



*building on success*

# Basements Visual Evidence

Partial Review of the Core Strategy

July 2013



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA



## Contents

Background .....	5
Purpose of this report .....	5
Conclusion .....	5
Aerial Images .....	6
Photos of gardens with basements underneath .....	20



## **Background**

- 1.1 There has been a growing trend to construct basements in the borough as a means of extending accommodation. Basements are also built as part of both new residential and commercial developments (however, this is not a new trend). Land values in this borough are very high and in some locations are the highest in the country. The built environment is largely historic with 70% of the borough designated as conservation area and about 4,000 listed buildings. The dense built environment coupled with its historic character limits the scope to extend properties above ground. This has led to a growing number of developments below ground and this document presents data in relation to applications which have a basement element associated with them.

## **Purpose of this report**

- 1.2 It is commonly understood that basements can be designed to be less visually intrusive given their location below ground. It is considered that the only external manifestations of basements are light wells, roof lights, railings etc and that the structure of the basement itself is largely hidden from view after completion, with the garden generally reinstated above.
- 1.3 This report compares aerial photographs of different sites/areas of the borough from 1999 with more recent aerial photographs from 2011 and 2012. This comparison has been undertaken to understand the visual impact (if any) of basement development on the character of gardens in the borough.
- 1.4 In addition to the aerial photographs some photographs of gardens with a basement development have also been presented. This part of the report was undertaken as a desktop on-line research.

## **Conclusion**

- 1.5 It is clear from the aerial photographs that gardens that have been subject to basement development underneath can be distinguished from those without basement development. Gardens with basements underneath generally appear artificial with a sterile appearance compared to the informal leafy character that was present before. Gardens with basements below also seem to have reduced planting. The cumulative impact of a large number of basements can change the character of the gardens in the borough and have implications for biodiversity in the longer term. This will fundamentally change the character of the borough, especially in conservation areas where there is an obligation to preserve the character and/or appearance of the area.

## Aerial Images



7-10 Cottage Place 2004



7-10 Cottage Place 2011 (loss of planting), PP/10/00268

This Development is incomplete with scaffolding in place - the image is not a reasonable reflection of the landscaped scheme in its final condition



31 Brompton Square and 7-10 Cottage Place 2011  
(Note the excavation at 31 Brompton Square with loss of all natural permeable ground and planting)

This Scheme was Granted Planning Consent on 18.05.2005 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden.

This Project does not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009

The Scheme that was implemented under reference PP/07/01238 - included multiple other works all of which affected the final garden landscape - The Basement was simply a component part of a far larger project and as such observations regarding landscaping cannot be attributed solely to the Basement element

The Scheme as photographed is still under construction and because it is unfinished it does not provide a reasonable indication of the Landscaping Scheme that will be implemented upon completion

This Scheme was Granted Planning Consent on 09.09.2005 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden.



10 and 11 The Boltons, 1999

This Project does not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009



10 and 11 The Boltons 2011 (significant loss of planting, change of informal character, clipped planting around the edges), PP/05/01499, PP/03/00601

