



from fat, stubby plots in Camden Hill Gardens, through narrow short plots in Kensington Place, to the very long, medium width plots of Campden Hill Square running through to their mews houses in Hillsleigh Road and Aubrey Walk. St George's Church is a building of great historic interest; a rare example of Bassett Keeling's outrageous playing with gothic forms, and a work of great invention both on plan, in elevation, and in detail.

3.4.12. Other elements of character.

These include the character of the spaces within the area.

3.4.12.1. In this example the spaces are not only between buildings but also around them. Aubrey House has an exceptional amount of space both north and south of it; Holland Park School is a series of pavilions set in spaces, and Kensington Heights has space on all four sides of it.

3.4.12.2. By contrast Campden Hill Square consists of terraces on three sides of a lushly planted private fenced and gated communal garden which has a special character because of the steepness of the slope from the south down to Notting Hill Gate.

3.4.12.3. In contrast with this open space there are narrower spaces, usually with buildings on both sides, but very often not symmetrically developed. For instance, Campden Hill Road is often lop-sided with buildings of different ages, heights, materials, styles on opposite sides of the road as for instance where Kensington Heights faces the 'Windsor Castle' public house and where Victorian Airlie Gardens faces 92-102 Campden Hill Road.

3.4.12.4. Another of these lopsided streets is Aubrey Walk, with a strange mixture of buildings on both the north side and (although not continuously developed) on the

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south. I have drawn an analysis of this road, which I append at Appendix RT No.

6.3.

3.4.12.5. There is a very wide range of **building materials, textures and colours.**

There is no overall consistency in this regard, and the variety adds to the character.

3.4.12.6. This is not a conservation area that exhibits a strong use of **local details;**

this is not a provincial conservation area, but very definitely an area with a

Metropolitan character. An awareness of the latest styles, whether it is for an 1826 town house or an 1864 Rogue Gothic church, is a characteristic of the area.

3.4.12.7. The contribution made by **green spaces, trees, hedges and other natural or cultivated elements** to the character of the area is modest and largely accidental.

There are elements of greenery but this is in the main a tightly developed inner-city area. What is however a characteristic is the well-maintained nature of the front gardens which have carefully chosen plants and give much visual and other delight in the area.

3.4.12.8. The **negative factors** within the area which offer a welcome opportunity for change include not only Water Tower House, but also the parking area west of that and the forlorn aspect and untidy spaces around the former Pump Room. The reservoirs themselves with their unrelieved windowless walls sticking up above the general road level, and the undeveloped land between them and their site boundary, are in themselves negative elements. The reservoirs' large size on plan makes them a major negative element.



3.4.12.9. Conclusions as to Character

3.4.12.9.i. My conclusions as to the character of the 'far setting' are that it is overwhelmingly a residential area with the Institutions hovering near but out of sight and out of mind. But within that residential character there is much variety; variety of age, form height, building size and building configuration. Most of the development was historically as houses with gardens (perhaps only at the back), but many of these have been adapted, often in an adhoc way, into multiple occupation.

3.4.12.9.ii. There are also large tall blocks of modern flats such as Kensington Heights and Melbourne House. The value of properties is high and is accompanied by a generally high standard of maintainance and care. The care lavished on the front gardens, railings and front walls of the houses is a characteristic component of the visual scene. Most of the houses are in long (though varied terraces), but there are occasional much larger semi-detached houses, and at Aubrey House, a large detached house with a private garden, surrounded by high brick walls.

3.4.13. The Role of the Waterworks in the Character of the Area.

3.4.13.1. If we examine the role of the Waterworks with regard to the character of the area we can see how that role has changed over time. In 1845 the area was still being developed for the first time, see Maps at Appendices RT Nos. 1.1.5 of 1846, and 1.1.6. of 1856, and the waterworks site, ideally placed on the top of the hill, was on the edge of development and therefore appropriate. By comparison it would have had little chance of implementation at this time in say Bedford Square at the heart of the, by then, fully developed Bedford Estate.

3.4.13.2. The waterworks later became part of the character of Campden Hill. As a

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group of buildings it was, when I first saw it in the 1950's a strikingly different component of the area's character.

3.4.13.3. But with the demolition of the water tower its integrity as a group of buildings has gone, and this has been aggravated by the building of the appalling Water Tower House building. The waterworks in its truncated physical form is now alien to the character of the residential area which has grown up round the waterworks since 1845. It is a piece of grit in the oyster which has **not** grown into a pearl. It makes a negative and harmful contribution to the largely residential character of this part of the conservation area.

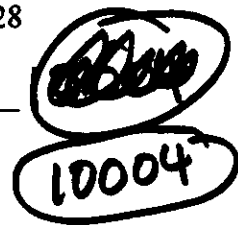
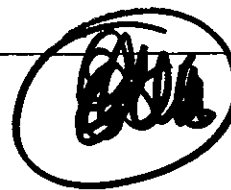
3.4.14. Basis for assessment of Character of the 'far setting'.

3.4.14.1. I have based this assessment of character on a perambulation from Kensington High Street, up the slightly winding and climbing length of Campden Hill Road, up to the brow of the hill, which seems to be at the point where Aubrey Walk joins Campden Hill Road, and down the steeper hill to Notting Hill Gate.

3.4.14.2 I made little turn-offs to left and right, and having explored Campden Hill Square returned south down Holland Walk as far as the turning called Campden Hill.

3.4.14.3 Although this perambulation covered a bigger area than the 'near setting' of the Appeal Site, since it is all in the same designated conservation area, yet is bounded by two main routes, Kensington High Street and Notting Hill, it seems to me an appropriate area to study. I have shown the boundaries of this wider area which I call the 'far setting' on a plan at Appendix RT No.6.2. (Area of Character and Appearance Assessment).

3.4.14.4. In addition I have made a more detailed analysis of the character and appearance of Aubrey Walk, referred to above and shown on a plan at Appendix RT



No. 6.3.

3.4.14.5 What then does one conclude as to character rather than appearance? The character is predominantly residential, though not entirely so; Basil Spence's sombre and dignified red brick town hall complex fills an entire building block between Campden Hill Road and Horton Street. King's College London is another large, dignified red brick building with portland stone dressings. As part of Queen Mary's College it provided for many years substantial university hostel accommodation. Holland Park School and the West London College of Commerce, sprawl about in that extravagant 1950's way, behind hostile fences and gates and Closed Circuit television monitors. In the whole of the middle stretch of Campden Hill Road, there is only one pub, The Windsor Castle, and two little shops. But overwhelmingly, it has a residential character, and it is a character which has seen much change since the first colonisation in the seventeenth century. Not only has the residential character changed with large detached houses replaced by terraces, and with houses converted into flats, or stables into dwellings, but the contribution to the character of the reservoirs has changed since 1845; they were roofed in, they were expanded, they became redundant, parts were sold off, and parts were demolished. Airlie Gardens, for instance, of 1868, is built on former water works land. So this process of change has been going on since the mid-nineteenth century. In this conservation area a characteristic has been frequent and substantial change and with great care there is no reason why it should not continue.

3.4.14.6. The area is one which in my view can, as I have shown, been broken down into a series of 'character areas', some large, some small, some Georgian, some

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Victorian, and some modern. I have produced a plan which I attach as Appendix RT No. 15 which shows what I consider these character areas to be. Any proposed scheme needs to relate to these different characters, which I believe the appeal scheme does successfully.

3.5. APPEARANCE OF THE AREA FORMING THE 'FAR SETTING' OF THE APPEAL SITE.

3.5.1. My photographs at Appendix RT No. 4 show the appearance of the area forming the setting, both the 'near setting' and the 'far setting' of the Appeal Site.

3.5.2. The notes under each photograph form an important part of my evidence.

I point out the photographs are in four sections.

Section 1, photographs 1-18 is a perambulation from north to south up Campden Hill Road to the Appeal Site on the brow of the hill.

Section 2, photographs 19 - 52 is a perambulation from south to north up Campden Hill Road to the Appeal Site.

Section 3, photographs 53 - 76 is a perambulation from west to east along Aubrey Walk, and

Section 4, photographs 77-108 is a perambulation behind the security gate of Holland Park School, and beyond the security gate of the reservoir site, including Thorpe Lodge, Holland Park School, and Holland Park Avenue.

3.6. ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE

Since William III bought what became Kensington Palace in 1689, this area of rising ground within easy reach of London has been important. I have shown how large mansions with extensive grounds were built up the slope from Kensington High Street as far as the ridge. Because of its location within the Royal Borough and within

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London, this area has been and continues to be an important one.

3.7. OTHER CONSERVATION AREAS PARTIALLY AFFECTED

Although the Kensington Conservation Area is very large, there are other conservation areas surrounding it: Holland Park to the west, Edwardes Square, Scarsdale and Abingdon to the south, as well as Kensington Square and Kensington Palace to the east. The western half of its northern boundary is shared by Ladbrooke Conservation Area along Holland Park Avenue. In my view because the appeal site is located at the high point of Campden Hill Road and because the proposal includes buildings seven stories high, there may be some minor effect on Holland Park Avenue. I deal with this at Section 8.5. below.



