5.8** Any consent for demolition will normally be subject to a condition that the building shall not be demolished until a contract for new work has been made.

Development in Conservation Areas

- 5.9** The Borough contains some of the best examples of Victorian and Edwardian townscape in London. Overall, the residential environment is of the highest quality. The Council, therefore, will seek to protect or enhance this through the control of development in conservation areas. In exercising such control, careful regard will be had to the content of Conservation Area Proposals Statements.

CD52 TO ENSURE THAT ANY DEVELOPMENT IN A CONSERVATION AREA PRESERVES OR ENHANCES THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE AREA.

CD53 TO ENSURE THAT ALL DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS IS TO A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN AND IS COMPATIBLE WITH:

- (a) CHARACTER, SCALE AND PATTERN;
 - (b) BULK AND HEIGHT;
 - (c) PROPORTION AND RHYTHM;
 - (d) ROOFSCAPE;
 - (e) MATERIALS;
 - (f) LANDSCAPING AND BOUNDARY TREATMENT;
- OF SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT.

CD54 TO CONSIDER THE EFFECT OF PROPOSALS ON VIEWS IDENTIFIED IN THE COUNCIL'S CONSERVATION AREA PROPOSALS STATEMENTS, AND GENERALLY WITHIN, INTO, AND OUT OF CONSERVATION AREAS, AND THE EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENT ON SITES ADJACENT TO SUCH AREAS.

5.10 In order for the Council to consider fully and in detail any proposals for new buildings, alterations, or extensions which will affect the character or appearance of a conservation area, sufficient information must be supplied with any planning application.

CD55 NORMALLY TO REQUIRE FULL PLANNING APPLICATIONS IN CONSERVATION AREAS.

5.11 The other policies in this chapter will be rigorously applied in conservation areas.

5.12 In applying these policies, the Council will consider not only the street scene, but views at the rear from other buildings and gardens, as these are also important to residents' amenities.

5.13 The Council will be particularly attentive to those unsympathetic small-scale developments and extensions, the significance of which lies in the incremental and cumulative effects which can so easily be detrimental to the local environment.

CD56 NORMALLY TO RESIST UNSYMPATHETIC SMALL-SCALE DEVELOPMENTS WHERE THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF A NUMBER OF SIMILAR PROPOSALS WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA.

5.14 In dealing with applications for alterations and extensions, the Council will seek to enhance buildings by encouraging the reinstatement of missing architectural features.

Listed Buildings

- 5.15** There are over 3,700 buildings, widely dispersed within the Royal Borough, which are included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. The Council considers that their preservation, protection and correct maintenance is of great importance.
- 5.16** The Council will, as the need arises, propose further buildings suitable for listing to the Department of National Heritage.
- 5.17** In cases where there is an imminent threat to such buildings by demolition or development proposals, the Council will consider use of its powers to serve Building Preservation Notices.

Demolition of Listed Buildings

- 5.18** The Council has control over the proposed demolition of all listed buildings in the Borough. The general presumption is that all buildings on the statutory list will be preserved because of their architectural or historic interest. Redevelopment behind a retained facade is usually unacceptable.
- CD57** TO RESIST THE DEMOLITION OF LISTED BUILDINGS IN WHOLE OR IN PART, OR THE REMOVAL OR MODIFICATION OF FEATURES OF ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE (BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL).

Works to Listed Buildings

- 5.19** In dealing with works to listed buildings there is a presumption firmly in favour of preservation. All proposed works to the building should be shown on an application for listed building consent. It should be demonstrated that any matter that might be the subject of control under other legislation or by another authority can be dealt with, without adversely affecting the building's character.

5.20 The other policies in this chapter will also apply to listed buildings.

CD58 NORMALLY TO RESIST PROPOSALS TO ALTER LISTED BUILDINGS UNLESS:

- (a) THE ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES, AND LATER FEATURES OF INTEREST, BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL, WOULD BE RETAINED; AND
- (b) ALTERATIONS WOULD BE IN KEEPING WITH THE STYLE OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDING; AND
- (c) ALL WORKS, WHETHER THEY BE REPAIRS OR ALTERATIONS, ARE CARRIED OUT IN A CORRECT SCHOLARLY MANNER, UNDER PROPER SUPERVISION, BY SPECIALIST LABOUR WHERE APPROPRIATE; AND
- (d) THE INTEGRITY, PLAN FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE BUILDING INCLUDING THE GROUND FLOOR PRINCIPAL ROOMS, MAIN STAIRCASE AND SUCH OTHER AREAS OF THE BUILDING AS MAY BE IDENTIFIED AS BEING OF SPECIAL INTEREST ARE RETAINED.

5.21 The Council will provide advice on the repair and maintenance of listed buildings. Detailed advice will also be provided in Conservation Area Proposals Statements and other publications. In considering proposals to alter listed buildings the Council will encourage the removal of later inappropriate additions and alterations.

Uses

5.22 The best use for a listed building is the use for which it was designed, and this use, particularly where residential, should continue. Proposals for the change of use of listed buildings which were designed for uses no longer required will be considered in the light of other policies in the Plan. The new and adapted use must not diminish the architectural or historic value of the building. The implications of complying with other statutory requirements, e.g. for fire escapes, will be taken into account in determining applications for change of use.

CD59 TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF LISTED BUILDINGS FOR THEIR ORIGINAL PURPOSE.

CD60 TO RESIST THE CHANGE OF USE OF A LISTED BUILDING WHICH WOULD MATERIALLY HARM ITS CHARACTER.

5.23 The setting of listed buildings is of great importance, particularly landscaped spaces and the character of neighbouring properties. Unsympathetic neighbouring development may detract from the setting of buildings on the statutory list.

CD61 TO RESIST DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE SETTING OF A LISTED BUILDING.

6 SHOPFRONTS AND ADVERTISEMENTS

Shopfronts

6.1 Many of the shopping streets in the Borough are of national and international repute; many are included in or border on conservation areas. Though the perceived quality of any particular proposals for new advertisements or shopfronts must depend, at least to some extent, on aesthetic taste, excessive or inconsiderate advertisement defeats its own ends.

6.2 The Council's aim is to protect or improve the general quality of advertisement and shopfront design and to limit the quantity where excess would spoil the character of particular shops or shopping areas. The Council will prepare, for the guidance of applicants, from time to time, comprehensive design guidelines for shopfronts and advertising for each of the Borough's principal shopping streets. Design guidelines have already been prepared for Kensington High Street, Earls Court Road, King's Road and Portobello Road. Guidelines will also be incorporated in Conservation Area Proposals Statements.

CD62 TO ENCOURAGE THE RETENTION OF SHOPFRONTS OF QUALITY, EITHER ORIGINAL TO THE BUILDING OR LATER AND OF HISTORIC VALUE. IN THOSE EXCEPTIONAL CASES WHERE THE FABRIC IS BEYOND REPAIR, THE REPLACEMENT SHOULD BE DESIGNED AS A SCHOLARLY REPLICA OF THE EXISTING SHOPFRONT IN RESPECT OF ITS DESIGN, FORM, DETAILING AND MATERIALS.

6.3 A shopfront should not be designed in isolation but conceived as part of the whole building into which it is fitted. The fascia and columns or pilasters which support it form the frame into which the shopfront is set. Whilst there may be scope for individual design in shopfronts it is important that this frame is maintained in order to relate the shopfront to the building above and neighbouring properties.

CD63 TO SEEK THAT ALL NEW SHOPFRONTS RESPECT THE BUILDING'S ORIGINAL STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK.

6.4 In old buildings, the original fascia and pilasters or columns which form the frame of the shopfront should be retained or reinstated as appropriate.

CD64 NORMALLY TO REQUIRE, WHERE SHOP UNITS ARE COMBINED, NEW SHOPFRONTS AND SIGNAGE TO BE INSTALLED WITHIN THE ORIGINAL SURROUNDS AND NOT TO OBSCURE THEM.

6.5 Modern shopfronts are often temporary street features adapting constantly to changing retail demands. It is important that transient retail fashions do not disrupt the character of a building to achieve short-term requirements. House styles may have to be adapted to fit in with the age and character of the building in which the shopfront is situated.

6.6 All shopfronts should incorporate the property number in their design.

6.7 Open shopfronts can break up the continuity of a street frontage and leave an undesirable gap in a shopping parade.

CD65 TO RESIST OPEN SHOPFRONTS.

6.8 Exceptions may be made where this would allow the provision of an open air restaurant facility, and where nearby residents would not be disturbed or pedestrians obstructed.

6.9 The under-use of the upper floors of retail premises is of concern to the Council, particularly where the lawful use is for residential purposes. Often the lack of separate access prevents the use of upper floors. The policy below aims to prevent the removal of separate access and to seek its reinstatement where possible. Exceptions may be made only where adequate alternative means of separate access is provided or where justified for security reasons.

CD66 TO RESIST NEW SHOPFRONTS WHICH WOULD INVOLVE THE REMOVAL OF EXISTING SEPARATE ACCESS TO RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION OR PRECLUDE THE RESTORATION OF SUCH ACCESS IF ALREADY REMOVED, AND TO SEEK, WHERE POSSIBLE, THE REINSTATEMENT OF SUCH ACCESS.

6.10 Shopping centres are public places and therefore it is particularly important that high street premises are accessible to all. Easy access for people with special mobility needs, both into and within buildings, is generally beneficial to all shoppers. Retailers and developers are referred to Part M of the Building Regulations and to the shopfront design guides produced by the Council.

CD67 TO REQUIRE WHERE APPROPRIATE THAT SHOPFRONT PREMISES ARE ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL MOBILITY NEEDS, INCLUDING LEVEL ACCESS AND APPROPRIATE DOOR WIDTHS INTO THE BUILDING.

Advertisements

6.11 The Council considers it important to control signs and advertisements since, if insensitively handled in size, design and siting, they can detrimentally affect amenity by causing harm to the character and appearance of buildings and streets and add clutter and visual confusion to the street scene.

CD68 TO RESIST ADVERTISEMENTS IF:

- (a) BY REASON OF SIZE, SITING, DESIGN, MATERIALS OR ILLUMINATION THEY WOULD HARM THE APPEARANCE OF A BUILDING OR THE STREET SCENE; OR
- (b) THEY WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT PUBLIC SAFETY.

6.12 Certain types of advertisements can cause particular harm to the appearance of buildings and the street scene, and the Council will therefore discourage the following: freestanding advertisements on forecourts, signs or advertisements above fascia level, and more than one projecting sign per shop unit. The Council will exercise firm control over advertisements in conservation areas and on listed buildings. Illuminated box signs are particularly inappropriate in these areas and on such buildings.

6.13 Projecting signs should be located at fascia level and should not damage original mouldings or console brackets. Size, design and illumination will be carefully controlled.

Blinds, Awnings and Flags

6.14 The Council considers that it is important to control blinds, awnings and flags because, if poorly designed or over-prominent, they can detract from the appearance of buildings and be obtrusive features in the street scene.

