

Royal Botanic Gardens

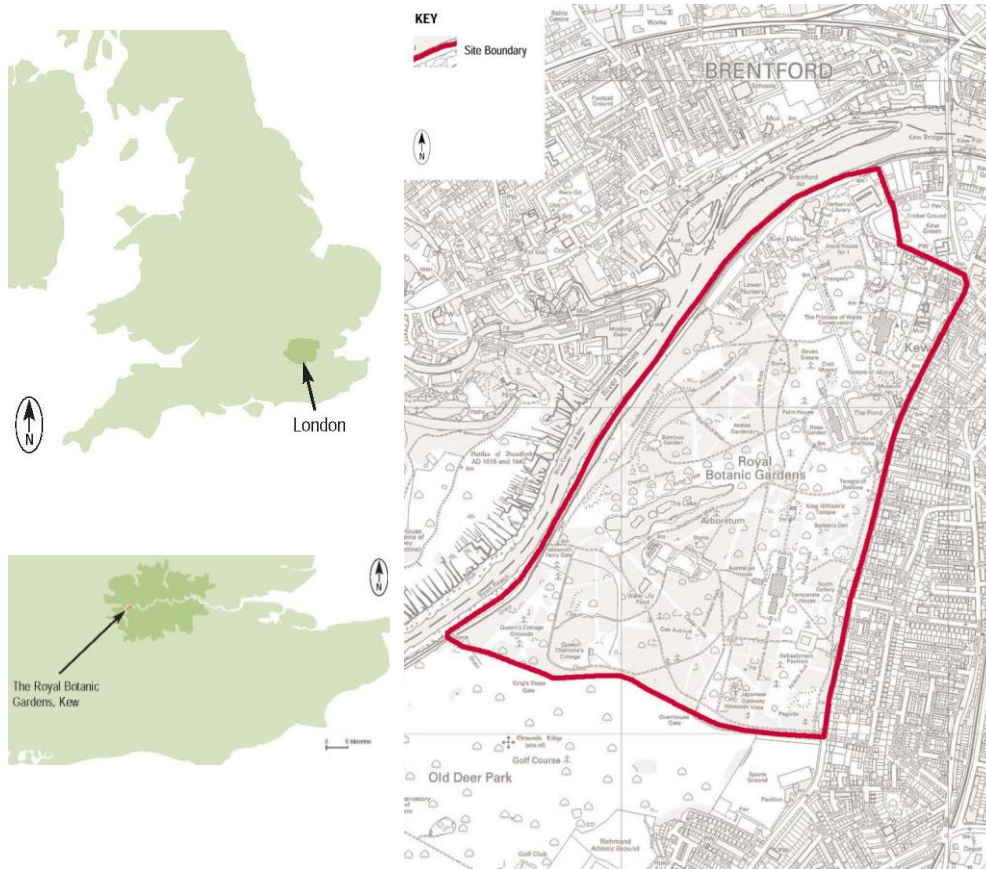
Kew

Kew WHS and the challenges of the regeneration of Brentford

Andrew Williams, Director of Estates & Capital Development

Georgina Darroch, World Heritage Site Coordinator

The Property



The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew was inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 2003 under three criteria:

Criterion (ii): Since the 18th century, the Botanic Gardens of Kew have been closely associated with scientific and economic exchanges established throughout the world in the field of botany, and this is reflected in the richness of its collections. The landscape and architectural features of the Gardens reflect considerable artistic influences both with regard to the European continent and to more distant regions;