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4. THE RESERVOIR SITE

4.1. HISTORY

4.1.1. The history of this reservoir site (as opposed to the other reservoir site east of Campden Hill Road) is given in the Survey of London Volume XXXV11 in Chapter VI at pp 99-100 which I reproduce as my Appendix RT No.1.2.1. This section of the Survey of London is headed 'Grand Junction Water Works Company Site'. The salient points are as follows:-

4.1.2. Thomas Williams and Sir James McGrigor bought in 1820 two adjoining parcels of land from the Lloyds. In each case the plots were used as extensions to the grounds of their houses further south. In 1843 Sir James McGrigor sold his plot (as well as his house and garden) to the Grand Junction Water Works Company. The reservoir (the East Reservoir) was completed in 1845. The reservoir was covered in 1857-8 under the provision of the Metropolitan Water Act of 1852, and at the same time a pumping station and tower were built (see a copy of a photograph Plate 36a from the Survey of London which I reproduce in Appendix RT No. 1.2.2. and Fig 11 from Survey of London, Appendix RT No.1.2.3.)

(The tower was demolished in 1970.)

4.1.3. In 1868 the Company brought the Thomas Williams land west of Sir James McGrigor's land and the house Wycombe Lodge and its land south of Aubrey Walk. Wycombe Lodge (built in 1829) was demolished and additional covered reservoirs were built in 1868-9. The covered top of the reservoir was used as tennis courts in the last few years of the nineteenth century, from 1884, as shown on the O.S. Map of 1897, Appendix RT No. 1.1.8. (Lawn Tennis, as a game derived from Royal Tennis

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was introduced by a Major Walter Clopton Wingfield in 1873. The game was initially called 'sphairistike'. The word 'Lawn' was to differentiate the game from Real Tennis, but the playing surface varies including clay and man-made materials. The game quickly became very, very, popular but the Tennis Club at Campden Hill starting in 1884 would have been one of the early clubs. The All England Club at Wimbledon for instance did not become the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club until 1882 and the Lawn Tennis Association was not founded until 1888.) (see Appendix RT No. 17).

4.1.4. In 1904 the property of the Grand Junction Water Works Company was acquired by the Metropolitan Water Board.

4.1.5. Water Tower House was built in the 1970s after the demolition of the 1857 tower.

4.2. FEATURES OF THE SITE AT PRESENT

(See also photographs in my Appendix RT No. 4)

4.2.1. **Water Tower House.** This is a five-storey block with an exposed concrete frame. It was built in 1970 after the demolition of the Water Tower. In the CAPS document it is described as a 'dreadful building in all townscape respects.' (p.31) and 'Water Tower House must regrettably be described as the areas's least appealing building (p.31). I agree with these comments. The architect's name appears to be unknown. I agree with the CAPS document map of p.31 that it is a building which detracts from the special interest of the conservation area. It is harmful to the character and appearance.

4.2.2. **Pump Room.** This is a single storey building of 1852: it is classical in style with round arch headed windows between brick piers underneath a powerful cornice.

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A tall parapet conceals slate roofs. The building contains large volume spaces which housed the pump engines and other machinery connected with the water works.



The buildings are now redundant and in a semi-derelict state and have been brutally truncated on their western side. English Heritage have reviewed these buildings and found them not to be of merit or worthy of retention (as a letter of 25th February, 1998 to Jeffery George Associates, stated) The buildings are not locally listed, nor described as having any local architectural character or merit within the CAPS document.

4.2.3. The Reservoir Itself.

4.2.3.1. The Reservoirs cover 8,763 sq m. on plan (94,324 sq ft) and from internal finished floor level to roof level are some 7.84, m. high. However the internal floor level is 3.88 m. below the level of Aubrey Walk, and that part which is above the level of Aubrey Walk to the extent of 4 m. is disguised by landscaped embankments, although the upper 2 m. of the serpentine brick outer wall on the crest of the hill can be seen from a private walkway strip at a lower level than, and on three sides of, the tennis courts which occupy the space on top of the reservoir.

4.2.3.2. The layout of the reservoir is shown on plan No. 9029 Sheet 3 of 4 by Aworth Land Surveys Ltd forming part of the Planning Application of March, 1999, and Sections AA and BB are shown on their 9029 Sheet 4 of 4 in the same set.

4.2.3.3. I revisited the site on the afternoon of the 1st June, 1999, and accompanied by Mr Nigel Hawkey of Thames Water Property Ltd, and three engineers from Thames Water, went inside the reservoirs. It was necessary for all of us to wear protective overalls, and carry air-quality measuring equipment and breathing masks.

There were originally three cells and two of these, the Western Reservoir and the Middle Reservoir of 1868 remain. I went down into firstly the Middle Reservoir, and then the Western Reservoir. Apart from the vast scale of these structures (and they are relatively small compared to other Victorian reservoirs) the most striking thing is the utterly utilitarian nature of them. They are wholly in brick, and made up of square grids forming twelve bays from north to south by eight bays from east to west in the Middle Reservoir and twelve bays by nine bays for the Eastern Reservoir.

4.2.3.4. The only natural light is from ventilators (when they are open) since air bricks at the top have been filled in. Photography is not easy; nevertheless my photographs Nos. 83-85 in Appendix RT No. 4 show the nature of the interior.

Cruciform brick piers support segmental arches which in turn support segmental vaults. In the other direction, at a slightly lower level, further segmental arches run between the cruciform piers.

4.2.3.5. The outer walls are segmental on plan, and the floor is flat except for single brick height divisions between the bays. The 'cells' are separated by a massive plain wall, and access from the walkway strip is by steep concrete and brick steps.

4.2.3.6. An architectural Appraisal and Contextual Study was carried out by Jeffery George & Associates in November, 1998, and I attach a copy as my Appendix RT No.


16.1.

4.2.3.7. A Certificate of Immunity from listing of the Reservoir and the Pumping Station was issued on 23rd March, 1999, Appendix RT No. 16.2.

4.2.3.8. I agree with the Secretary of State that they are not of sufficient interest to be included in a list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

4.2.4. **Block of Flats - 3, 5, and 7, Aubrey Walk.** The flats are three floors above

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garages and are of undistinguished and inappropriate character, see my photographs in Appendix RT No. 4.

4.2.5. **Non-accessible Embankment and Site Boundary.**

Many of my photographs in Appendix RT No. 4. show the bits of land around the reservoir outside the chicken-wire of the tennis courts but within the site boundary.

There is non-accessible land between the chicken wire and the serpentine walls of the reservoir, and further non-accessible land providing a walkway for Thames Water staff at a lower level than the first mentioned space. There are also embankments outside this lower level walkway strip down towards Thorpe Lodge and the school on the south, the gardens of Aubrey Lodge on the west, and Aubrey Walk on the north. Some of these embankments have trees and self-sown vegetation on them (which is described in greater detail by other witnesses.)

4.3. **SETTING: 'near setting' and 'far setting'.**

4.3.1. The question of the setting of the Reservoir Site (the Appeal Site) and the settings of specific listed buildings is an important consideration in this case. There is no full or even partial definition of the term 'setting' in planning statute or guidance. I have at previous inquiries relied heavily on the test of intervisibility to establish setting. That is to say that if from some point in the public realm I can see the appeal site or historic building I am within its setting and it is within mine.

4.3.2. However, I have come to the view that there are limitations to this test.

An article in the Journal of Planning and Environment Law, in June, 1999, by Simon Collcutt entitled 'The Setting of Cultural Heritage Features' is I think helpful. He points out that in common sense terms there are faults with the intervisibility test. Ely

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Cathedral can be seen from miles away. Is all of this area within its setting? Is the whole of Salisbury Plain within the setting of Stonehenge? He suggests that a practical approach is that such informal terms as 'near setting' and 'far setting' could be used. This is the division I have used in this evidence. I use the term 'near setting' to equate with 'visual envelope' i.e. those places where there is 'intervisibility' and this I show on my diagram at Appendix RT No. 5.

4.3.3. By 'far setting' I mean a wider area which in my view is the context of the appeal site where one is aware of the appeal site even though it cannot be seen. This I have shown on a plan at Appendix RT No. 6.2. under the title 'Area of Character and Appearance' Assessment.

4.3.4. The 'near setting' area I have shown is of public realm spaces only since conservation area concerns are based mainly on areas and not primarily with residential amenity and private concerns. However, conservation areas contain dwellings with inhabitants. The areas of public realm I have shown are in many cases bounded by buildings: I include the facades of those buildings forming the edges of the setting as being part of the setting. In my view the prime concern in conservation area terms should be the public realm, but the private realm cannot, of course, be ignored.