CD69 TO PERMIT AWNINGS OR BLINDS WHICH ARE IN CHARACTER WITH THE AGE AND STYLE OF THE BUILDING IN WHICH THEY ARE SITUATED.

6.15 Permission will only be granted for blinds which have no adverse impact on the quality of the street scene. Curved rigid-framed blinds will generally be discouraged and will not usually be acceptable in conservation areas or on listed buildings.

6.16 Bright, fluorescent, glossy or metallic finish blinds, and those which obscure fascias will generally be discouraged.

6.17 Blinds will generally not be permitted above first floor cill level.

6.18 Flagpoles in limited numbers can be a lively feature in commercial streets. However, the street scene may be harmed by an uncontrolled proliferation of flags. This is particularly so in predominantly residential areas.

CD70 TO PERMIT FLAGPOLES UNLESS THEIR SITING WOULD HARM THE CHARACTER OF AN AREA OR WOULD NOT PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF A CONSERVATION AREA.

Hoardings

6.19 Advertisement hoardings, either free-standing or attached to buildings, are generally considered to be unacceptable as permanent features of the street scene as they detract from townscape quality.

CD71 TO RESIST THE ERECTION OF PERMANENT HOARDINGS.

6.20 Temporary hoardings may be approved where they can be advantageously used for screening of building sites or land which is unsightly and where such hoardings would not in themselves be injurious to amenity or constitute a danger to public safety. In the case of buildings in need of refurbishment, consent for an advertising hoarding will only be granted when a contract has been let for the works.

Estate Agents' Boards

6.21 The proliferation of estate agents' boards in the Borough has been curbed through the identification of areas where they may not be displayed without express consent. Within these areas, advertisement consent will be required for any estate agents' board. These areas, subject to the Secretary of State's direction, will be periodically reviewed. Agents are advised to check with the local planning authority whether or not an area is subject to special controls before erecting boards.

7 TREES

(See also Planning Standards Chapter)

7.1 Trees in cities are a valuable amenity which once removed can rarely be adequately replaced; it is often only when a tree has been removed, that its value becomes apparent. Trees act as screens; they provide privacy and mask unwelcome views. Trees are valuable as contrast and relief to bricks and mortar and can be complementary to new developments. Trees act as barriers to wind and noise and as a filter to pollution. They are also a wildlife resource.

CD72 TO RESIST DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS THAT WOULD RESULT IN AN UNNECESSARY LOSS OF TREES.

CD73 TO ENCOURAGE THE PLANTING OF TREES IN NEW DEVELOPMENT.

7.2 The Council recognises the importance of trees as valuable elements of the urban landscape. The consent of the Council must be obtained if it is proposed to cut down, prune (lop, top), uproot or destroy any tree which is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Most of the significant trees in the Borough are already protected by TPOs but the Council will continue to make new Orders where particular trees or groups of trees

are threatened. Trees in conservation areas are also protected. Six weeks notice must be given to the Council if it is proposed to carry out any work to a tree in a conservation area. This applies only to trees with a trunk diameter greater than 75mm at 1.5m in height. The purpose of this requirement is to give the Council a final opportunity to make an Order where appropriate before work is carried out. Penalties for contravention are the same as those for trees which are subject to a TPO.

7.3 The Council views unauthorised tree works very seriously and will pursue a policy of initiating prosecution in appropriate cases. The Council will give publicity to this policy and the penalties.

CD74 TO RESIST THE LOSS OF TREES UNLESS THEY ARE DEAD, DYING OR POTENTIALLY A PUBLIC DANGER, CAUSING AN ACTIONABLE NUISANCE OR, EXCEPTIONALLY, WHEN REMOVAL IS REQUIRED IN A REPLANTING PROGRAMME.

CD75 TO REQUIRE WHERE PRACTICABLE AN APPROPRIATE REPLACEMENT FOR ANY TREE THAT IS FELLED.

7.4 Where development is permitted on sites with existing trees which are to be retained, it is important to protect the trees from damage during building operations. The Council will attach appropriate conditions to planning permissions to ensure the necessary protective measures are put in place and maintained. Further guidance is given in the Planning Standards Chapter.

CD76 TO ENSURE ADEQUATE PROTECTION OF TREES ON SITES IN THE COURSE OF DEVELOPMENT.

7.5 New planting will be encouraged during the next decade so that some mature trees will be established when mature and overmature trees have to be removed. The use of native species will be encouraged where appropriate.

7.6 The Council will pursue a programme of care and maintenance, planting and replacement designed to keep at least the current standard of tree-lined amenity prevailing in the Borough streets.

7.7 The Council will increase the stock of trees on public land throughout the Borough by its tree planting programme. Planting and replacement will normally have priority in the less attractive areas and those where there is a noticeable absence of mature trees. The Council is also particularly concerned to ensure that a sufficient number of appropriate trees are provided in conjunction with development. The Council will continue to co-operate with societies and groups interested in the preservation and planting of trees.

SCHEDULE OF SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE

To be read in conjunction with Section 8

The Sites are graded into the following hierarchy:

Sites of Metropolitan Importance

Grand Union Canal (M6)
Kensal Green Cemetery (M125)
The River Thames (M31)
Holland Park (M131)
Kensington Gardens (M103)

Sites of Local Importance

Emslie Horniman Pleasance (L1)
Westway Wildlife Garden (L2)
Avondale Park Wildlife Garden (L3)
Natural History Museum Gardens (L4)
Little Wormwood Scrubs Park (L5)
Meanwhile Gardens (L6)

Sites of Borough Importance: Grade I

Kensal Green Gas Works (BI 1)
West London and District Lines (BI 2)
Brompton Cemetery (BI 3)
Chelsea Physic Garden (BI 4)

Sites of Borough Importance: Grade II

British Rail Western Region Land (BII 1)
Metropolitan Line (BII 2)
Carmelite Monastery (BII 3)
Ladbroke Grove Garden Complex (BII 4)
Moravian Burial Ground (BII 5)
Royal Hospital Old Burial Grounds (BII 6)
Ranelagh Gardens (BII 7)
King's College (BII 8)

The reference numbers in brackets accord with the standard referencing system used by the London Ecology Unit and help to identify the sites shown on Map 3 and the Proposals Map.

Source: RBK&C Ecological Habitat Surveys 1993 & 1994

DEFINITIONS OF SITES

Sites of Metropolitan Sites

Sites which contain the best examples of London's habitats. These sites are of the highest priority against loss or damage. Metropolitan sites are considered by the London Ecology Committee before notification to the land owners.

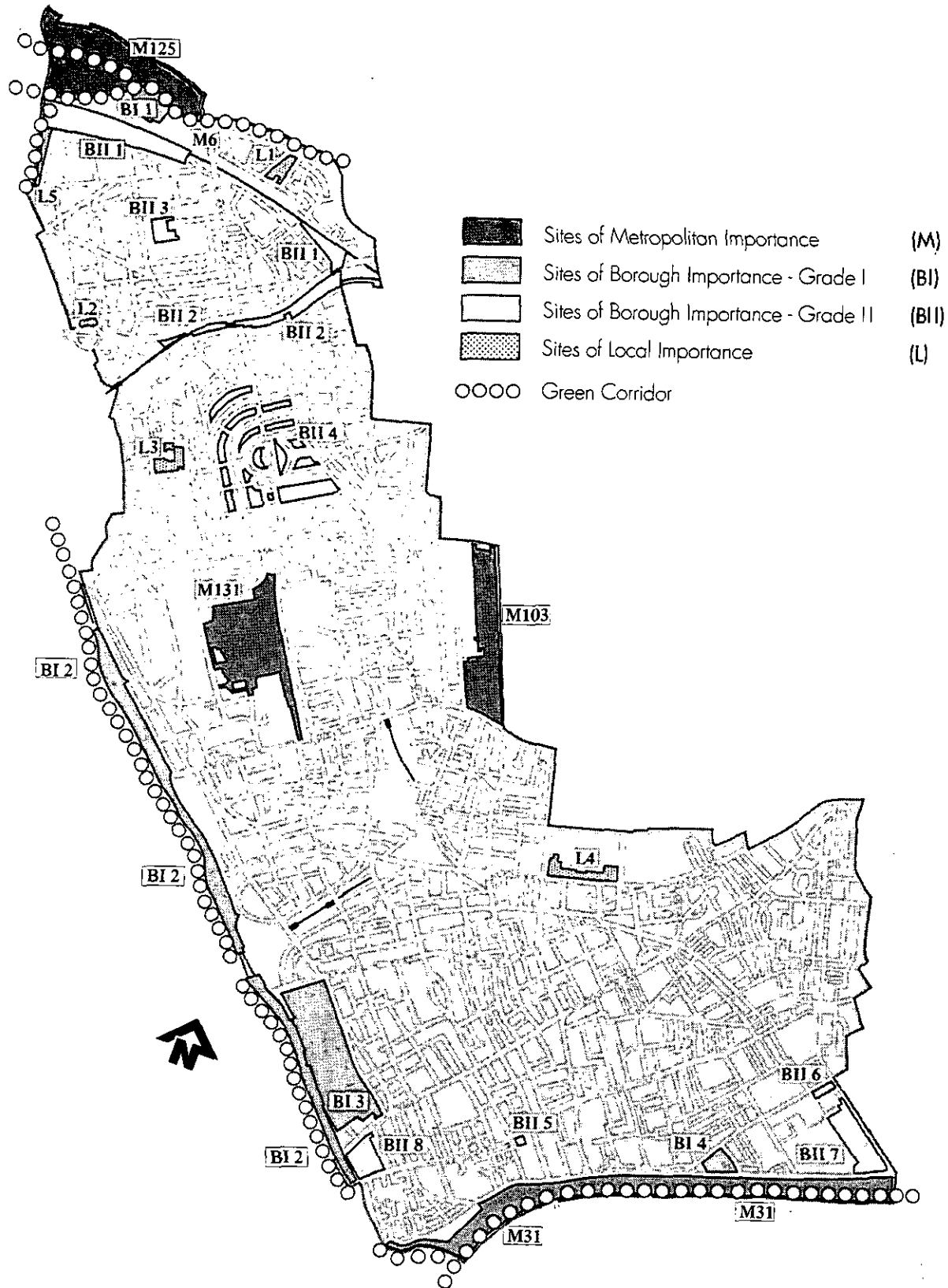
Sites of Borough Importance: Grade I & II

These sites are important in the context of the Borough. The nature conservation quality of these sites varies considerably. These sites are therefore graded as I & II in relation to their quality.

Sites of Local Importance

Local sites are those which do not qualify on their intrinsic nature conservation quality for either of the above categories, but may however be of particular value to the local community and to schools.

MAP 3 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance 1994



8 THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1** In a heavily built-up environment, areas with potential for wildlife and natural environments are obviously limited. The Council will therefore protect and enhance such areas.

CD77 TO IDENTIFY AND PROTECT SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE.