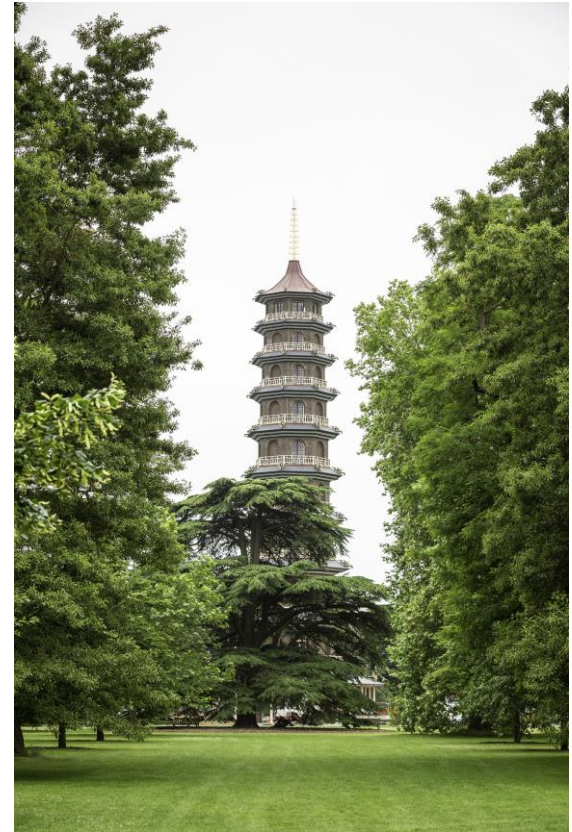
Criterion (iii): Kew Gardens have largely contributed to advances in many scientific disciplines, particularly botany and ecology;

Criterion (iv): The landscape gardens and the edifices created by celebrated artists such as Charles Bridgeman, William Kent, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and William Chambers reflect the beginning of movements which were to have international influence.

The Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Kew Gardens comprises of:



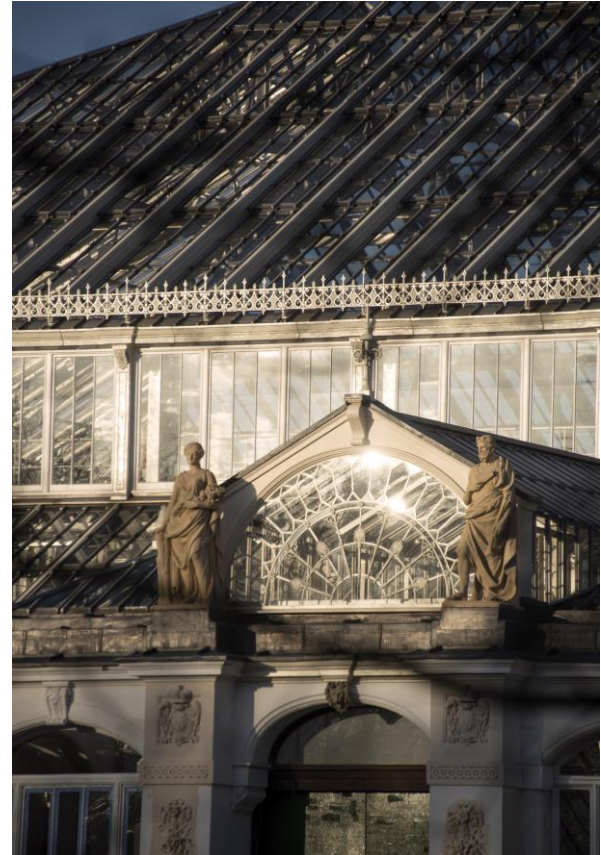
A rich and diverse historic cultural landscape providing a palimpsest of landscape design



The Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Kew Gardens comprises of:



An iconic architectural legacy



The Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Kew Gardens comprises of:



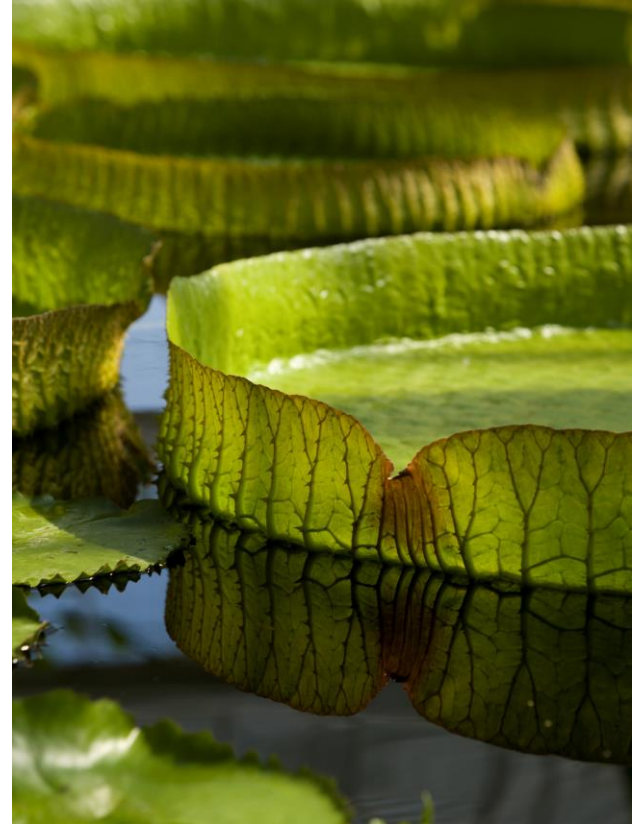
Globally important preserved and living plant collections



The Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Kew Gardens comprises of:



A horticultural heritage of keynote species and collections

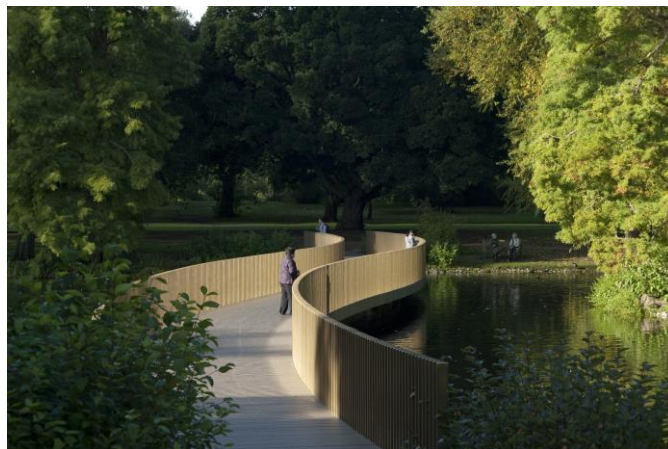


The Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Kew Gardens comprises of:



Key contributions to developments in plant science and plant taxonomy

Recent additions:



Overview

- **Estate** – Kew Gardens is a major tourist destination (1.8m visits) and a World Heritage site
- **250th anniversary** – in 2009 (established 1759)
- **Globally-significant science collections** – 8.5m items: Herbarium, Millennium Seed Bank Partnership, fungarium & plant DNA representing c.95% of known flowering plant genera
- **Living collections** – c.30,000 taxa of living specimens
- **1,000 staff** – (nearly 350 scientists); also c.100 postgraduate students & 800 volunteers
- **Kew Foundation** – 110,00 Members across both sites
- **Global Reach** – collaborating with c.400 organisations in c.110 countries
- **Education** – 100,000 school children through to MSc & PhD students
- **Governance** – An NDPB and an independent charity

Mission

Our mission

To be the **global** resource for plant and fungal **knowledge**, building an understanding of the world's plants and fungi upon which all our lives depend.

Our vision

We want a world where plants and fungi are **understood**, **valued** and **conserved** – because our lives depend on plants and fungi.

Our purpose

We use the power of our **science** and the rich diversity of our **gardens** and **collections** to provide **knowledge**, **inspiration** and **understanding** of why plants and fungi matter to everyone.