4.3.5. My diagram of 'near setting' Appendix 5 is arrived at by deducting those places which are not within the appeal site's 'near setting'. Obviously the appeal site itself is left out; also omitted are those places which are in the visual shadow of existing buildings; these can be places surprisingly close geographically to the appeal site, for example in much of Peel Street and Aubrey Road. In this case not all of the appeal site can be seen from all parts of its 'near' setting. For instance from Thorpe



Lodge you would not be able to see all of the block of flats and from the corner of Aubrey Road/Aubrey Walk you would not be able to see those buildings in the southern part of the appeal site. Also, it must be remembered that we do not experience cities from static viewpoints; we move through cities continually changing our direction of view. However, my diagram stands as a surrogate for the experience of being in the 'near setting' area of the proposals and its accuracy can be tested by a visit.

4.4. ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE

The site is an important site because of:-

1. its location within the Kensington Conservation Area in the Royal Borough.
2. its size.
3. its location at the ridge of Campden Hill above Notting Hill to the north and Kensington Church street to the south.

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5. LISTED BUILDINGS AFFECTED BY PROPOSAL

5.0. There are no listed buildings directly affected by the proposal. Neither the Pump Room nor the reservoir buildings themselves are listed and both have a Certificate of Immunity from listing.

5.1. FEW LISTED BUILDINGS

Moreover, it is remarkable how few listed buildings there are within the 'near setting' of such a large redevelopment site within a conservation area. There are only six entries on the list and only ten buildings in all.

5.2. LISTED BUILDINGS WITHIN THE 'NEAR SETTING' OF THE APPEAL SITE

I consider that the following listed buildings are within the 'near setting' of the appeal site in the sense that there is intervisibility between them and some part of the proposal. Conversely the appeal site is within their 'near setting'.

(The Conservation Area full list of listed buildings within the Kensington Conservation Area as at 1995, is given on p.56 of the CAPS document, but many of these could not see the proposals or be seen from them).

5.2.0. I give copies of the listing descriptions of the listed buildings within the 'near setting' of the proposals at Appendix RT No. 2.3. Their location can be seen on my plans at Appendix RT No. 6.1.

The six buildings or groups of buildings are as follows:-

5.2.1. Aubrey Walk: St George's Church by Bassett Keeling, listed Grade II.

5.2.1.1. In 1864 St George's Church in Aubrey Walk was built 'to meet the needs of the increasing population of the neighbourhood.' The listing description states:



'1864 by Bassett Keeling. Muscular Gothic style. Ragstone with ashlar dressings pinkstone bands. Brick flanks. Stumpy tower, and low arcaded porch to west. Interior painted and apse demolished.'

5.2.1.2. In my (unpublished) thesis 'Victorian Churches in London' (1956 University College, London), see Appendix RT No. 1.1.13 I wrote

'There were several architects working at this time [1850s and 1860s] whose work has a strange wildness and ugliness. Normal critical methods break down when looking at these churches, but it is not fair or just to dismiss them as only amusing freaks. They reveal much of the mind of the Victorian designers of this period, and when most of the paltry work of the 'pattern district church' is seen to be completely lacking in interest on architectural qualities, these have vigour, strength and vitality. That they all manifest an amazing coarseness of design and are very unattractive is also true. The chief examples are by Peacock, Teulon, Keeling, and Lamb, but rare instances of vulgarity occur in the work of Street, and even Pearson. To call these architects 'rogues' as in Goodhart-Rendel's famous essay, is perhaps not quite accurate. They were not alone from the herd, they were just rougher specimens.'

5.2.1.3. In my thesis, I wrote about St George, Aubrey Walk in the following words:-

'St George's is contemporary with St Mark, St Mark's Road Paddington, both being of 1864, and apart from the front which has a narthex on short columns, the whole effect is very similar. There is a nave and aisle of four bays. Then a wide bay for a crossing and widened out aisles; to the west of this is a chancel with a short five sided apse with openings in the non-cardinal faces and an opening to the south for a chapel. The length of the church is 112 ft. and the width across nave and aisles 58 ft. and at the pseudo-transept 72 ft. The nave is buttressed and lit from clerestories and aisle windows; there are galleries on three sides. The roof is elaborately laced with structural members. This is a most ungracious church, awkward and uneasy to live with; the texture of the materials is hard and uncompromising. It has been much altered and sobered down since Keeling designed it; it must have been amazing when it was new and all the shapes and materials were crisp and shiny.'

5.2.1.4. Writing in 1966, Basil Clarke in 'Parish Churches of London' Appendix RT No 1.6. stated:-

'St George's Campden Hill . . . is due for demolition. It was built in 1864 by John Bennett of Kensington to provide a living for his son. The contractors

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were Myers and Son. The interior has been completely de-Keelingised by the alteration of the arcades (A.H. Ryan Tenison), the removal of the galleries, the white-washing of the walls, etc.

5.2.1.5. I illustrated the text of my thesis with my plan, see Appendix RT No. 1.1.14.

This drawing was later used as the basis for the plan in the Survey of London Volume XXXV11 at their page 97. (in Appendix RT No. 1.2.1.)

5.2.1.6. In Pevsner and Cherry, London 3 North West, 1991, Appendix RT No. 1.3'.

the entry states:

'St George, Aubrey Walk, 1864 by Bassett Keeling. Quirky rogue-architect front (Pevsner called it atrocious), with open narthex on short columns, multi-coloured. The tower with stairs to the gallery, formerly with a spire, now with a short post-war cap by Milner & Craze. The interior has been considerably altered (apse demolished, walls whitewashed, columns cased.) It was originally exceedingly patterned, with red and black brick arches on iron columns, small circular clerestory windows, and a restless criss-cross of timbers in the roof - STAINED GLASS. Clerestory windows and aisle window with St George by Hugh Arnold, 1906. - Three s aisle windows by C. Townshend (PC).'

5.2.1.7. There is a more complete description of the church in Survey of London, Volume XXXV11, Appendix RT No. 1.2.1.

5.2.1.8. The church was built

'to meet the needs of the increasing population of the neighbourhood. The Church was well attended for many years by a fashionable congregation, whose carriages were so numerous the directors of the Waterworks moved their railings to provide more passage room. A stately beadle, with gold-braided uniform and a wand of office, was in attendance to open the carriage doors.' Appendix RT No. 1.1.10., pp 28 and 29.

The church makes a brave show to the front, but the standard of ostentation and quality of materials drops off to an extraordinary extent at the sides which are much simpler, bleaker and cheaper with coloured brickwork and very little stone!

5.2.1.9. As a result of extensive internal alterations to Bassett Keeling's 'ornate and somewhat barbarous style', beginning in the late nineteenth century, 'the highly



personal character of the church' has been lost, see Appendix RT No. 1.2.

The original broached spire has also been reduced to a stumpy cap on the tower, see photographs in Appendix RT No. 4, further lessening the integrity of this listed building.

5.2.1.10. The original Reservoir, of course, was built and roofed before St George's Church, and the Appeal Site lying across the road, to the south of Aubrey Walk from St George's Church could always be seen from this building. The Waterworks management in fact 'removed their railings to provide more passage room' for the carriages of St George's church attenders at the end of the 19th century, as has already been described.

5.2.1.11. Since then the integrity of this listed building has been harmed by extensive alterations. For instance the removal of the broach spire and its replacement by a copper pyramidal cap, the demolition of the apse, the whitewashing of much of the interior, and the removal of galleries. Recent extensions to the rear of the building have now centred many church activities at the northern end of the Church, rather than on the Aubrey Walk side.

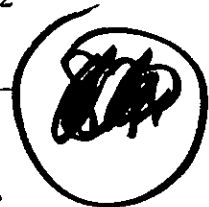
5.2.2. 2-6 (even) Aubrey Walk, including garden railings, listed Grade II.

5.2.2.1. The listing description, Appendix RT No. 2.3. reads:

'Early c19 terrace. Three storeys, 2 windows each. Yellow brick. Stucco to ground floor. Round-headed doorways. Gauged flat arches to windows. Iron window guards to first floor. Spearhead and pineapple railings to gardens. Doorway to No. 6 on return frontage to Hillsleigh Road'.

5.2.2.2. Pevsner dates the houses c. 1826, and they are shown on Daw's Map of Kensington, 1846, Appendix RT No. 1.1.5. These rather plain, standard late Georgian houses, are typical of the style of architecture of the period in the Capital, (see

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Nicholson, plans and elevations of a Fourth Rate House, at Appendix RT No. 1.1.15), but they are not typical of Campden Hill houses, being earlier and plainer than most.

5.2.2.3. There have been some alterations, as seen in Photograph No. 73 in Appendix RT No.4. The brickwork has been extensively patched and two of the parapets replaced or heavily altered. The entrance to No. 6 has at some stage been moved from Aubrey Walk round into Hillsleigh Road, reducing both the historic and the architectural interest and the whole of the side wall to Hillsleigh Road has been rebuilt in a non-matching brick.