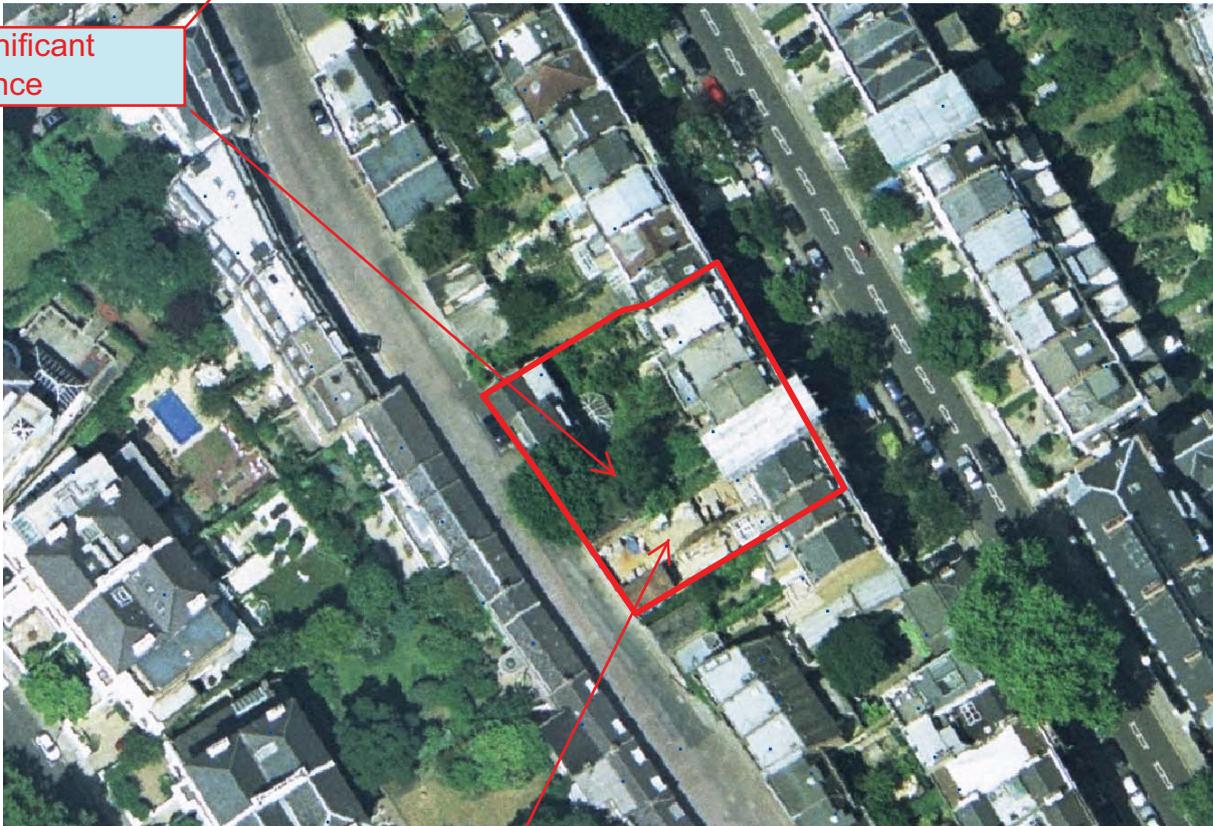
The photographs were taken 12 years apart - other planning consents were implemented within that period including PP/04/01280 which allowed ground floor extensions - the garden changes may well be attributable to those works and not relate to the basement

These basement schemes were Granted Planning Consent before MAY 2009 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden. PP/08/00875 and PP/08/01674 and PP/09/00550