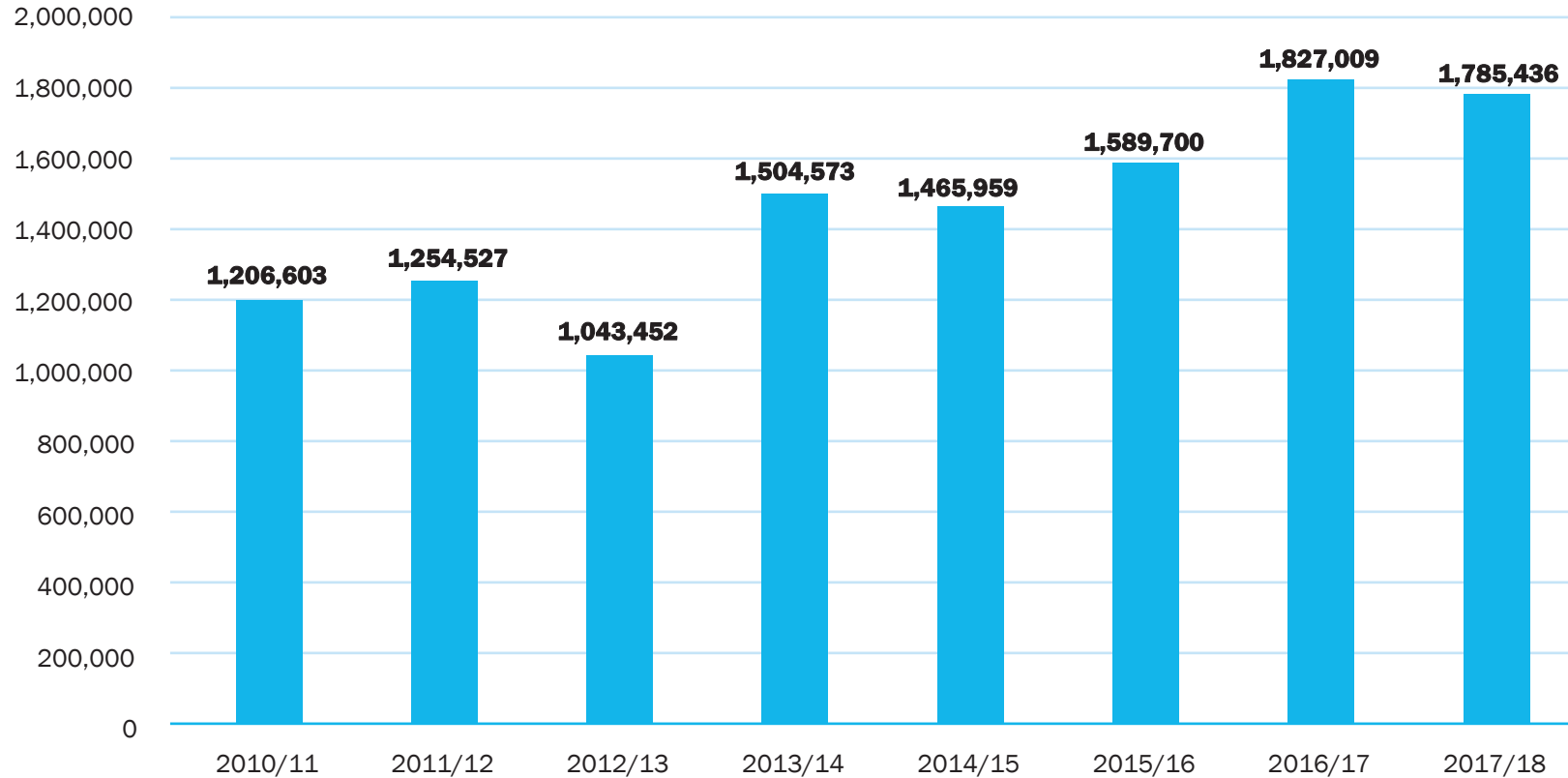
Our attitude

We are authentic and passionate **experts**, **collaborating and sharing** our knowledge to stimulate **curiosity** and **debate**, celebrating **beauty** and encouraging a life-long love of plants.

