

4.4 Rocque's map shows that within the conservation area open fields extended northwards from the rear of the residential development along the riverfront. The parallel street pattern of the area extending from the riverfront north to King Street (even though it is now truncated by the Great West Road) originated from the few field boundaries, footways and bridleways recorded on Rocque's map of 1745.

4.5 By the seventeenth century, Hammersmith had become an important residential area. This was particularly relevant to The Mall Conservation Area, which became an important residential quarter with the best houses situated along the waterfront². This influx of population and residential building along the waterfront (as well as in Queen Caroline Street) precipitated from the erection of the chapel of ease (now St Paul's Church) in 1630 in what used to be the centre of the old village at Broadway.

4.6 By the eighteenth century the settlement pattern continued westwards from Queen Caroline Street along the river front into the Lower, Upper and Chiswick Malls with houses overlooking the Thames. The Malls remain one of the best localities to appreciate eighteenth century Hammersmith. Industry and other activities also existed³.

4.7 However, very little of this building has survived. In 1915 the Survey of London recorded that industrial development was gradually destroying the beauty of the riverfront⁴. Wartime bomb damage harmed the continuity of the historic urban fabric. Furthermore, modern developments have not been of a uniformly high design standard which has inevitably led to a dilution of the character and scale of the area.

4.8 The creation of a narrow riverfront strip is a modern intervention brought about by the building and then widening of the Great West Road. This major division in the urban fabric effectively severed the river frontage (Chiswick Mall, Upper and Lower Malls) from its hinterland

of which it was previously an integral part both historically and socially, the western end forming part of the Scott Estate⁵.

5 CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

5.1 The character of the conservation area is derived from the historic built form and its relationship with the river. This provides an exceptional townscape to the river edge. Fragments of 17th and 18th century Hammersmith survive and these are focused around the three groups of listed buildings: Hammersmith Terrace, Upper Mall and Lower Mall, many of which are valued for their historic and outstanding architectural quality.

5.2 Associated with each of the above groups are areas of late Victorian residential development. The individual houses and terraces of this period, whilst lacking outstanding architectural qualities, make an important contribution to a townscape of value.

5.3 Underlying the above building periods is the street pattern, much of which can be traced back to early maps and histories of the area.

5.4 Of great importance to the conservation area is the riverfront and river with its splendid views both upstream to Chiswick Road and downstream past the bridge, and panoramas. This also underlines the importance of the quality of the riverside open spaces and footpaths and the views of the conservation area from the Thames itself (as well as from the old towpath, now a public footpath on the opposite bank)⁶. The rural character of the southern bank of the river is important in views out of the conservation area. The river's recreational use adds much to the area's character and appearance.

5.5 Located on the outside of a bend in the river, there are gravel deposits which make it a suitable place to beach boats. When the tide is low the foreshore provides an area for informal recreation allowing people to get closer to the water's edge.

5.6 Along much of the riverfront, the riverside walls reinforce the linear characteristic. However, the roads that run at right angles to the river mean there are views both to and from the river, breaking up the riverside frontages. Only at Chiswick Mall and Hammersmith Terrace do the buildings form a screen to the river.

5.7 The predominant land use is residential development. Other uses include offices (River House West at the junction of Eyot Gardens and the Great West Road); education (the Latymer Upper School situated between Weltje Road and Rivercourt Road); and the Thames Water pumping station between the Great West Road and Upper Mall. The area also contains a number of public houses, boating clubs and boating headquarters along the riverfront. Sailing, rowing and sculling clubs use the river for their boating activities, as do other recreational craft. All this makes this area an important recreational and educational facility used all year round by many people. Piers, landing stages, steps and moorings add interest and character.

5.8 The northern edge is naturally dominated by the presence of the Great West Road, and the resulting pollution (including noise and visual clutter). For most of its length, properties on this boundary turn defensively away behind high walls. The only properties exposed to the road are those left at the end of former roads linking to the riverfront. Even more unfortunate is the surviving south side of Verbena Terrace. Essentially, the character is typical of a roadside strip along any major highway.

5.9 The conservation area can be split into the following sub-areas which reflect the diverse character of the different areas within. These are shown on the plan on pages 14 and 15.

- A** Chiswick Mall to Hammersmith Terrace
- B** Black Lion Public House to Oil Mill Lane
- C** Upper Mall from Linden House to Furnival Gardens
- D** Furnival Gardens
- E** Lower Mall

A Chiswick Mall to Hammersmith Terrace

5.10 The main character of this part of the conservation area is derived from the groups of terraces of different scales and styles, and the variety of internal views due to the compact nature of the fabric and the irregular street pattern.