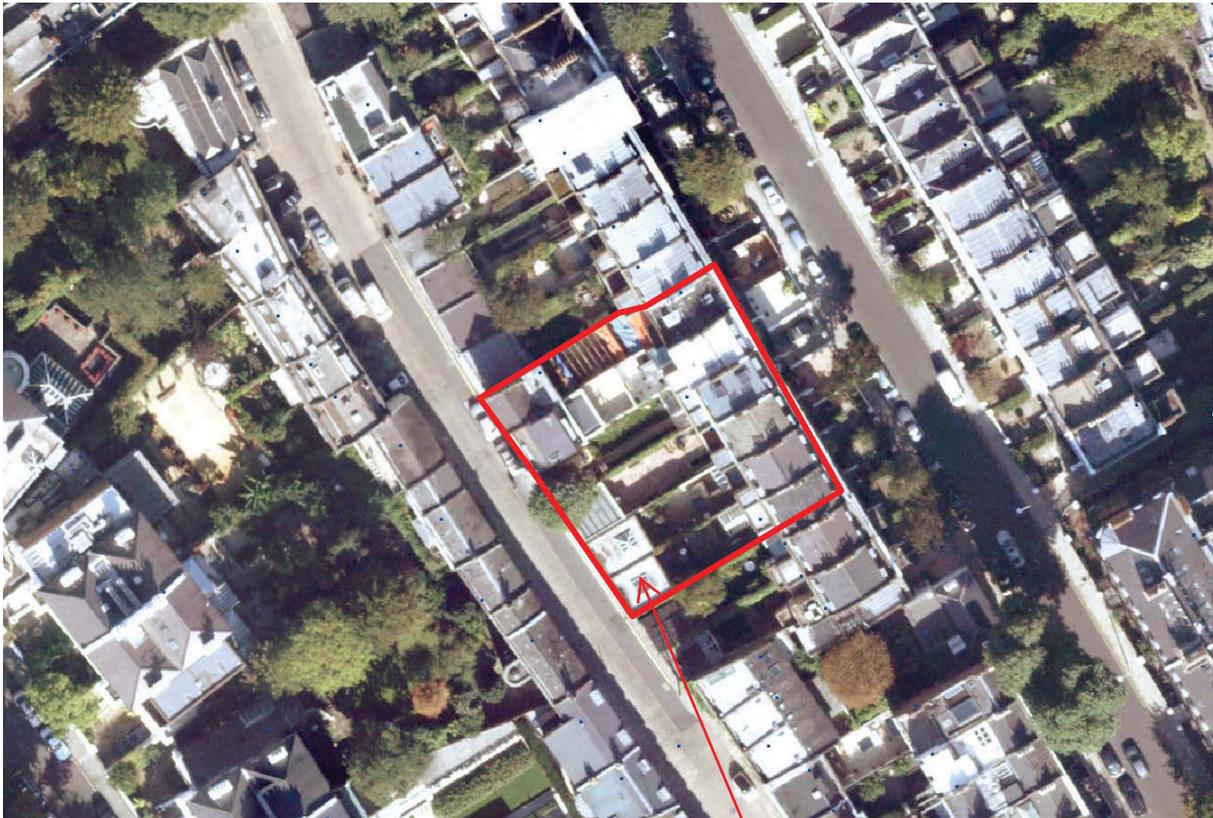
44- 50 Drayton Gardens 1999

No significant difference



44 – 50 Drayton Gardens 2004

Note that no Basement Planning Consent was in place at 50 Drayton Gardens in 2004 - RBKC incorrectly state that alteration at No 50 relates to basement works when in fact they relate to the reconstruction of a garage under PP/03/00274