- 8.2** *Sites of Nature Conservation Importance have been identified by direct survey undertaken by the London Ecology Unit on behalf of the Council. The sites play an important role in preserving existing species and are, in many cases, a resource for leisure and educational use. Where such areas are potential development sites, the contribution of the site to the ecology of the area will be taken into account when considering planning applications. Sites of Nature Conservation Importance are shown on Map 3 and on the Proposals Map. The list of sites will be reviewed periodically.*

CD78 TO ADOPT AND ENCOURAGE THE APPROPRIATE NATURE CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT OF SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE.

- 8.3** Management Plans have already been prepared for Holland Park and the Grand Union Canal. Other potential areas for the management of nature conservation include: Kensal Green and Brompton Cemeteries; parts of the Riverside; the campus of the college of St. Mark and St. John in Chelsea; railway corridors; the inter-tidal foreshore of Chelsea Creek; and parts of some of the larger garden squares.

CD79 TO CONSIDER THE EFFECT ON NATURE CONSERVATION IN DEALING WITH ANY PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT.

CD80 TO ENCOURAGE THE ALLOCATION OF POCKETS OF LAND FOR NATURE CONSERVATION AND THE PLANTING OF NATIVE SPECIES IN LANDSCAPING ON APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT SITES.

9 ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANCIENT MONUMENTS

- 9.1** Archaeological remains constitute the principal surviving evidence of the Borough's past but are a finite and fragile resource very vulnerable to modern development and land use. Once removed, that part of the past is lost forever. The destruction of such remains should be avoided wherever possible and should never take place without archaeological excavation and record.

CD81 TO ENCOURAGE THE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE AND THEIR SETTINGS AND THEIR INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION TO THE PUBLIC.

CD82 TO REQUIRE, WHERE DEVELOPMENT IS PROPOSED ON SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OR POTENTIAL: THAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION TAKES PLACE BEFORE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS ARE DETERMINED; THAT REMAINS AND THEIR SETTINGS ARE PERMANENTLY PRESERVED EITHER IN SITU, OR EXCEPTIONALLY BY RECORD; AND THAT PROVISION IS MADE FOR AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION AND RECORDING TO TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO DEVELOPMENT COMMENCING ON SITE.

CD83 TO ENCOURAGE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN LANDOWNERS, DEVELOPERS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ORGANISATIONS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGISTS LIAISON GROUP CODE OF PRACTICE.

9.2 Special attention will be given to the Sites of Archaeological Importance shown on the Proposals Map and on the Museum of London's sensitivity map and schedule.

9.3 The Royal Borough contains the following Scheduled Ancient Monuments: the Brick Kiln in Walmer Road, Kensington Palace and the Royal Hospital.

CD84 TO PRESERVE OR ENHANCE ALL SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND OTHER NATIONALLY IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS IN THE BOROUGH.

10 CHURCHES AND OTHER PLACES OF WORSHIP

10.1 Churches not only have a religious purpose but also often play an important role in the community and contribute to the townscape of that area. Where a place of worship is declared redundant, its community, townscape or architectural value should be retained. (See also Social and Community Uses Chapter.)

10.2 Where a place of worship is threatened with redundancy the Council's objectives will be where possible:

- (a) to encourage use by an alternative religious community as a place of worship;
- (b) to retain buildings of architectural, townscape or landmark value;
- (c) to retain a meeting hall or other community facilities;
- (d) to ensure that conversion works respect the external design and interior space of the building;

- (e) to seek that if the building is not to be used for worship, the upkeep and maintenance will be provided for, and public access can be arranged to view architectural features;
- (f) In exceptional circumstances, where it is not possible to retain religious buildings, the Council will seek their replacement by buildings of equal landmark value.

CD85 TO RETAIN WHERE POSSIBLE RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS OF ARCHITECTURAL OR TOWNSCAPE MERIT.

10.3 The Council will seek to protect churchyards for their social, historic, landscape and wildlife interest.

11 PLANNING POWERS AND LOCAL AUTHORITY ACTIVITY

11.1 The Council will seek the improvement of the environment using the following tools.

Planning Briefs

11.2 Many potential development sites require detailed planning guidance, to supplement the Council's policies and to make clear other local and site specific requirements. Planning briefs and guidance notes fulfil this role.

CD86 TO PREPARE PLANNING BRIEFS FOR IMPORTANT POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES AND IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS TO HAVE REGARD TO THE ADOPTED BRIEFS.

11.3 After the preparation of a planning brief or guidance notes, there may, on occasions be considerable delay in development proposals coming forward. In these cases and where circumstances have significantly changed, the Council will up-date the brief or guidance notes accordingly.

Environmental Improvements

11.4 The Council is committed to improving the local environment and will identify areas and sites where improvement schemes would be beneficial. As well as implementing its own schemes it will encourage other organisations to carry out such works.

CD87 TO IDENTIFY AREAS AND SITES WHICH WOULD BENEFIT FROM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES, AND IMPLEMENT SUCH SCHEMES AS RESOURCES PERMIT IN CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND OTHER GROUPS.

11.5 While funds are available from Central Government, priority will be given to improvements in the areas of the Borough covered by City Challenge.

Grants

11.6 The Council, as well as seeking improvements to the local environment through the control of development, also takes a positive role in offering grants and loans for suitable schemes.

11.7 The Council will offer grants and loans, as resources permit, to encourage groups and individuals to carry out works of enhancement, including:

the restoration of architectural detail on listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas;

repairs and restoration of mews arches;

the reinstatement of railings around garden squares; and

improvements in access for people with special mobility needs.

Environmental Assessment

11.8 Proposals for large developments may have major environmental implications. The Council will request environmental assessments from developers in appropriate cases.

Street Furniture and Paving

11.9 The Council will seek to improve street furniture and paving with the aim of providing consistent and attractive designs to enhance the Borough's character. It will lead by example and promote a high quality of street furniture design.

11.10 The Council and statutory undertakers are responsible for most of the street furniture and paving throughout the Borough. The Council will ensure that in its own provision of street furniture and paving, design and siting will be sensitive to local character. However, provision of many items of street furniture, for example telephone kiosks and bus shelters, is by authorities other than the Council. To protect the environment of the Borough, the Council will seek to influence the siting and design of these items through normal consultation procedures. (See Public Utilities and Services Chapter).

11.11 Existing street furniture will be rationalised where the opportunity arises and historic features such as bollards, lamps and coal hole covers will be preserved where possible.

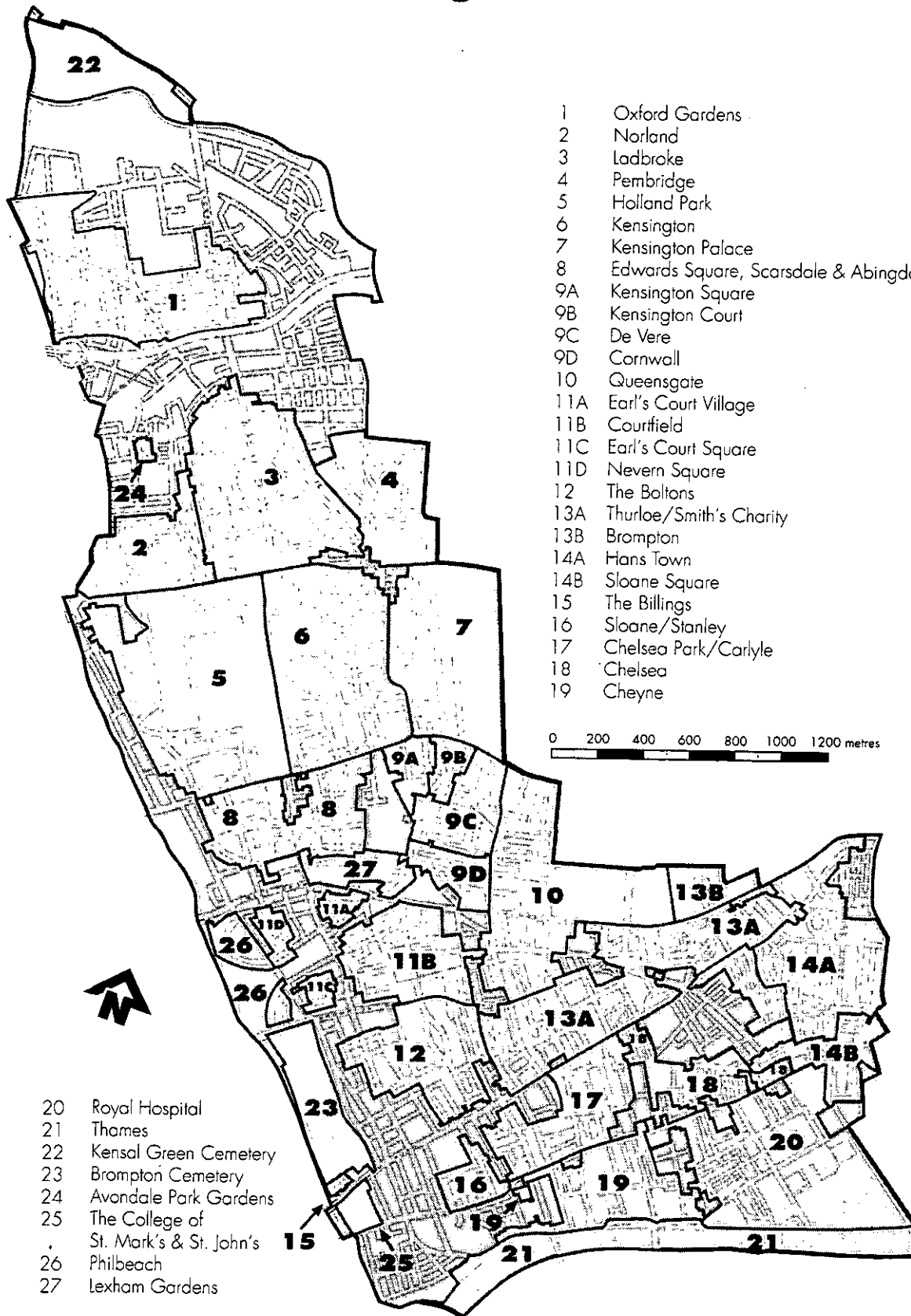
11.12 The following policies are proposed to control and influence the design and siting of street furniture and paving.

CD88 TO DISCOURAGE EXCESS STREET FURNITURE.

CD89 TO ENCOURAGE, GOOD QUALITY STREET FURNITURE OF UNOBTRUSIVE DESIGN, IN HARMONY WITH THE STREET SCENE, SITED TO MINIMISE VISUAL CLUTTER AND TO ALLOW CLEAR AND SAFE PASSAGE FOR PEOPLE WITH SENSORY AND MOBILITY DIFFICULTIES.

CD90 TO SEEK THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC STREET FURNITURE AND OTHER STRUCTURES.