5.11 The terraces have retained their uniformity and this is key in defining the townscape quality of this area with the strong rhythms created by the facades and rooflines. The older properties along Chiswick Mall provide a more varied townscape of exceptional quality enhanced by the bends in the road as it follows the line of the river. Generally views of the river are screened and there is a strong sense of enclosure.

5.12 Eyot Gardens is a late Victorian development, consisting of three storey terraces in brick with stucco decoration. The height of the buildings and the scale of the street with strong regular building lines creates a hard landscape with trees, hedges and planting in front gardens softening this in places.

5.13 Nos. 1-15 (odd) (Buildings of merit (BOM's)) and 2-16 (even) are matching terraces, three storeys in yellow brick with white painted stuccoed ground floor bays, decorative lintels to first and second floor windows and a continuous horizontal cornice line at second floor sill level. Roof eaves are projecting and bracketed. The eastern terrace has been partly spoilt by the full width dormer added to the front of No. 12. The garden walls are varied, some with original detailing and many with hedges behind.

5.14 The remaining terrace of Victorian houses at the north end of Eyot Gardens has two storey high bay windows, with attic storey windows set in steeply pointed gables. This emphasises the rhythm of the roofline. Two houses have had the attic gables removed. No. 26 has added a full width dormer window and No. 18 has added a central dormer window.

5.15 Verbena Gardens on the northern boundary of the conservation area has had its setting spoilt by the Great West Road. There have been numerous alterations to the facades, some painted, others with new doors and windows, however the roofline has remained uniform.

5.16 The pedestrian footpaths of British Grove Passage and Mulberry Place provide an alternative route for pedestrians and give depth to the built form. They are marked by cast iron bollards at their junction with Eyot Gardens which are interesting features.

5.17 The row of new cottages in British Grove and the Millers Court development ⁷ merit little comment other than that they are acceptable in scale and materials if not in the finer elements of detailing, including the floorscape. They turn their backs on their surroundings focusing on an internal courtyard which is the reverse of the surrounding plan form.

5.18 To the north is River House West, an anomaly being a new office building in a residential area, but it has relatively little visual impact on the conservation area, being associated with the scale and activity of the Great West Road. The stepping back of the facade helps the block relate to Eyot Gardens.

5.19 At the entrance to Cedar House on Chiswick Mall there is a stone marked "H'mth 1931" (which used to read "London"). This stone marks the boundary between Hammersmith and Chiswick and the beginning of the Mall Conservation Area. There are good views west into Chiswick Mall, with Cedar House a particularly prominent feature, and east along this well defined route.



The Willows, Mall Cottage and Eyot Cottage

5.20 The Willows, Mall Cottage (Victorian Tudor detail) and Eyot Cottage (all BOM's) form an informal but harmonious group, of two storeys with a varied roofline, in weathered yellow stock brick with white painted windows and reveals. Eyot Cottage has a white painted wall with railings that helps to define the entry into the narrower enclosed section of Chiswick Mall where the properties separate the river from the road.

5.21 To the east of these are two single storey artist's studios (recently painted). These close the view to the south along Eyot Gardens and are the last remaining "industrial" buildings in the area. Opposite, at the corner of Eyot Gardens and Chiswick Mall, stands a decorative iron ventilation shaft.

5.22 No. 1 Eyot Gardens contains a small shop at ground floor level. The shop utilises the forecourt, paved in York stone as a seating area for refreshments, thereby creating an attractive little focal and activity point, capturing the space at the junction.

5.23 Looking due east, the staggered elevation of the St. Peters Wharf development indicates that the road gently turns to the north (following the river bank), with the high rendered flank elevation of Hammersmith Terrace clearly visible. St. Peters Wharf is a simple, dark brick group of studios specially designed for artists by M. Patrick, in 1970. They have a private courtyard facing the rear, overlooking the river.



St Peter's Wharf with Montrose Villas in the background.

5.24 It is when standing outside No. 2 Eyot Gardens, which has a good architectural detail on the flank wall, and looking east that Western Terrace comes into view on the left, together with the two large trees in the front gardens that are important features in the townscape. Western Terrace is an impressive grouping of Victorian three storey houses. The front gardens open the space providing relief and interest in the streetscape with the walls and railings defining the bend in the road. There is a noticeable difference in height and scale between No. 2 and No. 5, the latter being much older, in red brick with three 12-light sash windows to each floor (BOM including the boundary wall to the northeast and west)⁸.

5.25 On the south side is Hammersmith Terrace, sixteen large houses that date from c.1755 (all listed)⁹. These houses form one continuous block of buildings in a warm toned stock brick and were built on practically one and the same plan except for Nos. 1 and 16. The variation in height (the eastern block, Nos. 1-6 (consec) are three storeys high), the irregular spacing of the windows and the pillared porches projecting on to the pavement, with wrought iron railings to the basement areas, enhance the northern elevation. This though is of secondary importance to the terrace because the principal rooms face south onto the river¹⁰.