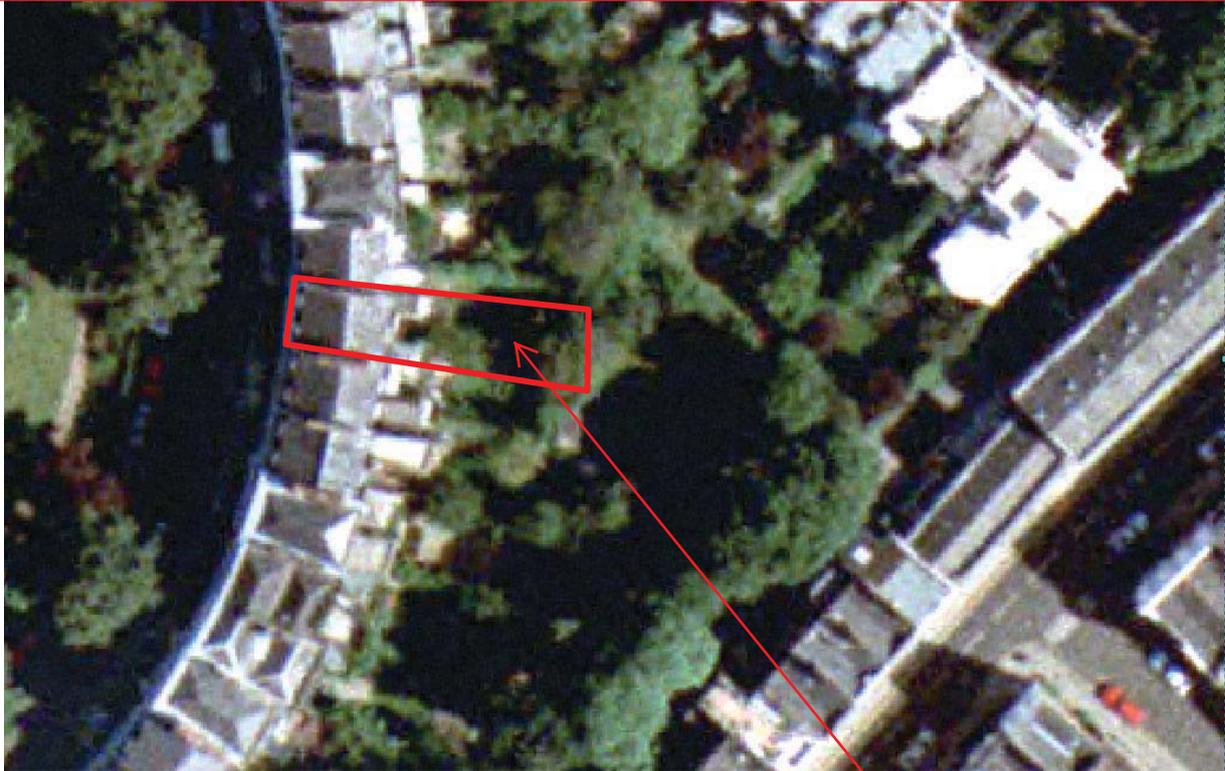


44 – 50 Drayton Gardens 2011 (significant loss of planting and introduction of hard landscape), PP/08/00875, PP/08/01674, PP/09/00550, PP/03/00274

Note that no Basement Planning Consent was in place at 50 Drayton Gardens in 2004 - RBKC incorrectly state that alteration at No 50 relates to basement works when in fact they relate to the reconstruction of a garage under PP/03/00274

These basement schemes were Granted Planning Consent before MAY 2009 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden. PP/08/00875 and PP/08/01674 and PP/09/00550

These basement schemes were Granted Planning Consent before MAY 2009 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden. PP/08/02064



47 Egerton Crescent 1999

This photograph is not clear and contains heavy shadow - the 2nd photo is much higher resolution making direct comparison very difficult



47 Egerton Crescent 2011, PP/08/02064

The Scheme that was implemented under reference PP/08/02064 - permitted multiple other works including extensions all of which affected the final garden landscape - The Basement was simply a component part of a far larger project and as such observations regarding landscaping cannot be attributed solely to the Basement element

This basement scheme was Granted Planning Consent before MAY 2009 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden. PP/08/02064



6 Cheyne Walk 1999

This photograph is not clear and contains heavy shadow - the 2nd photo is much higher resolution making direct comparison very difficult



6 Cheyne Walk 2011 (no loss of mature trees but roof lights in the middle of the garden) PP/04/01145

The Scheme that was implemented under reference PP/04/01145 - permitted multiple other works including extensions all of which affected the final garden landscape - The Basement was simply a component part of a far larger project and as such observations regarding landscaping cannot be attributed solely to the Basement element

This Scheme was Granted Planning Consent on 18.05.2005 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden.

This Project does not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009



31 Brompton Square 1999

The Scheme as photographed is still under construction and because it is unfinished it does not provide a reasonable indication of the Landscaping Scheme that will be implemented upon completion



31 Brompton Square 2011 (unauthorised loss of tree with a TPO, loss of natural garden)

The Scheme that was implemented under reference PP/07/01238 - included multiple other works all of which affected the final garden landscape - The Basement was simply a component part of a far larger project and as such observations regarding landscaping cannot be attributed solely to the Basement element

This Schemes that relate to 15 and 16 Paultons Square were Granted Planning Consent on 26.02.2008 1nd 26.01.2009 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden - This Schemes do not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009