These three terraced houses were **the first, and only** Georgian houses, built in Aubrey Walk, then called Notting Hill Grove.

The description in the Survey of London, see Appendix RT No. 1.2.1. reads:

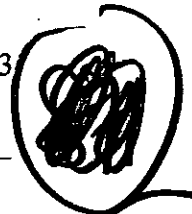
'Nos. 2-6 (even) Aubrey Walk which are three-storey Georgian houses of stock brick with stuccoed ground storeys were built on land purchased by Hanson. No. 6. was the first to be completed under a ninety-nine lease granted by Hanson to John Edward Cowmeadow, a coal merchant, in 1826. Cowmeadow took the house for his own occupation and was living there by 1827. He was also the lessee of Nos. 2 and 4, for which Hanson granted him a similar lease in 1829'. They were finished the following year. Cowmeadow's venture into the field of property was clearly not made from a position of security for in 1831 he was excused from paying rates 'on Account of numerous Family and his wife now Lying-in'; later in the year the rate collector noted 'Family in great distress'.

5.2.3. 15-19 (odd) Aubrey Walk, listed Grade II.

Built on the site of former outbuildings, these were designed by Raymond Erith in 1951-2 for the owners of Aubrey House.

The listing description, Appendix RT No. 1.3., reads:

'Terrace of three houses. 1951-2. By Raymond Erith for the Messrs Alexander. Brick, rendered garden front. Slate roof with four symmetrically placed brick stacks and wooden eaves soffit. Three storeys. Rectangular plan with large projecting bows on garden front. North (road) front a symmetrical



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five bay composition with blind windows on all storeys either side of centre and windows with margin-glazed sashes in outer bays. None on first floor set in single storey recesses. Central panelled door under low first floor window and low round-arched second floor window, both relatively small. Doors with arches also to extreme ends of facade and further door to right of right-hand ground floor blind window. All openings and recesses on this front have gauged heads, as have those on returns. South elevation is of seven bays with large margin-light casements, outer pairs of bays in semi-circular bay projecting slightly from line of facade. Windows flanking centre of tripartite proportions, though not glazed in a tripartite fashion. Centre bay with small arched window on second floor, small square window on first floor and margin half-glaze door with transom, light on ground floor. Two storey verandah masking central three bays, with cast-iron supports below and wooden supports above to pitched lead roof.

Interior not inspected but undoubtedly of interest. One of Erith's most successful compositions. L. Archer, 1985, pp 128-30.'

5.2.3.3. Pevsner, Buildings of England, London 3, 1991, Appendix RT No. 1.3. reads:

'by the accomplished classicist Raymond Erith in a restrained Regency style, unusual for its time. The houses are stock brick with grey brick dressings, the fronts sparsely fenestrated and some windows ostensibly blocked. The rear facade has two bow windows flanking a recessed centre. All three houses have stairwells with curved ends and elegant handrails. The modest garages adjoining are also by Erith. The Erith terrace was intended to recreate the atmosphere of the road's early architecture as illustrated by Nos. 2-6 of c.1826.'

5.2.3.4. and from Ian Nairn, 1964, Appendix RT No. 1.7.:

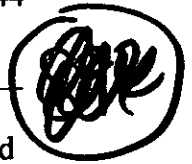
'This is quite simply, a three-storey Regency terrace. Not a copy or a pastiche, but the real thing, designed by someone who is living a century and a half out of phase. This is unlike any other neo-Georgian building in London and is worth a special visit. It shows up the fussy modernity of the houses opposite, something I wish I did not have to admit.'

A site notice dated 16th June, 1999 states 'refurbishment to form guest accommodation at Nos. 15 and 17,' and 'two staff flats at Nos. 19 and 19A'.

5.2.4. No. 118, Campden Hill Road, listed Grade II.

5.2.4.1. The listing description, Appendix RT No. 2.3. reads:

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'1877-8. Norman Shaw. House for George Henry Boughton. Now converted to flats. Red brick, stone dressings and some tile-hanging. Tiled roofs. Three to 4 storeys and attic. Three main bays, the outer advanced as crosswings with gables (the left hand one rebuilt). Two-storey canted bay window to right hand side. Entrance to left hand, pilastered, with segmental arch; cut brick details. Relieving arch to ground floor wall. Return to Peel Street also gabled. Some alterations. Interior not seen.'

5.2.4.2. Also described in Survey of London Volume XXVI, see Appendix RT No.

2.1. but now considerably altered as shown in Photo No. 35 Appendix RT No. 4.

The integrity of this building has been impaired to some extent by the rebuilding of the gable and other alterations. The former house has now been turned into flats.

5.2.5. Aubrey Road, Aubrey House, listed Grade II*. See photographs Appendix RT No. 4.

5.2.5.1. The listing description, Appendix RT No. 2.3. reads:

'Mid C18, circa 1730-1740 Brown brick, red window arches, 3 storey, 5 window centre with 2-storey, 3 window wings (possibly slightly later), and modern additions to east. The centre has a dentilled brick cornice and parapet and a dentilled brick pediment over the 3-window central part which breaks forward slightly. There is a band between ground and first floors. The doorcase has a dentilled pediment and entablature above Tuscan pilasters. The east (to left) wing projects slightly and has a band across the front continuing that of the main block. The west wing has been enlarged and altered in C19. The back on the garden shows the same 3-storey centre with the top floor in the parapet and a brick cornice below. The central one-window part projects slightly. The wings on this side are in line with the main block. The windows on the first floor retain their original cased frames. On the garden front to the extreme east beyond the modern additions is a C19 Tuscan loggia.

Interior - the house is said to incorporate earlier features, but as far as could be seen retains little except some simple mid C18 pedimented door surrounds. The staircases appear to be C19. The house stands in very good grounds particularly at the back.'

5.2.5.2. Pevsner, p.91, Appendix RT No. 1.3. states:

'Its site was renowned in the c17 for the medicinal spring known as Kensington Wells. The core of the house probably belongs to one built

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adjoining the spring c. 1698; its present appearance is owed to Sir Edward Lloyd, who added projecting wings to the central block and reconstructed the N. facade between 1745 and 1754. Later c18 alterations included a drawing room created by James Wyatt in 1774 for Lady Mary Coke. The gauged-arch windows and pediment with acroterion urns are visible from the road; the current doorcase is a reproduction.⁷

5.2.5.3. A high wall, see Photograph No.106 Appendix RT No. 4. encloses the site, and the Raymond Erith terrace of houses lie immediately to the east of Aubrey House, with the tennis courts invisible beyond the steep reservoir embankment, and landscaping.

5.2.5.4. A Site notice pinned to the wall by the entrance gate of 14th May, 1999, refers to reroofing and general repairs and the addition of a central cupola, and removal of external garages and w.c.s and the construction of a new swimming pool building, garages, boundary wall and gates. The architect is Donald Insall & Partners.

5.2.6. Campden Hill , Thorpe Lodge, listed Grade II.

5.2.6.1. The listing description, Appendix RT No. 2.3 reads:

Villa. Early C19, built by John Tanner , with embellishments by 1904-12 by W K Shirley. Roughcast. Garden front of 2 storeys, 3 bays, with central 2-storey bow window. Windows square-headed, sashed above, casements below, tripartite to ground floor centre. Tall Chimneys. Entrance facade with the early C20 extensions including buff brick porch with arched and gabled canopy. Fine metal gates to north-west entrance with oak leaf decoration, dated 1910.

Listed principally for very fine early C20 Art Nouveau interiors, with decorative panelling, murals, plasterwork, metalwork and tilework..

Historic Maps and Photographs, shown as Appendices RT Nos 1.1.7. and 1.1.9.

show Thorpe House as it was in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Photographs in Section 4 of Appendix RT No 4 show Thorpe House as it is today.

5.2.6.2. Pevsner, 1991, Appendix RT No. 1.3. states:

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'Another survival; a small early c.19 house with bow-windowed studio added to the west by J L Pearson for the artist H.T. Wells, totally transformed inside in 1904-13 in the most lavish turn-of-the-century artistic taste, by and for Montagu Norman (later a Governor of the Bank of England but also a member of the Art Workers Guild). His sketches were carried out chiefly by A J Shirley (metalworker and light fittings, now alas mostly gone) and J H Wakelin (furniture and joinery of which much survives). The architect W.K. Shirley (Lord Fenners) also assisted. Rich colours and precious materials typical of the period; hall walls shimmering with mother-of-pearl-like tiles (in fact industrial silicone), fireplaces with De Morgan tiles, much excellent simple panelling in a Gimson manner in a great variety of exotic woods. Huge Japanese peacock embroidery in the drawing room, another in the back hall. The studio was transformed into a groin-vaulted music room, dominated by a large c17 stone Italian fireplace with the Medici arms. Barrel-vaulted dining-room with vine-scroll plaster frieze. Remnants of a carefully contrived small garden, with pergola, pool and pleached avenue'.