5.26 On the north side of Hammersmith Terrace are Montrose Villas (BOM's) and Terrace Villas, separated by No. 2A which is a cottage pre-dating both and shown on the 1870 Ordnance Survey (O.S.) map. Terrace Villas is a late Victorian/early

Edwardian pair of semi-detached houses in red brick, with a ground floor bay each side of centrally paired recessed entrance porches, set behind a wall with railings. Montrose Villas is a typical two storey late Victorian style terrace with ground floor bays and paired entrances, set back from the pavement behind a low brick wall (some gardens have privet hedges).

5.27 Between Western Terrace and Montrose Villas is Mulberry Place, a pedestrian lane leading to a row of unspoilt two storey cottages (BOM's) fronting onto small private gardens entered by a gate off the footpath. This footpath is a remnant of one of the early abundant footways of Hammersmith¹¹.

5.28 At the eastern end of Hammersmith Terrace, on the north side, is an unusual small private garden occupying the width of the footpath and secured by iron railings, with forsythia covering the brick wall at the rear. This defines the northern street boundary together with the low walls and hedges of Montrose Villas and the wall and railings of Terrace Villas. Views to the west are closed by the backs of the terraced properties on Eyot Gardens which capture the space in front of Western Terrace. The backs of this terrace have remained unaltered.

5.29 No. 1 South Black Lion Lane (BOM) is a mid-Victorian detached cottage of two storeys, in yellow stock brick, which sits virtually on the corner with Hammersmith Terrace. The front garden wall and neatly trimmed privet hedge are tight up against the kerb on the corner. The whole area has the scale of a pedestrian area.

5.30 The mid-Victorian cottage development continues along the western side of South Black Lion Lane. Nos. 5-21 (odd) (BOM'S) are attractive two storey terraces of cottages in yellow brick with slate roofs and are the remnants of this development. Each house has a recessed porch and is one window wide. Porches and windows are emphasised by white painted stucco. No. 11 has had a circular window inserted above the front

door at first floor. The gap between the terraces affords a view of a cottage and trees in the enclosed space behind. These have not been altered and the unified appearance and low brick walls provide a homogenous streetscene.

5.31 St. Peters Church can be seen looking north from South Black Lion Lane, and is a reminder that the whole area formed an entity before the advent of the Great West Road, being the southern part of the Scott Estate.

B Black Lion Public House to Oil Mill Lane

5.32 The main character of this part of the conservation area is derived from the opening up of the riverwalk and the resulting river views in both directions. The focal points are the areas of open space along the broader river walk and the remaining historic properties.



View looking east of riverside in conservation area

5.33 The Black Lion P.H. (listed Grade II)¹² lends its name to the Black Lion, or Bell, stairs leading down to the river directly to the east of Hammersmith Terrace. The Black Lion car park is visually contained by a gateway and railings facing the road and a repointed older brick wall to the north.

5.34 The arched wall facing the riverfront forms an effective visual screen between the car park and the gardens, and previously formed part of the buildings of the West Middlesex Water Company¹³. There is a passageway between the Black Lion car

park and the alignment of brick arches. This is rather weakly defined on the northern side by concrete bollards.

5.35 The east side of South Black Lion Lane is now occupied by the new development of Samels Court (with views through to the Victorian Pumping Station, and southwards to the river). These are four and three storey blocks of flats c.1960's set in a grassed area which contrasts somewhat unsympathetically with the surrounding plan and built form.

5.36 The open space runs from the arched wall to the Old Ship Inn, with good river views along its length. On the north side of the Inn a seventeenth century brick porch (listed Grade II) survives from the original building of the Old Ship P.H.¹⁴. There are three large willow trees that are visually very important to this space directly in front of the arched wall, and a recently renovated play area which provides a focus for family activity in the area.

5.37 The Victorian Pumping Station (BOM) is a dominant feature to the north seen behind a modern redbrick extension, the wall of which defines the northern edge of the space. In front of this is an area with five trees which is a positive element in the landscape and helps capture the space.

5.38 The stretch of the riverfront eastwards from here was cleared in the 1960's. Lord Napier Place is a modern housing development, notable in that it extends to the riverfront, on the sites of the former Albert and Atlanta Wharves¹⁵. The riverside footpath passes beneath the projecting end block, which has been designed in a rather heavy manner with deep brick piers reducing the path width and creating deep shadow.

5.39 To the north are mid 19th century properties which have been incorporated into the development. This includes a pair of semidetached villas and a short terrace. They are two storeys with a half basement, each being