MAP 4 The Royal Borough's Conservation Areas



APPENDIX 1



List of Conservation Areas and Proposals Statements

- Areas with an Approved Proposals Statement

- 1 Oxford Gardens/St Quintins
- 2 Norland
- 3 Ladbroke
- 4 Pembridge
- 5 Holland Park
- 6 Kensington
- 7 Kensington Palace
- 8 Edwardes Square/Scarsdale/Abingdon
- 9A Kensington Square
- 9B Kensington Court
- 9C De Vere
- 9D Cornwall
- 10 Queen's Gate
- 11A Earls Court Village
- 11B Courtfield
- 11C Earls Court Square
- 11D Nevern Square
- 12 The Boltons
- 13A Thurloe/Smith's Charity
- 13B Brompton
- 14A Hans Town
- 14B Sloane Square
- 15 The Billings
- 16 Sloane/Stanley
- 17 Chelsea Park/Carlyle
- 18 Chelsea
- 19 Cheyne
- 20 Royal Hospital
- 21 Thames
- 22 Kensal Green Cemetery
- 23 Brompton Cemetery
- 24 Avondale Park Gardens
- 25 College of St Mark and St John
- 26 Philbeach
- 27 Lexham Gardens

LEISURE AND RECREATION



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GENERAL POLICIES

Part I Policies and Reasoned Justifications

Introduction

- i. The Royal Borough has a variety of leisure and recreation facilities to offer its residents, workers and visitors, including halls, libraries, cinemas and theatres. In addition there are within, or adjacent to its boundaries, Kensington Gardens, Hyde Park, Battersea Park, Holland Park, the Royal Hospital and many of the cultural and recreational activities that contribute to the character and function of London as a capital city, e.g. the South Kensington Museums, Kensington Palace, the River and the Embankment, the King's Road and Portobello Road.

Region-wide

- ii. Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9), paragraph 3.13, recognises the contribution that new leisure facilities make towards the development of the economy particularly tourism, and in providing amenities for the Region's people. Similarly, provision for development related to the arts, culture and entertainment is important for the quality of life of the South East's inhabitants.
- iii. The Borough is a very densely built up inner city area where high land values are reflected in the pressure for the development of most available land. Updating and conversion of commercial and residential property is likely to see some continuing intensification of development and it will be increasingly important to retain open, green and recreational spaces within the urban area.

London-wide

- iv. The Borough suffers from an overall shortage of public open space. Consequently, the Council is determined to protect and improve existing provision of public and private open space because of its great amenity value to residents, workers and visitors. Some open land within Kensington and Chelsea has a wider than borough significance which justifies its designation as Metropolitan Open Land and should be conserved and protected (Strategic Guidance for London (RPG3), paragraph 60).
- v. Kensington and Chelsea will follow the approach suggested in RPG3 (paragraph 79) and "take account of the importance of sport and recreational facilities, including playing fields." Existing recreation provision is inadequate to meet the wide-ranging demands placed on it by residents, workers and visitors. However, the opportunities to provide further facilities to meet the needs of all members of the community are very limited. In a borough as intensively developed as Kensington and Chelsea, the scarcity of suitable sites and the pressure to provide for other activities and services mean that it would be

extremely difficult to provide more public open space without demolishing existing buildings. Consequently, the Council's policy is to retain and protect existing leisure and recreation facilities, and to attempt to satisfy the needs of those who live and work in the Borough by providing and actively encouraging the provision of appropriate facilities when the opportunity arises.

- vi. Kensington and Chelsea is well provided with arts, cultural and entertainment facilities, and these make an important contribution to the quality of life of local residents, Londoners and visitors alike. The Council is determined to resist the loss of these facilities to other uses and will encourage further provision in suitable locations.
- vii. The River Thames is one of London's greatest assets. Kensington and Chelsea will protect existing means of access to the River and will encourage the increased use of the River Thames for leisure and recreation purposes, including the protection and completion of the Thames Path.

STRAT 34

TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED CONTRIBUTION OF SPORTS, LEISURE AND RECREATION PROVISION, INCLUDING ARTS, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES IN THE ROYAL BOROUGH, TO THE LOCAL AND METROPOLITAN AREA.

STRAT 35

TO MAINTAIN AND INCREASE THE PROVISION AND QUALITY OF OPEN SPACE OF LOCAL AND METROPOLITAN VALUE.

STRAT 36

TO ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF A CONTINUOUS THAMES PATH ALONG THE RIVERSIDE AND THE MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS TO THE RIVER.

LOCAL POLICIES

1 OBJECTIVES

- 1.1** There are four overall objectives for leisure and recreation in the Borough:
- (A) To encourage and retain the provision of sports and recreational facilities in order to meet the needs of those who live, work and study in the Borough.
 - (B) To protect existing open space and improve the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space to meet the needs of those who live, work and study in the Borough.
 - (C) To resist the loss and encourage the provision of arts, cultural and entertainment facilities to meet the needs of residents, workers and visitors.
 - (D) To have regard to the range of peoples' leisure and recreation requirements and in particular those with special mobility needs.

2 ENCOURAGING AND RETAINING SPORT AND RECREATION PROVISION

- 2.1** In recent years there has been an increasing demand for recreation and sporting facilities as more people have had more time to devote to leisure pursuits. In addition, there is a growing awareness of the positive benefits to health that can result from regular exercise. Recreational and sporting activities, especially at the group level, also serve to bring people together thus helping to underpin and enhance the residential character and community of the Borough.
- 2.2** Sport is likely to go on attracting more participants, taking part more often. The general 'ageing' of the population over the next ten years will result in a move away from team and strength-based sports to health-related activities such as aerobics, indoor bowls, badminton, swimming and walking. However, there is still a need to take a long-term and broad view of demographic change and trends in sports and recreational activities, especially in relation to planning and provision for outdoor pitch sports and playing fields, although demographic change alone does not adequately indicate future demand for such facilities.
- 2.3** Increased demand combined with more diverse and discerning user groups will increase pressure on existing levels of provision, and will act as a spur to the development of additional facilities.



Retaining Existing Provision

2.4 The majority of the sporting activities in the Borough are provided by educational institutions, clubs and voluntary organisations. These include cricket, bowls, tennis and squash. The Council provides facilities for football, tennis, swimming, squash and a range of indoor sports but the Borough lacks sufficient facilities to meet the growing demands of its residents. The 'Open Space Survey' carried out by the Council in October 1992 shows the distribution and amount of open space and recreation facilities in the Borough. Llewelyn-Davies Planning and Environmental Trust Associates Ltd (1992) report on Open Space in London identifies the Borough as having the least publicly accessible open space of any authority in London and considerably less sports provision than nationally recommended. The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) Standards, as laid out in 'Minimum Standards for Outdoor Recreational Playing Space' (1989) suggest a nationally recommended ratio of outdoor publicly accessible sports/play space per 1000 population. The recommended standard ratio of adult recreation is 1.6 – 1.8 ha per 1000 population. In 1992 the Borough ratio was 0.11 ha per 1000 population, only 7% of the NPFA standard ratio.

LR1 TO RESIST THE LOSS OF PLAYING FIELDS, PITCHES AND OTHER SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL PROVISION.

2.5 Exceptions to this policy will only be justified if leisure and recreation needs are met by other similar provision nearby.

Encouraging New Provision

2.6 The London Council for Sport and Recreation is the only organisation able to influence the provision of sport and recreation over the whole of Greater London. One of the functions of the regional Council is to produce regional strategies to provide guidance for local authority development plans. For the Borough this guidance is contained in "A Capital Prospect" and sets out recommendations for new provision to meet minimum requirements for different types of facility:

- (a) one new sports hall in Chelsea;
- (b) two full size, intensive use, artificial sports pitches, one in Chelsea and one in North Kensington (proposals are in hand for an intensive use artificial sports pitch at Crowthorne Road, Westway, W10);
- (c) dual use of Holland Park School;
- (d) one synthetic 6-lane athletics track;
- (e) one indoor bowls rink (2,400 m²), possibly included as part of a mixed development.

The Council will work closely with the London Council for Sport and Recreation in assessing suitable sites and proposals.

LR2 TO ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

2.7 Opportunities to provide further facilities to meet all the needs of the members of the community are very limited because of the densely built-up nature of the Borough. However, sport and recreation facilities can form an important component of housing, major office or retail developments, and in highly built-up areas, development schemes may be among the few opportunities for creating new sporting and recreation facilities (see also Offices and Industry Chapter, policy E4 and paragraph 3.12).

LR3 TO SEEK THE PROVISION OF SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN ASSOCIATION WITH DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHERE APPROPRIATE.

2.8 The Council will seek Planning Obligations to secure public access to sports and recreational facilities in appropriate development proposals.

2.9 The Council is committed to increasing participation in sport and recreation across the community, and to encouraging the use of facilities by people of all ages and both sexes. Indoor facilities provide for an efficient use of space, can be intensively used and can compensate for the lack of local facilities for outdoor sports. Multiple-use sports complexes provide for a much wider range of activities within one building or on a single playing pitch, therefore meeting the needs of a wider range of the local population.

LR4 TO REQUIRE THAT, WHERE APPROPRIATE, NEW SPORTS AND RECREATION PROVISION BE DESIGNED TO ENABLE MULTIPLE AND/OR SHARED USE.

LR5 TO ENCOURAGE PUBLIC ACCESS TO ALL NEW SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

2.10 The Council will try to ensure the best shared use of all outdoor and indoor sporting and recreation facilities, and to encourage wider use of existing facilities in order to offset current deficiencies. Where proposals for development include sport and recreation facilities, the Council will seek to secure access for the general public.

LR6 TO ENCOURAGE THE FULL AND EFFECTIVE USE OF ALL EXISTING SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL PROVISION, INCLUDING THE SHARED USE OF EXISTING SCHOOL FACILITIES.



3 OPEN SPACE PROVISION

Existing Open Space

3.1 One of the major factors contributing to leisure and recreation is open space, which is used both informally (eg. for sitting, walking and general relaxation) and formally, for organised games. Open space is also of value in balancing the ecology of the urban environment and in providing a habitat for wildlife (see also Conservation and Development Chapter Section 8 'The Natural Environment'). The Council's 'Open Space Survey' 1992 and the Llewelyn-Davies Planning and Environmental Trust Association Ltd (1992) report highlight the open space deficiencies in the Borough. Whilst it is difficult to make direct comparisons between boroughs of different areas and population, the Llewelyn-Davies report compares both the total amount of public open space in each borough to the total land area and the resident population per hectare of public open space. With the exception of the City of London (2.1%) Kensington and Chelsea has been shown to have the least public open space as a proportion of land area in 1991 (2.8%). The overall Greater London Average is 11.1%. The ratio of open space to the population in Kensington and Chelsea is by far the lowest in London (1ha serving 3,867 population) followed by The London Borough of Islington (1ha serving 1,990 population). The Council's Open Space Survey does, however, show that parts of the Borough are well endowed with private open space particularly communal gardens and garden squares. However, this does not lessen the deficiency in public open space as, in many instances, communal gardens and garden squares do not have public access.

3.2 The Council and the Government attach great importance to the retention of accessible recreational open spaces in urban areas, where demand is concentrated. It is important that people, particularly children, the elderly and people with physical disabilities and/or sensory impairment, have access to open space close to where they live. Once built upon, an open space is likely to be lost to the community for ever.