5.2.6.3. Carolyn Starren in her paper 'The Great Houses of Campden Hill and their Residents' of April '98, Appendix RT No. 1.1.10.3. states:

'Thorpe Lodge is the only villa to survive and now is used in part as the library for Holland Park School. Henry Tamworth Wells RA took the house in 1875 at a rent of £137 per year. He was a painter of miniatures and animals and built a magnificent lofty studio which had a concrete platform for animal painting.

Montague Collett Norman, Governor of the Bank of England, succeeded him. He and his wife transformed the house between 1904-1912, which they described as 'virtually uninhabitable'. They made great use of woods that had been collected from all over the world; turned the studio into a music room and they created a beautiful garden.'

'In 1948 a compulsory purchase order was served by the L.C.C. much to the distress of the Normans who faced eviction from the home they had lavished so much attention on. The L.C.C. planned to erect a number of 11 storey council flats on the site - a proposal that shocked local residents and the scheme was dropped after vigorous campaigning. Holland Park School was decided on instead and Thorpe House saved.'

5.2.6.4. Photographs Nos. 77, 78, 80, and 93, Appendix RT No. 4. shows the setting of Thorpe House, with 'huts' and other ancillary works associated with Holland Park School, which have damaged the setting of this listed building.

5.2.6.5. As the listing description description states, it is listed principally for the



interiors. I went inside Thorpe Lodge, together with my associate on Wednesday, 9th June, 1999. As my photographs in Section 4 of Appendix RT No. 4 show, although there is enough left of the Montagu Norman interiors to give a feeling of how it must have been in its prime, the air of the schoolroom and college seminar room is now predominant. Many of the rooms are panelled, and in places there are tiled panels, and silk embroidered wall hangings, but it is difficult to picture it as an avant-garde style home. The former studio is now the school library and all of the other rooms are either classrooms or school offices. The garden is quite forlorn although traces of the brick paving, pool, and out buildings can be seen. (The fine metal gates referred to in the listing description were not discernable). Outside, it is the only surviving villa of the seven built in 1814, but it has been much altered since, and the rough cast finish almost totally obscures period detail and form.

5.2.6.6. It is difficult to discern much of special interest externally. Its setting on the northern side was harmed by the erection of the covered reservoirs of 1868 with their serpentine brick walls rising out of their embankment to support and encase the flat roof of the reservoir.

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

An Archaeological Assessment has been submitted, by the appellants, of the site.

This was prepared with the aid of boreholes drilled on site.

The Local Planning Authority state in the Committee Report to the Committee on 8th June, 1999:

“4.4. The site does not contain any entries in the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record. The study comments that there are few sites or finds recorded in the surrounding area, and although the site occupies part of a summit of a low hill, it is not a sufficiently distinct topographic location to have been preferentially occupied in earlier times. Importantly, the study points out that the deep excavation required for the construction of the reservoir and associated buildings must have truncated the archaeological important levels. The study concludes that the site does not have archaeological potential and that there is no further need to consider archaeology on the site.”

(A letter of the 1st December, 1998, from English Heritage to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea stated ‘I am satisfied that the proposals do not pose a threat to the archaeological heritage.’ this was signed by Myk Flitcroft.)

7. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

7.1. PLANNING HISTORY

This is fully covered in the evidence of Mr Sellwood.

7.2. EVOLUTION OF PRESENT PROPOSAL

This is fully explained in the evidence of Mr Crossley and Mr Sellwood.

7.3. DESCRIPTION OF PRESENT PROPOSAL

7.3.1. The scheme is fully shown on the planning application drawings together with the supplementary documents that have been produced. The appeal drawings are P.O99, P.100A, P.101A, P.102A, P.103A, P104A, P106A, P.107A, P.108A, P.109A, P.110A, P.111A, P.112A, P113A, 8809 sheet 3, 4, 5, 9029 sheet 3, 4, 9132 sheet 1, 3, 4, 5, 6.

It is also fully described in architectural terms by the architect Mr Crossley in his evidence, and I do not wish to repeat that here. I fully support the approach Mr Crossley had, and the scheme which he has produced as a result.

7.3.2. I make the following additional comments from the point of view of Urban Design and Conservation considerations.

7.3.3. In broad terms, the proposed scheme has four components:-

- (i). A cluster of flats at the junction of Aubrey Walk and Campden Hill Road.
- (ii). A new square of houses open at its northern end.
- (iii). A short terrace facing into Aubrey Walk opposite a short (listed) Georgian terrace.
- (iv). A two-tier arrangement of tennis courts, the top layer of which is open-air.

7.3.4. Each of these four components of the scheme has a different Urban Design/Conservation role and each has therefore both different forms and

architectural styles.

7.3.5. Component 1 - The Flats

These are in a very prominent location at the ridge of Campden Hill Road; for this reason a tall building is appropriate. Moreover, there are substantial tall buildings nearby, Melbourne House at seven storeys, Kensington Heights at seven plus 'penthouse' storeys, and Palmerston House at nine storeys. Therefore a building of comparable height and bulk is appropriate and acceptable in Urban Design Terms.

7.3.6. This component is also close to and within the setting of the very vigorously designed church, St George's by Bassett Keeling, which is both large and tall with its taller tower. A building of considerable mass and vigorous modelling is positively needed to 'stand up' to the assertive 'west' front of St George's.

7.3.7. In a similar way to the case for form, the architectural style of both Melbourne House and Kensington Heights is unequivocally 'modern' in style, and the appearance of the proposed building relates well to these.

7.3.8. Component 2 - The New Square of Houses

For this component, the urban design and conservation considerations are different from those for the flats. This component, made up of houses rather than flats, is closer than the block of flats to the existing houses, both large and small, which are characteristic of this part of the conservation area. And, in general, these existing houses are of a classical and formal arrangement. Although the houses in Aubrey Walk are derived from mews buildings, they originally served the grander, formal town houses of Campden Hill Square, 'a 'square' formed of three terraces of houses around an open space and visually open at its northern end. So the form of the new houses is an appropriate and polite gesture to that historic element and reinforces



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strongly this element of character in the conservation area. As is the case for form, the architectural style can also be, and should be, different for the houses compared to the flats. In this part of the conservation area one is much more aware of classically derived forms being dominant (although there is no universal consistency of age, style or material) and it is appropriate and 'good manners' for these houses to acknowledge the classical language of architecture in their disposition and detail design, which they do. The architectural style for the houses is clearly not in the 'Broad Church' that can justifiably be called 'Modern', but it is in that other 'Broad Church' which is recognisably derived from the classical principles of Greek and Roman architecture. For instance, there is a base, a middle and a top; there is order and some measure of symmetry. So without the use of the characteristic mouldings and ornament of Georgian architecture, there is nevertheless an wholly appropriate classical quality to these houses. In considering the proportions of the proposed square the height of the buildings relative to the width and length of the square all have to be considered, as well as the fact that the square is open ended. I have given this very careful consideration, and in my view the dimensions are not unduly restricted, but give the prospect of a fine new space where buildings and landscape go together well. (see also 12.17 below.)

7.3.9. Component Three - The Short Terrace (The Aubrey Walk Flats).

The main urban design/conservation consideration here is to maintain and reinforce or to create the line of the street on the southern side so as to relate to the short terrace of Georgian houses on the north side. At present, Aubrey Walk is for great stretches of its length a one-sided street, and this is an unsatisfactory urban form. It is at

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present more satisfying at its western end where the Raymond Erith short terrace faces the unlisted terrace on the northern side.

7.3.10. The proposed short terrace will complement the Georgian houses opposite, strengthen the built form of the street and make a very successful linking element between the new square of houses and the cluster of flats.

7.3.11. Component 4 - The Tennis Courts

This retains for this part of the development the existing recreational space used by the Tennis Club and maintains the relationship of this visual element with Aubrey House, and its extensive grounds and the listed Erith terrace on the south side of Aubrey Walk.

7.3.12. The Totality of the Scheme

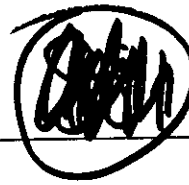
In total the scheme would relate well to the varied character, scale and form of its surroundings. In particular the proposed southern terrace of new houses would relate well to Thorpe Lodge and replace the existing unplanned, incoherent and ugly prospect with a fine, carefully designed, elevation of good materials and proportions.

7.4. NEGOTIATIONS

This is fully covered in the evidence of Mr Sellwood.

7.5. DISTINCTION BETWEEN ALTERNATIVE SCHEMES

This is explained in the evidence of Mr Sellwood and Mr Crossley.