15, 16, 20 and 21 Paultons Square 1999



15, 16, 20 and 21 Paultons Square 2012 (PP/07/03168, PP/08/03258, PP/10/02136, PP/10/01714)

Photographs are undated but it is clear that works to 20 and 21 Paultons Square are incomplete in this photograph and as such the image is not a reasonable representation of the garden in its final condition with landscaping complete

The works to 3 Upper Philimore Gardens are clearly still under construction and because it is unfinished it does not provide a reasonable indication of the Landscaping Scheme that will be implemented upon completion - No conclusion should be taken from this image



3 and 5 Upper Phillimore Gardens 1999



3 and 5 Upper Phillimore Gardens 2011(loss of planting) (CC/11/02478, PP/06/01843)

The Scheme to 5 Upper Philimore Gardens was Granted Planning Consent on 29.12.2006 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden. As such this Project does not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009

Planning consent for these schemes were all granted under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden - This Schemes do not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009



11, 13, 14, 15 and 16 Holland Park 1999



11, 13, 14, 15 and 16 Holland Park 2012 (PP/06/00707, PP/02/00102, PP/07/01274, PP/07/03166 and PP/08/01884)

The Scheme's as implemented - included multiple other works including extensions to the original building all of which affected the final garden landscape - The Basement was simply a component part of a far larger project and as such observations regarding landscaping cannot be attributed solely to the Basement element

The Scheme as photographed is still under construction and because it is unfinished it does not provide a reasonable indication of the Landscaping Scheme that will be implemented upon completion



9 Holland Park 1999



9 Holland Park 2008

This Scheme was Granted Planning Consent on 24.12.2007 - PP/07/02816 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden.

This Project does not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009



9 Holland Park 2012 (PP/07/02816)

This Scheme was Granted Planning Consent on 24.12.2007 - PP/07/02816 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden.

This Project does not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009

The Scheme as implemented - included multiple other works including extensions to the original building and garden Pavilions all of which affected the final garden landscape - The Basement was simply a component part of a far larger project and as such observations regarding landscaping cannot be attributed solely to the Basement element

This Scheme was Granted Planning Consent on 24.12.2007 - PP/07/01773 under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden.

This Project does not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009 - THE SCHEME AS APPROVED INCLUDED A VERY SUBSTANTIAL TREE PLANTING PROGRAMME - AS YET INCOMPLETE



**15 Kensington Palace Gardens 1999**

The Scheme as photographed is still under construction and because it is unfinished it does not provide a reasonable indication of the Landscaping Scheme that will be implemented upon completion



**15 Kensington Palace Gardens 2012 (PP/07/01773)**

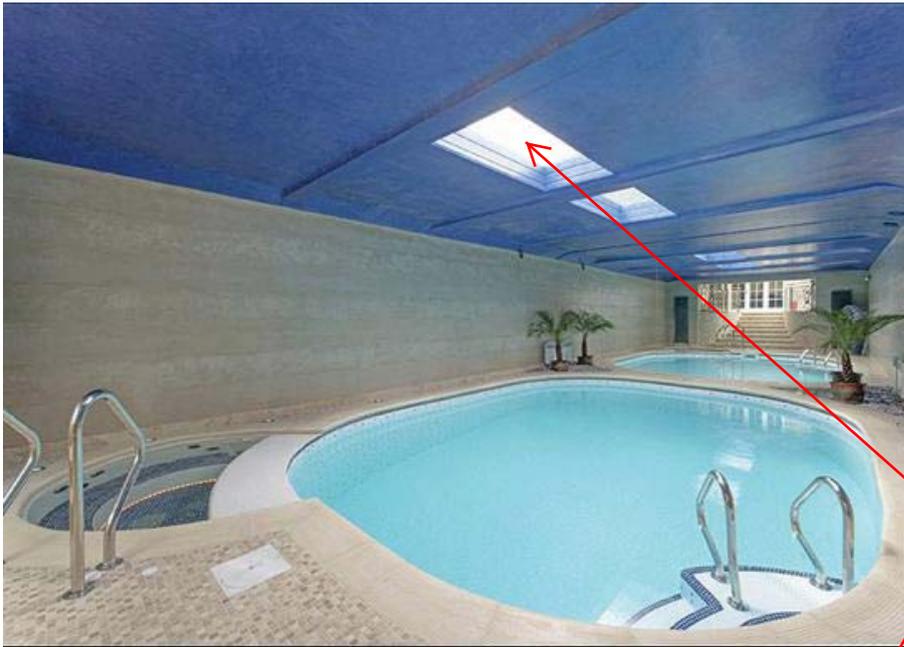
The Scheme as implemented - included multiple other works including extensions to the original building and garden Conservatory all of which affected the final garden landscape - The Basement was simply a component part of a far larger project and as such observations regarding landscaping cannot be attributed solely to the Basement element