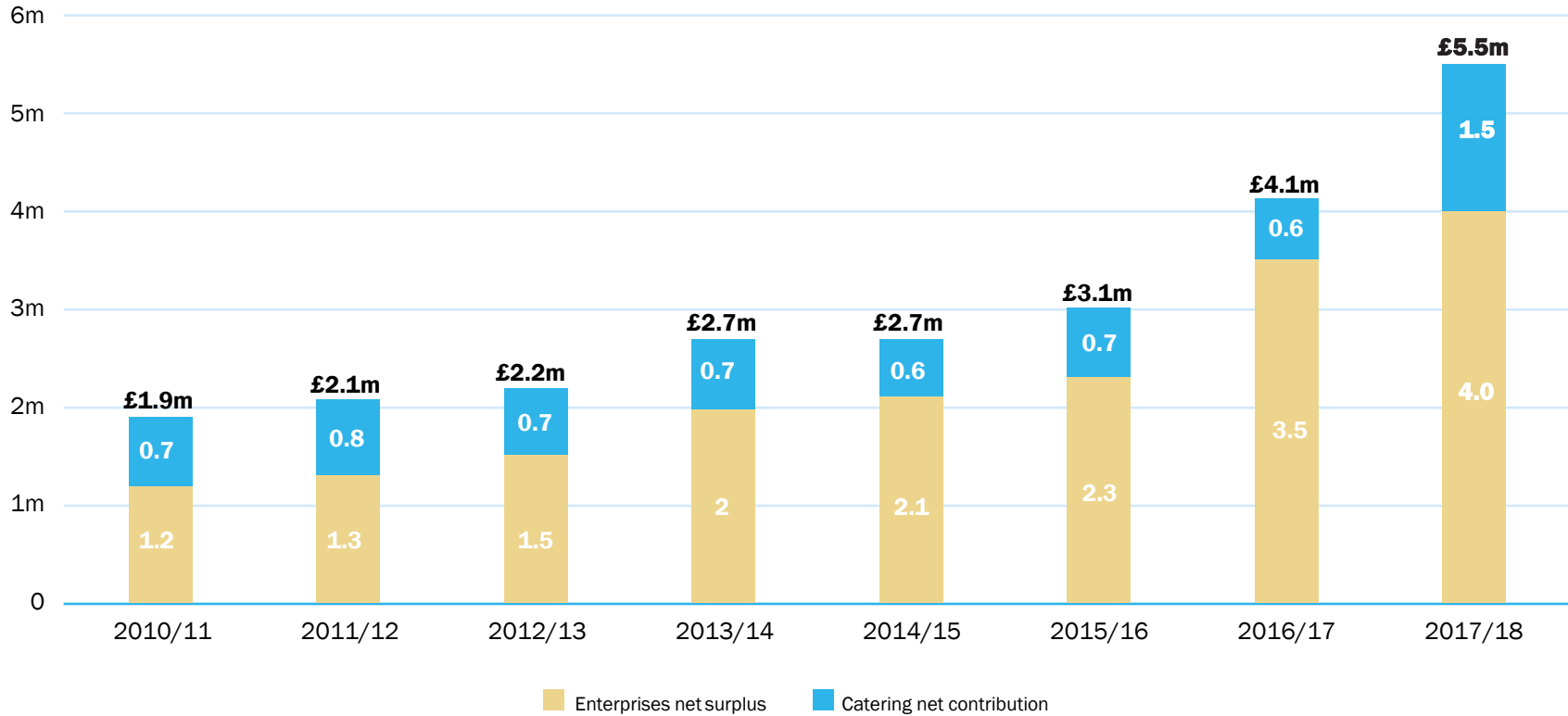
Strategic objectives



Total visitor numbers for Kew



Commercial contribution

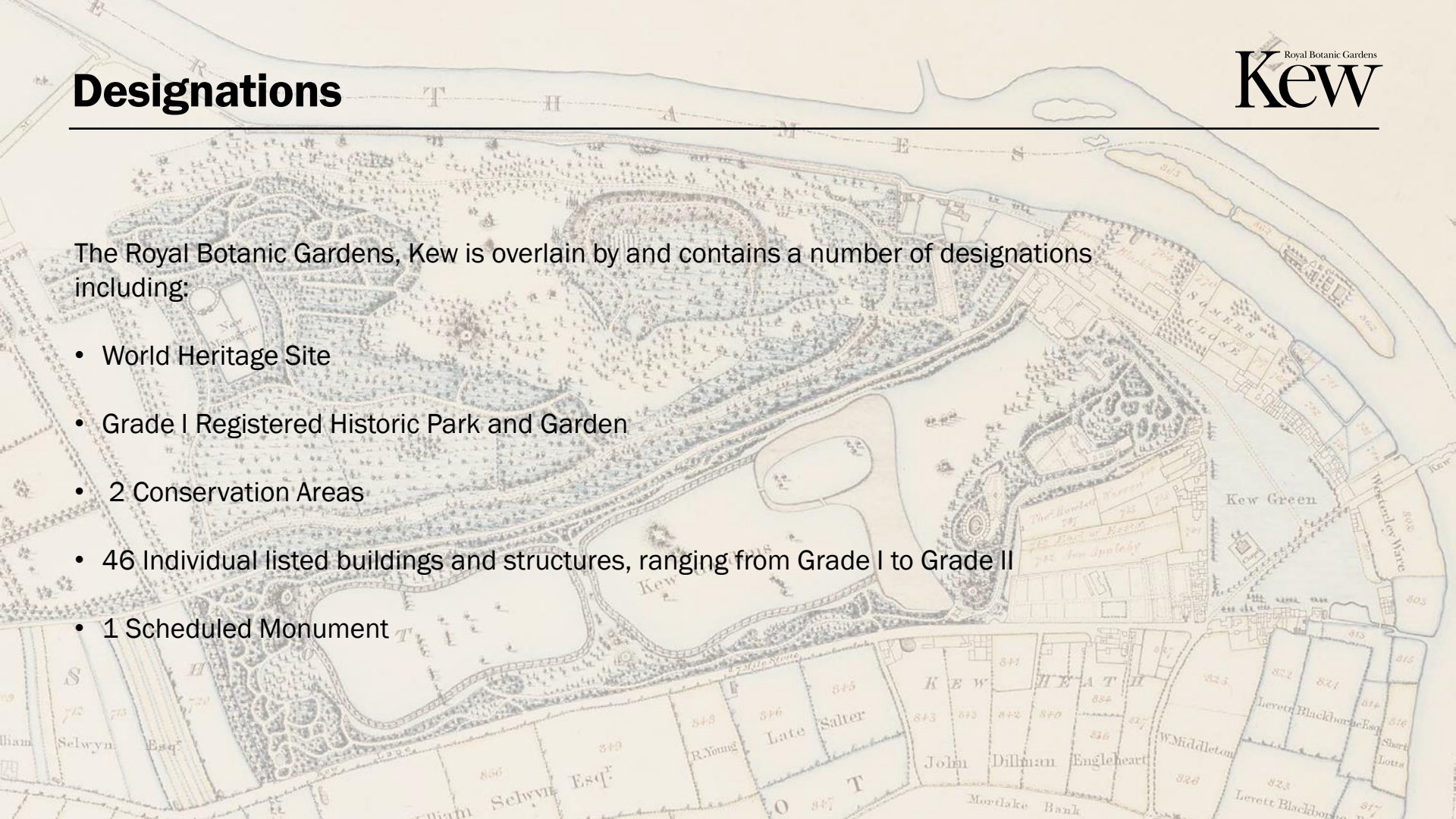


Protecting the World Heritage Site

Designations

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is overlain by and contains a number of designations including:

- World Heritage Site
- Grade I Registered Historic Park and Garden
- 2 Conservation Areas
- 46 Individual listed buildings and structures, ranging from Grade I to Grade II
- 1 Scheduled Monument