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8. IMPACT OF PROPOSALS

8.1. ON THE SITE

The proposals would greatly improve the present appearance of the site. Ugly and badly sited buildings would be removed; this would include the demolition of Water Tower House and its harsh approach ramp, and the forlorn remnant of the Pump Room and its cruelly exposed western rendered wall; it would also include the demolition of the reservoir building itself which is alien in scale to other buildings in the area and whose segmental walls have their upper parts, together with the reservoir roof at a higher level than Aubrey Walk and the road called Airlie Gardens. The proposal would also rectify the existing unsatisfactory situation with regard to the left-over spaces between the reservoir walls and the site boundary. By contrast with the present unsatisfactory situation on the site the scheme proposal would be of an appropriate scale in its various parts, with good massing, heights which respond to the differing heights nearby, with good landscaping, good layout, and well thought out access.

8.2. ON THE 'NEAR SETTING' OF THE SITE

Within the 'near setting' of the site, (the intervisibility area), the proposed scheme would replace the existing unsatisfactory views of the site with a series of satisfactory views of a carefully designed layout which responds to the different characteristics of the different parts of the near setting. The individual components of the 'near setting'; the Erith houses, the mews buildings of Aubrey Walk, the Georgian terrace at 2-6 Aubrey Walk, the Victorian Gothic church, the classically derived buildings, the modern style buildings, and Thorpe Lodge, would all have buildings and urban design layouts on the appeal site which respond to their characteristics in a



sympathetic way.

8.3. ON THE SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS

8.3.1. For all of the listed buildings, (see Section 5.2.) whose setting includes some part of the appeal site, that part of their setting will be enhanced or preserved. From Aubrey House itself I have assessed (in the absence of inspection) that the setting will not be changed.

8.3.2. Within Aubrey House's curtilage, I also assess that the setting will either not be changed or will be unharmed.

8.3.3. The front elevation of the Erith houses, 15-19 Aubrey Walk, will not be in the 'near setting' of the appeal site. I have assessed (in the absence of inspection) that the setting of the rear elevation and rear curtilage will either be unaffected or not harmed.

8.3.4. The setting of the south elevation and side elevations of the little Georgian terrace, 2-6 Aubrey Walk, will be enhanced by the removal of the present harmful immediate prospect, on the appeal site, for those houses, and their replacement by a well designed carefully considered layout. The appeal site is not within the 'near setting' of the rear elevations of these houses.

8.3.5. For St George's Church, similarly, the 'near setting' of the south and side elevations of the church will be enhanced rather than harmed. The relationship between the tower of the church and the easternmost corner of the appeal site will be greatly enhanced by the removal of Water Tower House and its replacement by a well-designed block of flats whose height at the junction of Aubrey Walk and Campden Hill Road will relate well to the tower of the church.

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8.3.6. The setting of 118, Campden Hill Road (the Norman Shaw house) will be enhanced by the removal of Water Tower House and its replacement by a well-designed block of flats which is much better planned in relationship to the rest of the site and its surrounding than the existing Water Tower House.

8.3.7. The 'near setting' of Thorpe Lodge, on its northern side is and would be of two parts; the nearer part is that within the school site, the farther part is that part of the appeal site which is still within the 'near setting' of Thorpe Lodge. The school part has been eroded away as a quality setting, and I imagine this has largely happened since it became part of Holland Park School. At present it is very unattractive, with tarmac, car parking spacing markings, a hut, and poor quality boundaries. Beyond this, to the north, is the reservoir part of the setting, and this continues at present the poor quality general setting. There is a scrubby stretch of grass, then a high brick wall with chicken wire on top, then an embankment, then a flat walkway strip, then the upstand part of the segmental reservoir walls, and then the chickenwire fence for the tennis courts. It is neither attractive nor planned. This will be replaced by a well-designed, considered scheme of houses, of good materials and appearance. In my view this will either enhance the setting of Thorpe Lodge, or at the very least, not harm it.

8.4. ON THE KENSINGTON CONSERVATION AREA

For those considerable parts of the very large Kensington Conservation Area which I call the 'far setting', and whose character and appearance I have assessed; an area shown on the diagram at Appendix RT No. 6.2., that character and appearance will be enhanced. A large redundant reservoir, ugly buildings, and awkward left over



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spaces around them - all at the ridge of Campden Hill running up to the main spine road of Campden Hill Road, will be replaced by well-designed carefully grouped houses and flats with high quality hard and soft landscaping. Even if they cannot be seen from parts of this 'far setting', knowledge of their presence will enhance the enjoyment of the area. The creation of another three-sided square, (there is already a three-sided square at Campden Hill Square,) in such an important location within Kensington Conservation Area, will be a strong reinforcement of the Urban Design character of this conservation area. I emphasise this in my conclusions at paras 12, 13 et sequ.

8.5. ON OTHER CONSERVATION AREAS

I think that Holland Park Conservation Area (west of Aubrey House) may be affected to a small degree by this scheme but it is some way from the appeal site. The conservation impact will almost entirely be covered by consideration of Kensington Conservation Area.

8.6. ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

I accept the views of others that there will be no impact on matters of archaeological importance or potential, although I have not myself carried out any evaluation or assessment.



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9. POLICY CONTEXT

9.1. The statutory plan for the Royal Borough is the Unitary Development Plan which was adopted on 28th August, 1995.

9.2. Parts of the UDP giving the overall aim of the plan and the policy strategy are relevant to conservation and design issues.

9.3. The main part of the UDP dealing with Conservation and Design is the Chapter 'Conservation and Development'. The relevant policies are:-

- STRAT 1
- STRAT 2
- STRAT 5
- STRAT 6
- CD 21
- CD 25
- CD 28
- CD 29
- CD 30
- CD 34
- CD 35
- CD 48
- CD 51
- CD 52
- CD 53
- CD 61
- H 10
- H 11

Copies of all these policies are before the Inquiry.

10. CENTRAL GOVERNMENT POLICY

10.1. PPG 15.

PPG 15: PLANNING AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT issued in September, 1994, 'provides comprehensive advice on controls for the protection of historic buildings and conservation areas.' I provide copies of some extracts from PPG15 in my Appendix RT No. 12.

10.2. PPG16.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16: Archaeology and Planning) issued in November, 1990 'sets out the Secretary of State's policy on archaeological remains on land'. However, in this case, it has been agreed that there are no matters of archaeological concern.

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11. OTHER PUBLISHED POLICY DOCUMENTS

11.1. Site Brief

"There is no planning brief for this site." RBKC Committee Report of 8th June, 1999 (para 1.9.)

11.2. English Heritage Policy Statements, (see also Appendix RT No. 14).

English Heritage have published two documents 'Conservation Area appraisals' and 'Conservation Area Practice', 1995. These are relevant to this inquiry and copies of relevant pages are given in my Appendix RT No. 14.1.1. and 14.1.2.

11.3. Conservation Area Proposals Statement

11.3.1. A Proposals Statement for Kensington Conservation Area was adopted by the Planning and Conservation Committee on 9th January, 1995. This document is before the Inquiry.

11.3.2. It is an important document for this inquiry and I draw attention here to the most significant contents of a document which runs in total to just over 60 pages. In places I give a commentary on the document.

11.3.3. On page 2 in the foreword by the then Chairman of the Planning and Conservation Committee, Councillor Desmond Harney OBE, he states that Kensington Conservation Area 'contains all styles and ages of building, from its early Georgian speculative developments through to the present day.'

11.3.4. In the section 'Statutory Background' on p.3. it is stated that

'comments in this Statement are therefore subsidiary to and should be read in the light of the Council's general restrictive policies as set out in the Unitary Development Plan'.

11.3.5. In the Section, 'Planning Background' on p.3. it is stated:



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'The overall aim of the Plan is "to maintain and enhance the character and function of the Royal Borough as a residential area and to ensure its continuing role within the metropolitan area as an attractive place in which to live and work."'

11.3.6. In the Section on p. 3. 'The purpose and Format of the Proposals statement', purpose 1 is stated as:

"1. To identify the particular characteristics of the Area which justify its designation as a conservation area and which should be preserved or enhanced."

11.3.7. Page 4 has a Section which traces the various stages in the designation of the Conservation Area as it now is, and under 'Procedure' states that the Proposals Statement was prepared by McCoy Associates and states 'The Statement was written, illustrated, and designed by Geoffrey Huntingford BSc Hons, MRTPI.'

11.3.8. Page 6 shows part of the Roque Map of 1746 and part of the Starling Map of 1822 which show no development on either side of what is now Aubrey Walk, but a reservoir on the other side (east) of Campden Hill Road.

11.3.9. A 'General History', starts on page 7, stating that the Conservation Area is 'on the favoured south and west slopes of Campden Hill'. On page 8 it says that 'The Grand Junction Water Works was already (1822) established on Campden Hill with the West Middlesex Works below it on the other side of this footpath, now known as Campden Hill Road.'