## Photos of gardens with basements underneath



South End, Kensington

RBKC Planning Policy since May 2009 would resist this type of Lightwell - Current Policy is 1m Maximum projection



Pembroke Road

This scheme approved in 2004 - Current Planning Policy that was introduced in 2009 would have prevented installation of Glass Panels



Pembroke Road

Planning consent PP/03/02414 for this schemes was granted under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden - This Schemes do not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009



Vicarage Gate, Kensington

This scheme approved in 2007 - Current Planning Policy that was introduced in 2009 would have prevented installation of Glass Panels



Vicarage Gate, Kensington

Planning consent PP/07/01332 for this scheme was granted under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden - This Schemes do not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009



Somerset Square, Holland Park



Somerset Square, Holland Park

Planning consent for this scheme PP/09/00413 these schemes was granted under discontinued Basement Planning Policy CD32 - That Policy did not require 1m of Soil to be maintained above the garden basement nor did it limit the size of the basement to 85% of the garden - This Schemes do not provide a representation of current RBKC Planning Policy as set out in the Subterranean SPD which was adopted May 2009



Chelsea Park Gardens

This is a typical garden landscaping scheme for an enormous number of EXISTING private gardens within RBKC

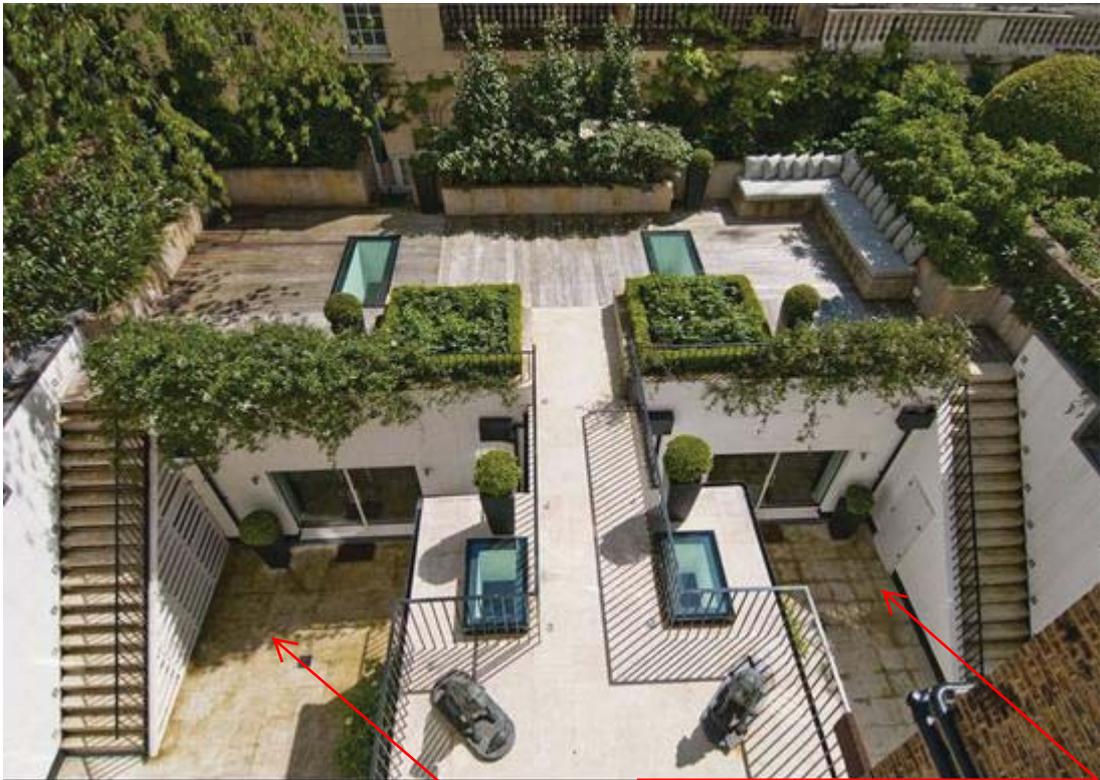


Drayton Gardens

Glass Panels of this type are prevented by Planning Policy introduced in 2009



Holland Park



Holland Park

This scheme approved under previous policy - Current Basement Policy implemented in 2009 would resist lightwells of this size



Mallord Street, Chelsea

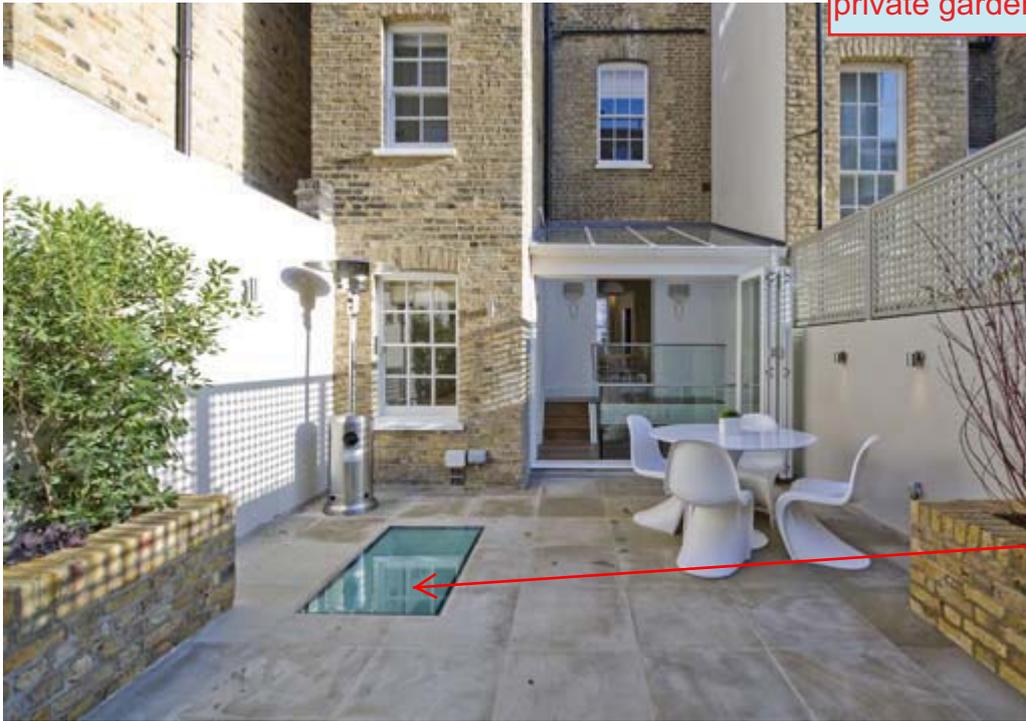


Millborne Grove, Chelsea

This is a typical garden landscaping scheme for an enormous number of EXISTING private gardens within RBKC