LR7 TO RESIST THE LOSS OF EXISTING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OPEN SPACE WHICH MEETS LEISURE AND RECREATION NEEDS.

3.3 Some open land within the built-up area has a wider than borough significance which justifies its designation as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and should be conserved and protected. Within the Borough the following are identified as Metropolitan Open Land: Holland Park, Kensington Gardens and Brompton and Kensal Cemeteries. The detailed boundaries of these areas are shown on the Proposals Map. (See also Conservation and Development Chapter, policy CD10.)

3.4 Loss of open space may create new areas of deficiency and will only be justified if a replacement open space is provided. Existing open spaces may provide wildlife habitats that would be lost on redevelopment, or special characteristics that could not easily be replicated. However, the overall shortage of open space and the difficulty of finding appropriate new sites, make it essential to resist the loss of permanent open spaces.

3.5 In order to make the most of existing open spaces, the Council will identify possible 'Green Chains' to link open land together. These will provide extended walkways based on existing public rights of way, linking the Borough's public open space and serving as a Leisure and Recreation resource. The Council will seek to use the Green Chains as a means of targeting greening measures for example tree planting and related infrastructure such as benches and litter bins. 'Green Corridors', defined as near continuous areas of open space serving as conduits for wildlife and linking habitats have been identified in the Borough by the London Ecology Unit. Unlike Green Chains which serve as public walkways, Green Corridors are purely for wildlife. (See also Section 8 of the Conservation and Development Chapter.)

LR8 TO SEEK THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GREEN CHAINS LINKING OPEN SPACES.

3.6 Small open spaces, which independently or together with others, especially domestic gardens, contribute to meeting open space needs (particularly in areas of deficiency) and the needs of the less mobile, eg. children, elderly people and people with physical disabilities and/or sensory impairment. Furthermore, they provide, individually and collectively, significant visual amenity. Small open spaces contribute to the nature conservation and ecology of the Borough in their own right, and as part of more extensive nature conservation and ecological networks. (See also policies CD21 and CD22 of the Conservation and Development Chapter).

3.7 The deficiency of the Borough in public open space is partially compensated for by private open spaces such as the garden squares, cemeteries and grounds of institutions. Like public open spaces, they can serve to break up the oppressive urban form, provide visually attractive green oases and offer a habitat to various forms of wildlife. Whilst private to the general public, access will normally be available to a restricted set of persons as decided by the owners or management trustees, following any relevant legislative procedures. Even with access only to restricted groups, as private open space makes up some two-thirds of all open space in the Borough, its value as a recreational resource and its ability to take the pressure off public open space should be acknowledged. The Council will be supportive therefore of proposals to widen access to private open space. It is accepted that the granting of access to the formal garden squares and communal gardens of the Borough is a matter for each owner and/or garden square committee and that the most likely form of wider access would be limited and small scale i.e. for specified individuals or groups rather than unconstrained opening to the general public.

LR9 TO ENCOURAGE THE WIDER USE OF PRIVATE OPEN SPACE.

3.8 Vacant land is particularly important in areas of greatest deficiency of open space, and temporary recreational use will be encouraged by the grant of planning permission, where necessary (see also Section 8 of the Conservation and Development Chapter).

LR10 TO ENCOURAGE THE TEMPORARY USE OF SUITABLE VACANT SITES FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE OR PLAYGROUNDS.

- 3.9** Sitting-out and amenity areas are particularly important for elderly people, parents with young children, shoppers, workers and visitors, and opportunities for such provision will be encouraged.

LR11 TO ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF SITTING-OUT AND AMENITY AREAS IN SUITABLE LOCATIONS.

- 3.10** The suitability of locations will be assessed according to their accessibility, proximity to busy roads and the quality of the open space provided.

- 3.11** Existing rights of way will be safeguarded over public and private land especially when redevelopment threatens these rights. New routes will be negotiated, wherever possible, to tie in with the existing network of pedestrian routes.

LR12 TO ENSURE THE RETENTION OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY OVER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LAND, AND PROVIDE NEW RIGHTS OF WAY WHERE APPROPRIATE.

New Open Space

- 3.12** In a borough as intensively developed as Kensington and Chelsea, the scarcity of suitable sites and the pressure to provide for other activities and services, mean that it would be extremely difficult to provide more public open space without demolishing existing buildings. Accordingly, the Council will concentrate on increasing the supply of public open space at the Small Local Park level. It will also encourage the provision of indoor facilities to supplement the supply of open space.

- 3.13** However, new public open space can form an important component of housing, major office or retail developments, and in highly built-up areas like the Royal Borough, development schemes may be among the few opportunities to create public open space.

LR13 TO SEEK THE INCLUSION OF OPEN SPACE, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE WHERE APPROPRIATE IN ASSOCIATION WITH DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS.

- 3.14** The Council will seek planning obligations to secure public access to open space in appropriate development proposals.

- 3.15** Family-sized dwellings should have access to their own amenity space, which may be shared or private, to allow informal leisure and recreation activities by all the members of a household, particularly children. The proximity and adequacy of existing public parks and playground space will be a factor in determining the amount and form of amenity space provided for new family housing.

LR14 TO REQUIRE THAT AMENITY SPACE IS PROVIDED FOR NEW FAMILY HOUSING.

3.16 Public access to new communal space will be encouraged in order to maximise use and help offset current deficiencies in public open space provision.

LR15 TO ENCOURAGE PUBLIC ACCESS TO ALL NEW COMMUNAL OPEN SPACE.

3.17 Open spaces can provide habitats of ecological significance and offer a range of opportunities for leisure and educational use. However, controlled access by the public may be necessary to protect the quality of the environment (see also Conservation and Development Chapter, Section 8).

LR16 TO ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF NATURE GARDENS AND ECOLOGICAL SITES FOR COMMUNITY USE.

The River and Canal

3.18 The River Thames forms the southern boundary of the Borough and remains under-used as a leisure and recreation resource. The Council will seek to promote water-borne leisure and recreation activities where possible.

LR17 TO ENCOURAGE THE INCREASED USE OF THE RIVER THAMES FOR LEISURE AND RECREATION PURPOSES.

3.19 The use of the River Thames for leisure and recreation purposes will be balanced against the need to protect its nature conservation importance.

3.20 With the exception of the south western corner of Chelsea, a riverside walk already extends continuously along the Thames in the Borough and is part of the Countryside Commission's long-distance Thames Path which stretches from the Thames Barrier to the source of the Thames. The path provides a useful amenity and links the various Thames-side open spaces, although much of the environment is affected by heavy traffic. The Council wishes to promote the opportunity for walking by the riverside as a leisure pursuit and will seek the improvement of the existing riverside walk when considering proposals for sites adjacent to the river. (See also policies STRAT 9 and CD5.)

LR18 TO PROTECT THE THAMES PATH AND SEEK ITS IMPROVEMENT AND COMPLETION ALONG THE RIVER FRONTAGE.

3.21 Several points of access to the foreshore exist along the river frontage. The potential of the Thames as a recreational and educational resource requires that these points of access are protected and new ones provided where possible. Existing means of access cannot be permanently opened up, or new means of access created, without reference to the Chief

Harbourmaster so that safety issues can be considered. The Council recognises the Thames and its foreshore as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (see also Conservation and Development Chapter, policies CD77 and CD78 and paragraph 8.2).

LR19 TO REQUIRE THAT EXISTING MEANS OF ACCESS TO THE FORESHORE ARE SAFEGUARDED AND SUPPLEMENTED WHERE APPROPRIATE.

3.22 The Grand Union Canal (Paddington Branch) runs through the Borough from the bridge over Ladbroke Grove to the border with the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. Although relatively short, this section of the Canal offers an interesting contrast to the purely urban stretches in other parts of the city and has considerable leisure and recreation potential. It is, therefore, necessary to safeguard the Grand Union Canal from inappropriate developments which detract from its value as a resource for leisure and recreational use and for environmental educational purposes. The Council recognises the Grand Union Canal as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (see also Conservation and Development Chapter Section 8).

3.23 The Canal has further potential for transport and water-based activities and these will be encouraged. In doing so, the need to protect wildlife will be taken into account.

LR20 TO ENCOURAGE USE OF THE CANAL FOR WATER-BASED LEISURE AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES.

LR21 TO SEEK THE USE OF THE TWO CANAL BASINS SITUATED IN THE KENSAL GREEN GASWORKS SITE FOR WATER RECREATION AND BOAT MOORINGS.

3.24 The tow-path is wide enough to allow some landscaping and the provision of seating at intervals. To make the canalside more attractive to users, use of the City Challenge funding for providing future improvements will be made.

LR22 TO ENCOURAGE THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE CANAL TOW-PATH AND THE CREATION OF NEW MEANS OF ACCESS.

4 ARTS, CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT

4.1 The Borough contains a variety of arts, cultural and entertainment facilities, ranging from museums and art galleries to theatres, cinemas and nightclubs. As part of the wide variety of entertainment offered by central London, several of these facilities are enjoyed by a national, and in some cases international, audience. The cultural diversity of the Borough, which includes a large ethnic minority population, increases the need for a range of leisure and recreation facilities.

4.2 Arts, cultural and entertainment uses can help underpin and secure communities which are central to the residential character of the Borough. They can be a means of retaining and enhancing familiar landmarks and increasing stability by reinforcing neighbourhood identity. They are also a local source of employment.

LR23 NORMALLY TO RESIST THE LOSS OF ARTS, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES.

4.3 The Council attaches importance to retaining cinemas and theatres, both because of their recreational value and their contribution to the character of parts of the Borough. The disappearance of cinemas and theatres, particularly general release cinemas, can affect a range of people including the young and the elderly. Local entertainment facilities conveniently placed on transport routes are attractive to those without a car, and their loss reduces community and cultural opportunities. An amount of flexibility is available for arts, cultural and entertainment facilities through the Use Class Order which allows change of use within the same or related use class. Theatres are categorised in a class of their own (*sui generis*) and the Council will seek to resist the loss of theatre uses to other arts, cultural and entertainment uses.

LR24 TO REQUIRE A REPLACEMENT OF SIMILAR CAPACITY UPON REDEVELOPMENT OF ANY CINEMA OR THEATRE.

4.4 Certain buildings in the Borough are listed because of their historic association with a cinema or theatre use. These are important landmarks and give added character to individual areas, apart from possessing great cultural and historic significance. The best use of a listed building is that for which it was originally designed. (See also Conservation and Development Chapter policies CD59 and CD60, and paragraph 5.22.)

4.5 The availability of hall premises is an important element in the recreational and social patterns of a community. Many organisations are dependent on them for their activities. To be generally useful, they should be flexible in both operation and facilities, so as to cater for the diverse needs of meetings, dances and other recreational and cultural pursuits (see also Social and Community Uses Chapter, policy SC4). New premises should be designed with good sound-proofing and storage space.

LR25 TO RESIST THE LOSS OF HALL PREMISES PROVIDING LEISURE AND RECREATION USES, MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS, WITHOUT ADEQUATE REPLACEMENT.