11.3.10. Page 8 also states that 'Campden Hill Square, originally laid out by Joshua Flesher Hanson in 1826, was also premature, development being slow and uneven with the last lease, that of the original No. 28, not being granted until 1851,' and 'By 1852 Campden Hill Square was complete.'

11.3.11. On page 9 it is stated that 'St George's, Camden Hill, had been built as a



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daughter church in the 'grounds of Wycombe House, formerly a neighbour of Aubrey House, in 1864', and

'With the . . . insertion of Campden Hill Gardens, the general street pattern of the area had been established by the last quarter of the 19th century.' (My emphasis: note how late this was).

11.3.12. Page 9 also refers to 'Major changes this century' and includes 'developments on former Water Board Land'.

11.3.13. Page 10, lists 'Notable Residents of Kensington Conservation Area. These include:-

Ford Madox Ford at 80, Campden Hill Road.
Charles Morgan at 16, Campden Hill Square
Sir Henry Newbolt at 29, Campden Hill Square.
Dame Marie Rambert at 19 Campden Hill Gardens
Sir William Russell Flint at 80 Peel Street.
Siegfried Sassoon at 23 Campden Hill Square.

[This list give an indication of the kind of people who were attracted to live in the area; the blue plaques on the houses add to the character.]

11.3.14. On page 11 is the map which breaks the very large conservation area into ten Townscape Areas; this page leads into the sections giving brief notes, and illustrations, showing 'historical development' and 'townscape analysis'. Not all of these townscape areas are relevant to this inquiry but several are.

11.3.15. **Townscape Area 3 Campden Hill House pp 16 and 17.**

On page 16, reference is made to 'the variety of built forms' and to 'three and a half acres bought by the West Middlesex Water Works Company [though it doesn't say where]. [It was in fact east of Campden Hill Road.]

11.3.16. **Townscape Area 4
Campden Street to Edge Street pp 18 and 19.**

Reference is made to 'attractive and unpretentious residential environment on a



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human scale' and states that in Peel Street there are 'some impressive and beautifully maintained properties.'

11.3.17. **Townscape Area 6**
Campden Hill pp. 22 and 23.

P. 22 draws attention of the influence of Regency Square, Brighton of 1818 on Campden Hill Square started in 1823. The text makes clear that both squares were open-ended, with development only on three sides.' On p. 22 we read

'the original houses round the Square are generally much altered.'

and 'Of greater impact in townscape terms has been the redevelopment of No. 18 in 1887-8, and the making good of war damage.'

This page also refers to the former threesome of **Tower Cressy** which 'dominates its surroundings' and 'produced a picturesque skyline along with the original **broach spire of St George's and the Italianate Water Tower** of the Grand Junction Water Works. [All three of these have been demolished or altered.]

11.3.18. In the townscape analysis starting on p. 22 it is stated that

'the limited scale of this tasteful early Victorian development and the current density of mature vegetation conspire to defeat any formality or axuality'.

It goes on:

'its **three** sides are more an integral part of the area's relaxed, unrelated grid of streets' and

'the character of its **three** consistent sides is charming and highly picturesque.'

[In my view 'limited scale' is a curious phrase since the houses on the south side are six and seven storeys high].

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11.3.19. On p.23 the entry for AUBREY WALK reads:

'AUBREY WALK then takes on a more formal air with tall properties from the turn of the century. Less substantial buildings on the south side comprise two early blocks, attractive in themselves but rather compromised by less-than-sympathetic modern housing. At the east end of the street a listed late Georgian terrace flanks the junction with Hillsleigh Road opposite a crisp Arts and Crafts terrace.'

[This seems to be a confused description of this section. It ignores the listed Raymond Erith block.]

11.3.20. The map on p. 23. indicates as 'neutral buildings' two buildings on the south side of Aubrey Walk.

11.3.21 **Townscape Area 8**
The Institutions. pp 26 and 27.

On p.26 reference is made to Thorpe Lodge, pointing out that Montagu Norman 'transformed the interior of his home with the aid of the architect, Walter Knight Shirley (between 1920 and 1944).' 'The remarkable interior survived the Second World War as did the rest of the original development.' 'Thorpe Lodge was compulsorily purchased by the L.C.C. for housing in 1948.

11.3.22 Holland Park School is described on p. 26 as 'a four storey building with wings being set in ample grounds in which the mature trees were considered an essential feature from the outset.' The text condemns 'ill-considered detailing and poor quality materials, exacerbated by inadequate maintenance' and states 'It is a disappointment that Thorpe Lodge is carefully sidelined by recent developments.'

11.3.23. On the map on p.27 all of Holland Park School buildings are again given the 'neutral buildings' notation and the Atkins building (of King's College is described as a 'detracting building'.

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11.3.24. **Townscape Area 10**
The Northern Corridor pp. 30 and 31.

The text states that

'This part of the Conservation Area occupies the highest ground in Kensington and indeed for a considerable distance in any direction.' It refers to 1809/10 when the West Middlesex Water Works Company purchased land from which to compete with other companies supplying water to the burgeoning population of Kensington and St Marylebone.'

11.3.25 also on 'the high ground' was

'the Grand Junction Water Works Company in 1843 whose first reservoir completed in 1845, was where Kensington Heights is now. Expansion in 1857/8 included a pumping station and an Italianate tower, a prominent part of the local scene demolished in 1970.'

11.3.26 It refers to 'the expansion of the Grand Junction Works onto land occupied by Wycombe House'.

11.3.27. Reference is also made to St George's Church with an illustration on p. 30 of the church with its original broached spire. This page also has an illustration of the Water Tower.

11.3.28. The text on this page also deals with 'Developments since the war' referring to 'substantial blocks such as Water Tower House or Kensington Heights, Melbourne House, and Palmerston House as residential schemes.'

'The most considered scheme' according to the text 'dates from 1962-4 when a detached house on the corner with Bedford Gardens was demolished to make way for The Mount', an immaculate design by Douglas Stephen & Partners.'

11.3.29. The 'Townscape Analysis' which starts on p. 30 states that

'the visual character of this part of the Conservation Area falls into three distinct parts. First comes the main road where large, monolithic buildings predominate. These have their own authentic principles and their own internal geometry, the logic of which does not necessarily relate to the street scene or acknowledge wider townscape considerations such as vistas. Airlie

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Gardens represents the point at which the aggregation of units begins to lose the personal scale which is generally characteristic of this Conservation Area and indeed most of the Borough. Its wealth of detail and the ease with which it turns the corner into Campden Hill Road tells in its favour. At the other end of the scale is Water Tower House, a dreadful building in all respects.'

11.3.30. The illustrations on this page include one of Water Tower House with the caption 'Water Tower House must regretfully be described as the Area's [Conservation Area's] least appealing building.'

11.3.31. The map on this page (p. 31) marks Water Tower House as a 'detracting building' and Kensington Heights, Melbourne House, and Palmerston House as 'neutral buildings'. The whole of the remaining part of the reservoir site is shown as a 'neutral area', though the Pump House has no marking.

11.3.32. P.32 is a reminiscence about the Lawn Tennis Club, which reveals that the surfaces of the tennis courts here were 'like a school playground' and that during the war an ack-ack gun was put on one of the courts because 'the club occupied the highest point in the area.'

11.3.33. Part 3 of C.A.P.S. called 'Land Use and Traffic' starts on p. 33. It states that 'the history and development of Kensington Conservation Area is essentially that of a quality residential area', and 'the area today offers a wide range of housing, sizes and styles', and 'this variety (constitutes) an important characteristic of the area.'

11.3.34. It continues 'the Council's principal planning aim (is) to preserve the character of the whole Borough as an attractive place to live.'

11.3.35. On the page 33 under the heading 'Traffic' it states:

'the proportions of some streets have been altered by rows of parked cars into little more than narrow traffic corridors less appropriate as the setting of buildings of townscape interest.'

11.3.36. Part 4 'Building Maintenance and Minor Works' p.34 et sequ chooses St



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George's Church as an example of the 'erosion of decorative stonework'; and illustrates this point with a photograph.

11.3.37. In Part 5 on p. 38 referring to unlisted buildings the C.A.P.S. states:

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

[Presumably the writer meant a **positive** contribution. I take it that this statement does not refer to 'Detracting Buildings' and probably not to 'Neutral Buildings'.]

11.3.38. **Part 7 on p. 45 is called 'Views and Vistas'.**

A map on p. 53 indicates these Views and Vistas. One of them is looking north up Campden Hill Road from in front of Water Tower House, and another is looking west up Campden Street to Kensington Heights.

In capitals on p. 45 it states:

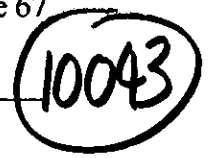
'THE LIKELY DAMAGING OR ENHANCING EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENT ON VISTAS IN THE CONSERVATION AREA WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BY THE COUNCIL IN EXERCISING ITS PLANNING POWERS, PARTICULARLY IN RELATION TO THE VISTAS SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT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

11.3.39. Part 8 starting on p. 46 is called 'Property Enhancements - Buildings.

Entry B3 reads as follows:-

'B.3. WATER TOWER HOUSE, CAMPDEN HILL ROAD.