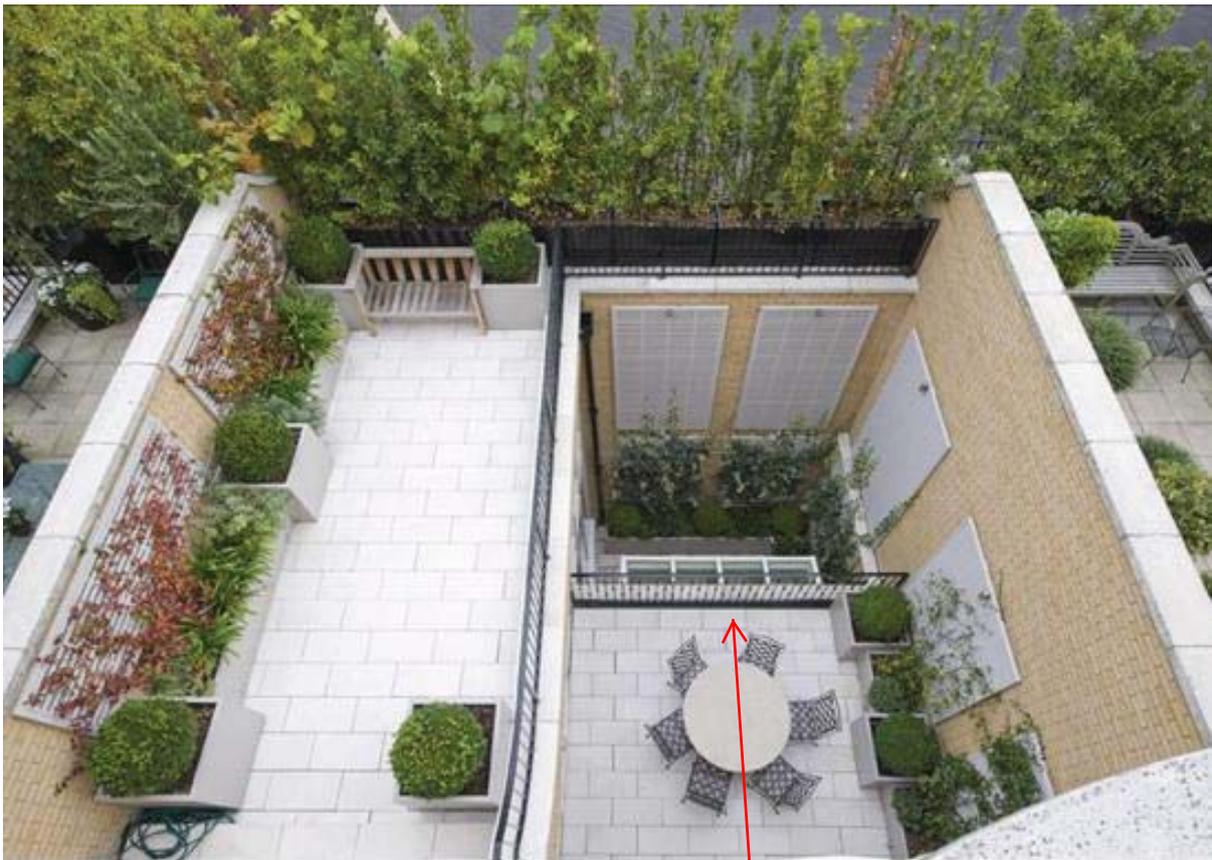
Glass Panels of this type are prevented by current Planning Policy introduced in 2009

This is a typical garden landscaping scheme for an enormous number of EXISTING private gardens within RBKC



This scheme approval predates current policy - Current Planning Policy that was introduced in 2009 would have prevented installation of Glass Panel

Royal Avenue, Chelsea



Wycombe Square, Kensington

This scheme approved under previous policy - Current Basement Policy implemented in 2009 would resist lightwells of this size - Current Policy is 1m Projection



4 Earl's Court Gardens

This property does not have any basement in the garden - Following initial publication of this document RBKC were forced to withdraw the image and the inaccurate reference to the property - See email from Mr Emmanuel Onillon - Owner