LR26 TO REQUIRE THAT NEW HALL PREMISES BE DESIGNED TO ENABLE MULTIPLE AND/OR SHARED USE TO TAKE PLACE.

4.6 The Council will support proposals which result in increased leisure opportunities for residents, and which add to the variety and richness of life in the Borough. In considering applications for arts, cultural and entertainment uses, the Council will give careful regard to the possible adverse effects of such uses on residential areas by way of increased noise, traffic and pedestrian movement.

LR27 TO ENCOURAGE NEW ARTS, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT USES SUBJECT TO OTHER POLICIES OF THE PLAN.

4.7 Nightclubs, discotheques, casinos and gaming rooms can give rise to nuisance such as noise and additional traffic which can adversely affect residential amenity, especially late at night. Where such uses are contained within hotels, they should not lead to unacceptable intensification of activity. (See also Hotels Chapter, policy T2 and paragraphs 3.6 and 3.10.)

LR28 TO RESIST PROPOSALS FOR NIGHTCLUBS, DISCOTHEQUES, CASINOS AND GAMING ROOMS IF THERE WOULD BE:

- (a) A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN THE AREA'S CHARACTER OR AMENITY; OR
- (b) A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN TRAFFIC AND PARKING PROBLEMS.

4.8 The Earls Court Exhibition Centre is the only significant purpose-built exhibition centre within the Borough. It has been extended and now has significantly more exhibition space, and additional car parking facilities within the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. In addition, Olympia is located very close to the Borough boundary with Hammersmith and Fulham. These large venues currently stage exhibitions and conferences of national and international importance and attract many visitors to the Borough who take advantage of local facilities such as hotels and catering establishments. The Council will co-operate with the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham on the future planning of the Earls Court and Olympia exhibition centres.

4.9 Conference and exhibition centres within and adjacent to the Borough can have adverse effects on the surrounding residential amenity, be a cause of congestion to the transport networks and limit the supply of public car parking both on and off street. The opportunity for new conference centres is limited. Such new facilities, and extensions to existing facilities can result in intensification of activity on the site. This would further harm residential amenity and add unacceptably to congestion of the transport networks and parking problems in the surrounding area. Proposals which would result in an intensification of activity on the site will normally be refused. Proposals for small-scale extensions which would not result in an intensification of activity may be considered favourably if they do not conflict with any other policies of the Plan.

LR29 NORMALLY TO RESIST THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CONFERENCE CENTRES OR EXHIBITION HALLS AND THE FURTHER EXTENSION OF THE EARLS COURT EXHIBITION CENTRE.

4.10 Proposals for the development of conference or exhibition centres in conjunction with hotels will be required to satisfy the policies of the Hotels Chapter.

4.11 Arts, cultural and entertainment facilities can form an important component of housing, major office or retail developments, and in highly built-up areas like the Borough, development schemes may be among the few opportunities for creating such facilities.

LR30 TO SEEK PROVISION OF ARTS, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES, NEW WORKS OF ART OR PERFORMING ARTS SPACE IN ASSOCIATION WITH DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHERE APPROPRIATE.

4.12 The Per Cent for Art campaign, launched by the Arts Council in 1989, seeks to improve the built environment by employing the talents of Britain's artists and crafts people in building projects. The Council supports the aims of the campaign and will encourage developers of buildings to incorporate works of art or performing art space within their projects.

4.13 Kensington and Chelsea is noted for possessing numerous artists' studios, usually located in mews, which reflect the artistic tradition of parts of the Borough. These premises make a significant contribution to its artistic and cultural life and should be retained wherever possible.

LR31 WHERE POSSIBLE, TO RESIST THE LOSS OF ARTISTS' STUDIO SPACE TO OTHER USES.

5 LEISURE AND RECREATION FOR ALL

5.1 The Council's leisure and recreation policies have been devised to meet the widest possible range of users' needs. It is acknowledged that different groups have different requirements. Children need playspace for the energetic pursuit of games, for example, whilst elderly people benefit from quiet sitting-out areas and tranquil gardens. Where appropriate, designated areas for use by under-fives and their carers will be encouraged.

LR32 TO ENCOURAGE PROVISION FOR BOTH ACTIVE PLAY AND SEPARATE AREAS OF TRANQUILITY WHERE NEW OPEN SPACE IS CREATED.

5.2 The Council's Open Space Survey (1992), shows the distribution and amount of play space in the Borough and highlights the Borough-wide deficiency. The extent of the Borough's shortfall in play-space provision is illustrated using the National Playing Fields Association Standards which suggest a standard ratio of childrens' recreation space to be in the range of 0.6 - 0.8 ha per 1000 population. In 1992 the Kensington and Chelsea ratio was 0.4-ha/1000. In broad terms, those areas deficient in open space are also

those deficient in playspace and playgrounds, as most of these facilities are situated within the existing open spaces.

LR33 TO RESIST THE LOSS OF EXISTING FACILITIES FOR PLAY PROVISION.

5.3 In the Borough, the opportunities for play, other than in areas of formal playspace, have decreased with the growth of traffic, the high rate of conversion of houses into flats and the consequent limited access into private gardens. It is particularly important to preserve existing levels of formal provision and, wherever possible, increase its supply.

LR34 TO SEEK TO ENSURE ADEQUATE COMMUNAL PLAY PROVISION IN LARGE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS CONTAINING FAMILY HOUSING.

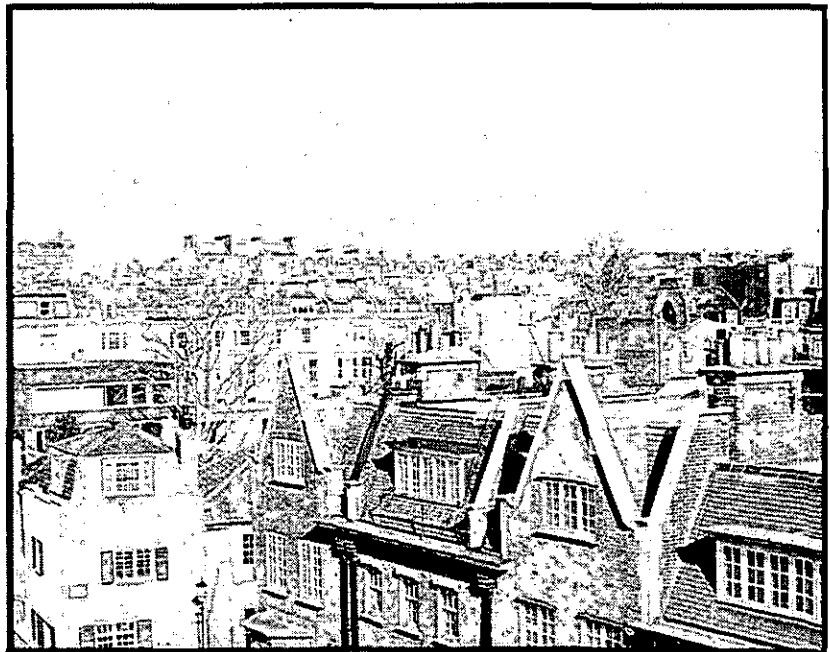
LR35 TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE PLAY PROVISION IN THE COUNCIL'S HOUSING ESTATES AND IMPROVE EXISTING PROVISION WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

LR36 TO ENCOURAGE THE INCREASED USE OF THE COUNCIL'S PLAYGROUND SCHOOL PREMISES FACILITIES OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS AND TO EXTEND THE PERIOD OF USE WHERE APPROPRIATE AND AS RESOURCES PERMIT.

5.4 The Council pays particular regard to people with special mobility needs, and will encourage their participation in the whole range of leisure and recreational activities through ensuring appropriate design in development proposals and providing financial assistance where appropriate (see also Conservation and Development Chapter, paragraphs 11.6 and 11.7 regarding grants; and the Planning Standards Chapter).

LR37 TO ENCOURAGE WIDER ACCESS TO, AND INCREASED USE OF, EXISTING LEISURE, RECREATIONAL, SPORTS AND ARTS, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL MOBILITY NEEDS.

HOUSING



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GENERAL POLICIES

Part I Policies and Reasoned Justifications

Introduction

- i. Kensington and Chelsea is primarily a residential borough despite its commercial importance to London, particularly in shopping and tourism. The Council attaches the highest importance to meeting the needs of long-term residents.
- ii. The population of the Royal Borough, which fell rapidly during the seventies, has shown signs of stabilising in the late eighties and early nineties. This fall in population is common to most of inner London and is caused in part by a desire for better living standards. Whilst the Council cannot directly influence the size of its residential population, the policies in the Plan can prevent further reduction in population by resisting the loss of residential accommodation to other uses and requiring new residential development wherever possible and appropriate. A stable population may not in itself be sufficient to maintain and enhance the residential function of the Borough, but it is necessary in order to achieve economies of scale in service delivery, reduce unit costs and provide a resident population for local shops, services and facilities.
- iii. Housing activity of all sorts proceeded at a high rate in the Borough during the 1980's, but slowed down considerably at the beginning of the 1990's. The total net gain in dwellings through permissions either implemented or under construction for the years 1987-1991 (inclusive) was 1750.

Maintaining the Existing Stock

- iv. Given the historic decline in population, the reduced rate of conversions and very limited land availability, it is essential to protect the existing dwelling stock if the residential character and function of the Borough is to be maintained. Furthermore, the building of new dwellings will not be effective in meeting the growth in housing requirements (created by the increase in the number of small households) if the current stock is diminished without replacement. Consequently, there will be a general presumption by the Council against the loss of residential accommodation to other uses in line with Strategic Guidance for London (RPG3).

Increasing the Number of Dwellings

- v. A new housing capacity figure for the Borough will be included in revised Regional Planning Guidance 3 to be published in 1995. Whilst the Council will endeavour to ensure this level of additional provision is achieved, there are a number of constraints.

The number of sites with potential for residential development is declining, as is the number of properties suitable for conversion, and there is an increasing demand for limited on-street parking space. Kensington and Chelsea is already an intensively developed inner city borough with little available development land. If the housing capacity figure as proposed to be included in RPG3 is to be met, a high priority must be placed on allocating all available development land for residential use, except where there is a history of employment-generating uses and the site is unsuitable for housing. This is all the more necessary because of the diminishing number of suitable properties for conversion.

Maintaining and Promoting a Variety of Housing

- vi. Kensington and Chelsea has some of the highest residential rents and prices in the country. Accommodation is difficult to obtain for many people who have a need to live in the Borough because of their work or family contacts. RPG3 acknowledges the importance of providing housing for lower and middle income households in London. The Council's policies aim to maintain and increase the amount of affordable housing, family dwellings, small units and accommodation for special needs. The Council will seek to negotiate for a wide variety of housing within large development schemes, and will seek the provision of a substantial element of affordable housing.

STRAT 13

TO ENSURE THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ROYAL BOROUGH TO THE DWELLING STOCK OF GREATER LONDON IS NOT DIMINISHED AND IS INCREASED WHEREVER APPROPRIATE.