The redevelopment of this building with premises more responsive to the prominence of the site and better related to the character of the Area would be welcomed. See also C7 and E 3/4" [see below] (Water Tower House as illustrated on p. 47).



11.3.40. Part 9 starting on p. 49 is called 'Property Enhancements - Curtilages.
'Entry C.7. on p. 50 reads as follows:-

'C7 Aubrey Walk

The changes in levels associated with the reservoirs on Campden Hill have created some small areas which have never been properly considered in design terms. One of these areas lies immediately west of Aubrey Walk. Apart from a low frontage retaining wall and a mature tree it is featureless but remains a prominent element in an otherwise attractive street. Improvements with the aim of enhancing the sense of enclosure throughout Aubrey Walk would be welcome. See B3 and E 3/4/

11.3.41 Part 10 starting on p. 51 is called 'Environmental Improvements'.
Entry 3/4 reads as follows:-

'E3 and E4 Waterworks frontages to Aubrey Walk and Campden Hill Road.

The frontages of the Water Board land on Campden Hill Road are marked by substantial changes in level. There is not much evidence that the Aubrey Walk frontage has ever been considered in design terms. On the other hand, the 'area' in front of Water Tower House - and the area over which its pedestrian ramp has been 'flown' - was designed and laid out with care, but is not very well maintained now. Consideration should be given to the design, appearance and maintenance of these prominent frontages. The character and appearance of Aubrey Walk and Hillsleigh Road would be considerably improved as a result.'

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12. CONCLUSIONS

12.1. This part of the Kensington Conservation Area, (both the 'near setting' of the appeal site, shown in my diagram at Appendix RT No. 5, and the 'far setting' shown in Appendix RT No. 6.2.) is very mixed in character and appearance. As the then chairman of Kensington's Planning Committee states in the foreword to the Conservation Area Proposals Statement there are 'all styles and ages of buildings'.

12.2. It is important to realise how late this part of London developed; it is predominantly a 19th c. and not an 18th c. area. The reservoirs of 1810, 1845, 1857 came before the church of St George's and before many of the houses.

12.3. I have been struck by the great range of degrees of grandeur of the houses in the area, from the large mansion with its extensive garden, almost a park, of Aubrey House, to humble workers' terrace houses which this century have been rescued from slum conditions. The original buildings on the north side of Aubrey Walk which only form nine out of the twenty-two now there, were built as mews buildings providing stabling for the grand houses of Campden Hill Square and were originally built in the mid-nineteenth century. Many of the modifications appear to have been built late on in the nineteenth century after the east reservoir was roofed in 1858 and extended in 1868.

12.4. In my view there are quite distinct different areas of character around the appeal site as I show in a diagram at Appendix RT No. 15. Aubrey Walk, the old track, runs along a ridge; south and east of that there is an area of substantial and high, modern style and modern age buildings, and their height is emphasised by their location on top of the hill. As a cluster they act as a group of landmark buildings, and



they tenuously link through to the modern buildings of Holland Park School. North of Aubrey Walk there is a substantial grouping of classically styled nineteenth century buildings centred on Campden Hill Square and Campden Hill Gardens.

12.5. These are the main character areas, although as my diagram shows, there are pockets which do not conform to either of these major divisions .

12.6. The character of the wider area (the far setting) is predominantly though not entirely residential, with few shops and only one pub and one church. It is now obviously a high-class residential area with well maintained houses and flats and lovingly maintained, well-planted tiny front gardens. It is pretty and charming, but much of this character, perhaps surprisingly, does not rely on the presence of numbers of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. (In the 'near setting' of the site, there are only six entries and only ten 'listed' buildings).

12.7. The role of the waterworks has changed since the first Grand Junction Works (Eastern) Reservoir was built in 1845. At that time it was on the edge of the developed area. It became part of the character of the area but with the demolition of the tower the integrity of the Water Works group has gone and the Water Works group, including the ugly Water Tower House is now alien to the character of this smart residential area.

12.8. History shows us that the proposed change is only the latest in a long line of changes since 1858, both to the buildings and to the land owned by the water authorities. Not only is Water Tower House alien to the character, but it is also alien to the appearance of this part of the conservation area. My photographs show the variety of appearance in the area and how the present appearance of the elements of the appeal site detract from that appearance.



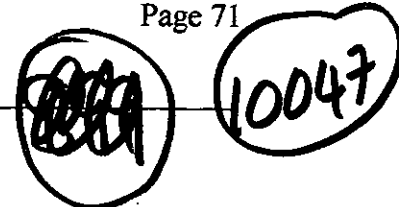
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12.9. In my view none of the buildings on the site are listable; I have been in the reservoir and apart from being big, they are not remarkable.

12.10. All of the existing listed buildings nearby have, I find, either been altered, or there are proposals to alter them. However, from what I have seen, they are all still of listable quality.

12.11. The settings of the older listed buildings have been altered since they were built. The setting of 2-6 has been altered by the building of the reservoir and the church (in 1864). The setting of the church has been altered by changes to the reservoir, including the demolition of the Water Tower, and by the building of Water Tower House. The setting of 118, Campden Hill Road has similarly been altered, and also by the building of Kensington Heights. The setting of Aubrey House has been altered by the demolition of its neighbours and the erection of the reservoir and Holland Park School, and modern houses at its gate. And the setting of Thorpe Lodge has been altered by the arrival of Holland Park School and works associated with the school immediately north of Thorpe Lodge, and later by the building of Kensington Heights; it was earlier affected by the building and roofing of the reservoir and the building of the flats known as Airlie Gardens.

12.12. I see no reason why the existing buildings on the site should not receive conservation area consent for their demolition in conjunction with the appeal proposals. Water Tower House is harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the remains of the pump room, the reservoir itself, the block of flats, and the non-designed left over elements such as the embankments are at best neutral. The existing space behind (west of) Water Tower House is very ugly



and especially harmful opposite the tower of St George's Church.

12.13. By contrast the scheme proposed by Broadway Malyan would enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

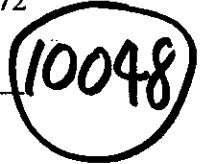
12.14. In broad terms, the proposed scheme has four components:-

- (i) a cluster of flats at the junction of Aubrey Walk and Campden Hill Road.
- (ii) a new square of houses, open at its southern end.
- (iii) a short terrace facing onto Aubrey Walk, opposite a short (listed) Georgian terrace.
- (iv) a two-layer arrangement of tennis courts, the upper layer of which is open-air.

12.15. Each of these four components of the scheme has a different Urban Design/Conservation role which the architects have understood and to which they have responded. The four components have, therefore, different forms and different architectural styles.

12.16. The block of apartments relates in height to the high buildings of Kensington Heights and also to its modern expression. It also relates to the height and modern expression of Melbourne House and Palmerston House to the east of Kensington Heights.

12.17. For the houses, a different urban design and conservation approach has been adopted and I think it is the right one for **this** context. The three-sided square will be attractive seen both from Aubrey Walk and from Thorpe Lodge. It will arguably enhance, and at the very least preserve, the setting of Thorpe Lodge. There is a precedent, down the hill towards Notting Hill Gate, in nearby Campden Hill Square for an open-ended square, (one of the few squares in this part of Kensington), and the Broadway Malyan scheme picks up this scheme without slavishly copying it. The external design of the houses also relates more strongly than the flats to the dominant



(though not universal) character of Campden Hill Gardens. The proportion of the square is derived from three elements; the width of the square, the length of the square, and the height of the buildings. In forming a judgement as to the proportions we have to bear in mind that it is open ended on its northern side, and that the three individual blocks on east, west and south are strongly modelled on plan and elevation; it is not a gaunt, plain late Georgian Square. I have examined the plans, perspectives, and the model carefully from this specific point of view and I do not think the proportion of the square is 'unduly restricted'; I think it will be an elegant square of good proportions. Crude comparisons of dimensions with other squares should be approached carefully, and the square carefully examined on its own merits, as I have done in this case.

12.18. The architect gives evidence as to the architectural design concept of these houses. In my view, in urban design and conservation area terms also, the proposal is totally appropriate and will enhance the area.

12.19. The third element of the scheme is the range directly facing onto the eastern part of Aubrey Walk and opposite the listed Georgian Houses, 2-6, Aubrey Walk, and the listed Victorian church. This will greatly strengthen the urban form of this street, which at present, as a street, limps along with unplanned gaps and left over spaces, as the CAPS document points out. The proportions of this short terrace will complement the short Georgian terrace opposite and enhance its setting and that of the listed church.

12.20. The spaces-in-between and around the three main elements are a very important part of the proposals; these will collectively enhance the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area. For instance the landscaped space