STRAT 14

TO SEEK TO MAXIMISE THE RESIDENTIAL CAPACITY OF THE BOROUGH IN LINE WITH STRATEGIC GUIDANCE FOR LONDON.

STRAT 15

TO ENCOURAGE AN ADEQUATE AND CONTINUING SUPPLY OF LAND FOR NEW HOUSING THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF VACANT AND UNDER-USED LAND FOR RESIDENTIAL USE IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS.

STRAT 16

TO SEEK AN INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT AND RANGE OF SIZES AND TYPES OF DWELLINGS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THOSE SEEKING PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION IN THE ROYAL BOROUGH, WHILST MAINTAINING THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THE RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT.

LOCAL POLICIES

1 OBJECTIVES

1.1 There are four overall objectives for housing in the Borough:

- (A) To protect permanent residential accommodation in order to maintain and enhance the residential function of the Borough.
- (B) To ensure that new residential development, including conversions and extensions, is of good quality in order to maintain and enhance the residential character of the Borough.
- (C) To increase the supply of housing in appropriate circumstances to help stem the decline of, and where possible to increase, the Borough's permanent residential population, subject to other policies of the Plan.
- (D) To provide and retain a range of housing types and sizes, of a satisfactory standard, to meet the varied physical and economic needs of Borough residents.

2 MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING THE RESIDENTIAL FUNCTION OF THE BOROUGH

2.1 Kensington and Chelsea experienced a decline in the level of population from the 1960's to 1981 despite an increase in the number of households since 1971. The 1991 Population Census showed the first increase in residential population for 30 years. The Borough has experienced considerable pressure from commercial uses to occupy residential property in conflict with the overall aim of the Plan. In order to protect the residential function of the Borough, it is considered that the only circumstances under which the change of use from residential accommodation might be acceptable are:

- (a) where the accommodation is statutorily unfit and could not be brought up to the standards laid down by the Housing Acts;
- (b) where the accommodation could not even with adaptation be incorporated into another unit; or
- (c) where an essential community facility requires accommodation.

The relocation of existing residential uses is acceptable providing there is no net overall loss and that a better overall disposition of land use can be achieved.

2.2 Under the Greater London Council (General Powers) Acts 1983 and 1984 the use of residential accommodation for temporary sleeping accommodation occupied by the same person for less than 90 consecutive nights, or for time-sharing schemes where a number of people each have the right to occupy a property for a set period each year, is a material change of use requiring planning permission. The Council will resist the loss of permanent residential accommodation through the provision of such temporary residential accommodation (see also Hotels Chapter, policy T4).

H1 TO RESIST THE LOSS OF PERMANENT RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION IN ALL BUT THE MOST EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

2.3 The Borough is very densely developed and there are few vacant sites available for residential development. In line with government guidance, the Council will seek to maximise housing provision within the Borough by giving priority to the residential development of sites and buildings where appropriate (see also policy STRAT 2).

H2 TO SEEK THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAND AND BUILDINGS FOR RESIDENTIAL USE UNLESS:

- a) A SATISFACTORY RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT CANNOT REASONABLY BE ACHIEVED BY REASON OF EXCESSIVE NOISE, INAPPROPRIATE LOCATION OR GROUND CONTAMINATION; OR
- b) THE LAND IS REQUIRED FOR THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL OR COMMUNITY FACILITIES TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS; OR
- c) THE DEVELOPMENT IS FOR THE REPLACEMENT ON THE SAME SITE OF EXISTING COMMERCIAL FLOORSPACE WHICH HAS NOT GIVEN RISE TO ENVIRONMENTAL OR TRAFFIC PROBLEMS.

2.4 The Council will have regard to the history of the use of the site and any known conflict with the amenity of the area through traffic or noise generation, hours of operation and any other material factors, including the considerations set out in the definition of the B1 Use Class. The Council will also have regard to the positive aspects of the existing use and its continuation or replacement by another non-residential use, such as its contribution to the vitality of the local economy. Where a site or building is not suitable or appropriate for residential use its residential use will not be sought.

Vacant Housing

2.5 Kensington and Chelsea suffers from a high level of vacant and under-utilised residential property. The numbers of vacant residential units above shops are of particular concern (see CD66 in Conservation and Development Chapter). To reduce the proportion of dwellings that are vacant would significantly increase the number of dwellings available to local residents. The Council attaches particular importance to the return to use of vacant residential property and will continue to identify vacant residential property, negotiate with the owners and where necessary, compulsorily purchase the property, following which it will be offered for sale to housing associations or sold on the open market. The Council requires that any such property be modernised and used solely for residential purposes.

- 2.6** Permissions for change of use of a property or part property to residential use, serve to maintain and enhance the function of the Borough as a residential area and will continue to be encouraged. Flats above shops or businesses can provide lower cost accommodation and contribute to the range of accommodation available, as well as enhancing the vitality of shopping areas (see also Shopping Chapter).

H3 TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF PROPERTY, WHEREVER APPROPRIATE, FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES AND, IN PARTICULAR, PROPERTY PURPOSE-BUILT FOR RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION WHERE PRESENTLY IN ANOTHER USE.

- 2.7** Where a return to residential use is proposed, the Council will consider the location of the premises and the amenity of the area. Where no amenity space is available, small residential units will be preferred. In properties with potential for gardens, family-size units should be provided. The Council will assess the suitability of properties by having regard to their internal layout and immediate surroundings.

3 MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING THE RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE BOROUGH

Commercial Development in Residential Areas

- 3.1** Maintaining both the historic and residential character depends greatly on the uses to which buildings are put. The character of a residential listed building or of a residential building in a conservation area can best be safeguarded if residential use is maintained.
- H4** TO RESIST THE ENCROACHMENT INTO RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES WHICH WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE BY VIRTUE OF SIZE, SCALE, HOURS OF OPERATION, TRAFFIC GENERATION OR NATURE OF USE.
- 3.2** It is also important to prevent the further incursion of commercial uses into mews which are primarily in residential use.
- 3.3** The Council recognises that a certain amount of services or other commercial activity can be incorporated into residential areas without necessarily causing environmental conflict. Some local services and facilities provide important support for residential areas and contribute to their character. The provision of local services and facilities also reduces the need for trips by car (see also Offices and Industry, Shopping, and Social and Community Uses Chapters). The Council is also sympathetic to those who work in the artistic and craft professions and in certain circumstances will be willing to protect existing studios from change to residential use (see also Leisure and Recreation Chapter, policy LR31).

- H5** TO ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION, WHERE APPROPRIATE, AND TO RESIST THE LOSS, OF LOCAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES WHICH SUPPORT THE RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE AREA.

Conversions

3.4 Although there continues to be a steady increase in self-contained dwellings in the Borough, largely due to the conversion of buildings, there has been a large-scale loss of small, often not self-contained units. This process has made a significant contribution to the decline in population, due to the displacement of many long-term residents in small households. Conversions potentially could have an important part to play in meeting the overall housing provision envisaged by RPG3 and in providing suitable accommodation for the growing number of small households. These aims will only be realised if a higher proportion of units provided are designed to meet the needs of the Borough's permanent residents. In those cases where a proposed conversion is acceptable under H6, policies H18 and H19 will apply.

3.5 However, there are drawbacks to dwellings provided by conversions. Although conversions provide new, generally small, dwellings, they can result in the loss of accommodation suitable for families and certain forms of low cost housing such as bedsitting rooms (see also paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5). Conversions can lack privacy, have inadequate noise insulation, and be badly designed, although the Council ensures that conversion schemes requiring planning permission are of an adequate standard. The increase in number or size of dwellings associated with many conversion schemes puts extra pressure on existing facilities such as parking, due to the higher car ownership rates of the occupants (see also Planning Standards Chapter and consult with the Director of Building Control as appropriate).

H6 TO PERMIT PROPOSALS FOR THE CONVERSION OF SELF-CONTAINED RESIDENTIAL UNITS INTO SMALLER DWELLINGS, EXCEPT WHERE THEY WOULD RESULT IN :

- (a) EXCESSIVE LEVELS OF ON-STREET PARKING DEMAND;
- (b) THE UNACCEPTABLE LOSS OF OFF-STREET PARKING SPACES;
- (c) THE LOSS OF FAMILY-SIZED DWELLINGS OF FIVE HABITABLE ROOMS OR FEWER WHICH HAVE DIRECT ACCESS TO AMENITY SPACE.

3.6 It is considered that in circumstances (a) and (b), the character of residential areas may be harmed. The Council is concerned that existing private garage space which provides off-street car-parking is maintained. In the case of proposals to convert mews properties, the retention of at least one garage space will normally be required.

Development and Residential Amenity

3.7 Additional residential accommodation is encouraged in line with the aims of the Plan but it is also considered essential that a policy to attract additional housing in the Borough must not lead to a loss of residential amenity. The Council recognises the value to local amenity of retaining and, where practicable, providing further open spaces and trees within the Borough (see also Conservation and Development, and Leisure and Recreation Chapters).

H7 TO SEEK, WHERE APPROPRIATE, THE PROVISION OF SOME OUTDOOR SPACE IN ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT AND, IN PARTICULAR, THE PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE AND PLAY FACILITIES IN DEVELOPMENTS OF OVER TEN UNITS.

3.8 In order to retain a high standard of residential amenity, it is important that appropriate provision is made for the social and community needs of residents. Therefore the Council will require the provision of such facilities as are appropriate in association with major residential developments. As a general guide, a major development will be considered to be one which provides 150 or more residential units.

H8 TO REQUIRE THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES WITHIN MAJOR RESIDENTIAL SCHEMES.

3.9 The form of social and community facilities to be provided will be dependent on the scale of the development, its location and its proximity to existing services (see also Social and Community Uses Chapter).

Density

3.10 If the housing capacity figure identified in RPG3 and sought through STRAT 14 of the UDP is to be met, it is necessary not only to place a high priority on allocating all identifiable land for residential use, but also to make the best use of that land. A balance has, however, to be struck between making the best use of residential land, ensuring new housing is of a good standard, and protecting the character and environment of surrounding areas.

3.11 Most of the existing housing in the Borough was built in the nineteenth century at densities which are very high by today's standards. Much of this is satisfactory in the accommodation and facilities it provides, and in the contribution it makes to the character and environment of the Borough. In most cases of new development, however, the Council's policy is to seek lower densities than in the past, in order that excessive pressure is not placed on existing facilities, particularly open space, that the quality of the existing environment is maintained, and, as appropriate, improved, and that new residential development offers facilities and a quality of environment acceptable today. It will be particularly important to design to lower densities, and make adequate provision for open space, in schemes suitable for occupation by families with children.

3.12 In considering both the quality of the environment proposed in a new housing scheme, and the effect of that scheme on the character and environment of the surrounding area, the density policies set out below will be followed, and regard will be had to the density ranges set out below. Schemes will also have to comply with other policies of the plan, particularly those relating to design, light, privacy, open space, and residential parking.

3.13 In applying the following policies the Council will have regard to the following well established density guidelines:

- VERY LOW: less than 70 habitable rooms per acre (hra) (175 habitable rooms per hectare (hrha))
- LOWER: between 70 hra and 100 hra (175-250 hrha)
- HIGHER: between 100 hra and 140 hra (250-350 hrha)
- VERY HIGH: above 140 hra (350 hrha)

Guidance on the calculation of residential density is given in the Planning Standards Chapter.

- H9** NORMALLY TO RESIST RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DESIGNED TO A VERY LOW DENSITY.
- H10** NORMALLY TO REQUIRE THAT HOUSING PREDOMINANTLY SUITABLE FOR OCCUPATION BY FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN IS DESIGNED TO A LOWER DENSITY.
- H11** NORMALLY TO RESIST HOUSING DESIGNED TO HIGHER DENSITIES EXCEPT WHERE IT:
- (a) IS DESIGNED PREDOMINANTLY FOR OCCUPATION BY SMALL HOUSEHOLDS; OR
 - (b) ENABLES THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL NEEDS OR AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON APPROPRIATE SITES; OR
 - (c) IS AN INFILL SCHEME WHERE A HIGHER DENSITY DEVELOPMENT IS NECESSARY FOR TOWNSCAPE REASONS TO COMPLY WITH THE POLICIES OF THE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT CHAPTER.
- H12** NORMALLY TO RESIST HOUSING DESIGNED TO VERY HIGH DENSITIES UNLESS NECESSARY FOR TOWNSCAPE REASONS TO COMPLY WITH THE POLICIES OF THE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT CHAPTER.

Improving the Quality of the Housing Stock

3.14 There has been a welcome improvement in the housing conditions of the Borough over the last 20-30 years, as building activity has concentrated on replacing poorer, older housing by means of the conversion and redevelopment of existing property. However, housing conditions in certain parts of the Borough still compare unfavourably with those elsewhere in London.

H13 TO CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE THE IMPROVEMENT AND PRESERVATION OF THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK.

3.15 The Council continues to implement landscaping and playground schemes on its estates. Besides enhancing the physical condition of dwellings and the environment, these schemes aim to improve the security and to add to the amenities enjoyed by residents and their children (see also policy CD87 of the Conservation and Development Chapter).

H14 TO ENSURE THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT THROUGH STREET WORKS, LANDSCAPING AND IMPROVEMENTS TO HOUSING ESTATES.

3.16 Funds are available for environmental improvement under various Central Government programmes, such as the City Challenge Programme, and occasionally through negotiation with the private sector.

4 INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING

New Development

4.1 There are few vacant sites remaining in the Borough and the provision of new housing, other than from conversion schemes, will mainly arise from smaller-scale redevelopment proposals. Policy STRAT 14 seeks to maximise the residential capacity of the Borough in line with RPG3. It is therefore important to ensure that, wherever possible, the development of vacant land and redevelopment of property currently in other uses is for residential purposes while seeking to maintain residential amenity. Where new residential development is proposed, and in appropriate locations, the Council will seek the provision of affordable housing for rent or for sale within the development. Section 5 deals with the provision of affordable housing.

H15 TO REQUIRE A SUBSTANTIAL PROPORTION OF HOUSING TO BE PROVIDED ON THOSE SITES TO WHICH THIS POLICY APPLIES AS IDENTIFIED IN THE SCHEDULE OF MAJOR SITES WITH DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.

H16 TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF PUBLICLY OWNED LAND FOR THE PROVISION OF HOUSING, WHEREVER APPROPRIATE.

4.2 A number of sites have been identified on the Schedule of Major Sites with Development Opportunities and Proposals Map where redevelopments will be expected to provide housing on all or at least the major part of the site area or floorspace. Such housing provision must be carefully designed to achieve an acceptable level of amenity for residents with regard to the location of any proposed business uses. (See also Offices and Industry Chapter policy E3).

5 PROVIDING AND MAINTAINING A WIDE RANGE OF HOUSING

Housing Mix

5.1 The mix of accommodation in the Borough should be related to the range in household types existing or likely to exist and to deficiencies in the range of accommodation. Households are typically smaller than elsewhere in the capital. In response to market demand, the private sector already provides a substantial proportion of smaller units, mostly through conversion schemes and it is therefore important to retain existing provision. A large stock of small residential units is also important in order to: maintain the level of population by allowing a more intensive use of residential properties; maintain the number of adult households who, through their spending power, help support the ancillary services which underpin the residential function; and meet the overall housing provision envisaged by RPG3.

H17 TO RESIST THE LOSS OF EXISTING, SMALL, SELF-CONTAINED FLATS OF ONE OR TWO HABITABLE ROOMS.

5.2 However, it is important to ensure that a sufficiently wide range of dwellings is provided in terms of type and size in redevelopment, rehabilitation, extension and conversion schemes, to satisfy the needs of larger households and rising standards.

H18 TO SEEK THE INCLUSION OF SMALLER UNITS (OF ONE OR TWO HABITABLE ROOMS) AND LARGER UNITS (OF THREE HABITABLE ROOMS AND MORE) IN SCHEMES FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT.

H19 TO SEEK AN APPROPRIATE MIX OF DWELLINGS WITHIN A SCHEME, HAVING REGARD TO THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

- (a) THE PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE SITE OR BUILDING AND ITS SETTING;
- (b) THE PREVIOUS OR EXISTING USE OF THE SITE OR BUILDING;
- (c) ACCESS TO PRIVATE GARDENS OR COMMUNAL GARDEN SQUARES FOR FAMILY UNITS;
- (d) THE LIKELY EFFECT ON DEMAND FOR CAR PARKING WITHIN THE AREA;
- (e) THE SURROUNDING COMPOSITION AND DENSITY OF POPULATION;
- (f) THE LOCATION OF SCHOOLS, SHOPS AND OPEN SPACES;
- (g) PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS (see paragraphs 5.13 to 5.24); AND
- (h) BUSY ROADS OR RAILWAY LINES NEARBY.

- 5.3** Particular regard should be paid to providing accommodation suitable for families in acceptable locations and the Council will encourage the provision of larger units suitable for family occupation to be located in the lower floors with access to the garden.

Affordable Housing Provision

- 5.4** The private rented sector performs an important function in the housing market, especially in meeting a need for lower cost housing, but has experienced a rapid decline. Much of the decline in this sector in the Borough has resulted from the conversion, into flats for sale, of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). There has also been a change in the types of lettings made. Whereas in the past, much of the privately rented sector had catered for lower income groups, an increasing proportion of this sector now consists of luxury furnished flats intended for short-term lets to mobile higher-income tenants.
- 5.5** Despite the decline, the Borough still has a greater proportion of private rented accommodation than anywhere else in the United Kingdom. The Council recognises that certain types of accommodation meet a specific need and will not normally consider favourably proposals which involve the loss of such accommodation. In particular, the Council is concerned that bedsit accommodation which is in compliance, or capable of complying, with building regulations and the standards laid down by the Housing Acts, should normally be maintained. However, there may be circumstances in which the loss of an HMO may be allowed, for example, in order to secure the essential restoration of a listed building where improvement is needed, and in which the existing HMO layout is harmful to the historic character of the building, or in appropriate locations having regard to the distribution of HMOs within the area.
- 5.6** Where existing HMOs and bedsitting rooms do not comply with the current Housing Acts, landlords should seek advice from the Council's Environmental Health Department.
- H20** NORMALLY TO RESIST PROPOSALS FOR THE CONVERSION INTO SELF-CONTAINED ACCOMMODATION OF THOSE HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION AND INDIVIDUAL BEDSITTING ROOMS WHICH COMPLY WITH, OR ARE CAPABLE OF REACHING, THE STANDARDS LAID DOWN BY THE HOUSING ACTS.
- 5.7** Housing associations are now the major providers of affordable housing for rent in the Borough. They assist in the housing of the statutorily homeless and for people with special accommodation needs as well as hostel provision for groups such as people with a mental illness, the single homeless and people with physical disabilities. They also contribute towards improving the housing stock. The Council encourages the provision of rented accommodation (especially affordable accommodation) in any large residential or mixed-use developments and will look favourably upon arrangements to secure the transfer of ownership of a proportion of the site, or some of the dwellings created, to registered Housing Associations or other providers of affordable housing for this purpose. Where appropriate, the Council will seek Planning Obligations to secure and retain the provision

of affordable housing. Proposals for housing associations to convert properties into self-contained dwellings, in liaison with existing tenants, will be welcome where there is no significant reduction in accommodation in terms of bedspaces.

H21 TO WELCOME RESIDENTIAL OR MIXED-USE SCHEMES WITH A RESIDENTIAL ELEMENT WHERE A RANGE OF HOUSING IS TO BE PROVIDED INCLUDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOUSING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS.

5.8 The Council wishes to encourage an increase in the provision of affordable housing in the Borough, such as that provided by registered Housing Associations (affordable housing is that which is approximately equivalent in cost to the occupier as that provided by housing associations working in the Borough). The provision of affordable housing has been established as a material consideration for inclusion in the Plan.

5.9 The high cost of housing in London means that many households cannot afford even the smallest properties. Kensington and Chelsea was the most expensive London Borough in terms of house prices and private sector rents in 1991. The London Research Centre estimated that in 1990, in London as a whole, there was a need for 380,500 additional social dwellings to meet the needs of the homeless, potential households, overcrowded households and households in unsatisfactory accommodation. This Council estimates that at least 9,000 additional affordable residential units are required to satisfy the housing needs of households living in the Borough. In order to satisfy the need for affordable homes for rent in this Borough, the Council will seek the provision of an adequate supply of affordable housing on residential development sites throughout the Borough.

H22 TO SEEK WHERE APPROPRIATE THE INCLUSION AND RETENTION OF A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF AFFORDABLE RESIDENTIAL UNITS ON RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES OF OVER 0.05 HECTARES (0.12 ACRES) IN SIZE.

H23 TO SEEK THE PROVISION AND RETENTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING WHERE INDICATED IN THE SCHEDULE OF MAJOR SITES WITH DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

5.10 The Council will expect residential development on sites of over 0.05 hectares to contribute a significant proportion of dwellings on the site to the stock of affordable housing. Land available for development in the Borough is very scarce and for this reason sites over 0.05 hectares will be subject to the policy to provide affordable housing. The Council wishes to ensure that the present proportion of affordable housing in the Borough, about one third, is maintained (a figure of one third corresponds to the proportion of households living in affordable or lower cost housing at the time of the 1991 Population Census). It would be impracticable to require a third of all residential redevelopment on all sites to be in the form of affordable housing. However, if the affordable housing target is to be met, the large sites in the Schedule of Major Sites with Development Opportunities should provide a higher proportion (i.e. more than one third) of affordable housing in order to compensate for those smaller sites where affordable housing might not be practicable. In order to monitor the success of this policy, the Council will regularly assess the proportion of new affordable housing provided within the total new housing stock.