Setting



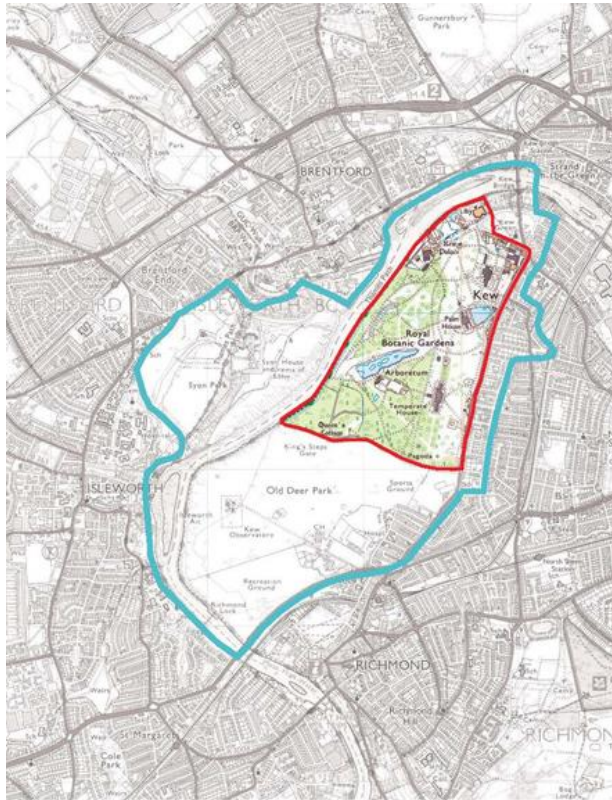
The Property is situated alongside the River Thames, in an area characterised by a predominately urban environment interspersed with large open green spaces and is a key feature of the ‘**Arcadian Thames**’ landscape.

There are important **views** and **vistas** into and out of the site, the broader Thames-side and parkland setting of the site, and significant and inextricable links between the complex history and development of the Gardens and the adjacent areas. The parks and green spaces around Kew also greatly add to the site’s special character and sense of place.

RBG Kew’s 2010 **Statement of Outstanding Universal Value** (SOUV) places considerable emphasis on the historic designed landscape of the WHS, stating that *“These elements, which express the Outstanding Universal Value, remain intact.”*

The **Mayoral SPG** describes Kew Gardens as *“the most self-contained of the four sites”* with *“its immediate surroundings are domestic”* referring to the *“village atmosphere of Kew Green with its church”* which *“provides an agreeable and low key approach to the gardens”*.

Buffer Zone



— World Heritage Site Boundary — Proposed Buffer Zone Boundary
 Scale 1:25,000

A **Buffer Zone** has been agreed the local authorities and stakeholders to:

- Protect important views and vistas into and out of the gardens;
- Maintain relationships with areas that have strong historical links to the Gardens;
- Protect the character and setting of the Gardens.

The buffer zone comprises:

- areas key to the **protection of significant views in and out of Kew** (e.g. Syon Park);
- land with strong historical relationships to Kew (e.g. The Old Deer Park, Kew Green);
- Areas that have a **bearing on the character and setting of the gardens** (e.g. the River Thames and its islands between Isleworth Ferry Gate and Kew Bridge).

The majority of the proposed buffer zone is designated by both Richmond upon Thames and Hounslow as Metropolitan Open Land, and is therefore protected.

Detractors



The **ICOMOS evaluation** at the time of the nomination took the view that “...the overall aspect of six 22-storey tower blocks at Brentford seriously diminished the visual experience at Kew at several points in the gardens.”

In a **2013 ICOMOS report** it is also noted that “new development carried out within the buffer zone (and beyond) since inscription **has harmed OUV.**”

The **Mayoral SPG** specifically notes that “high rise development north of Kew at Brentford and along the A4 is the most tangible evidence of the Botanic Gardens’ urban context”.

The statement of integrity within the SOUV states that “**Development outside the Buffer Zone may threaten the setting of the property.**”



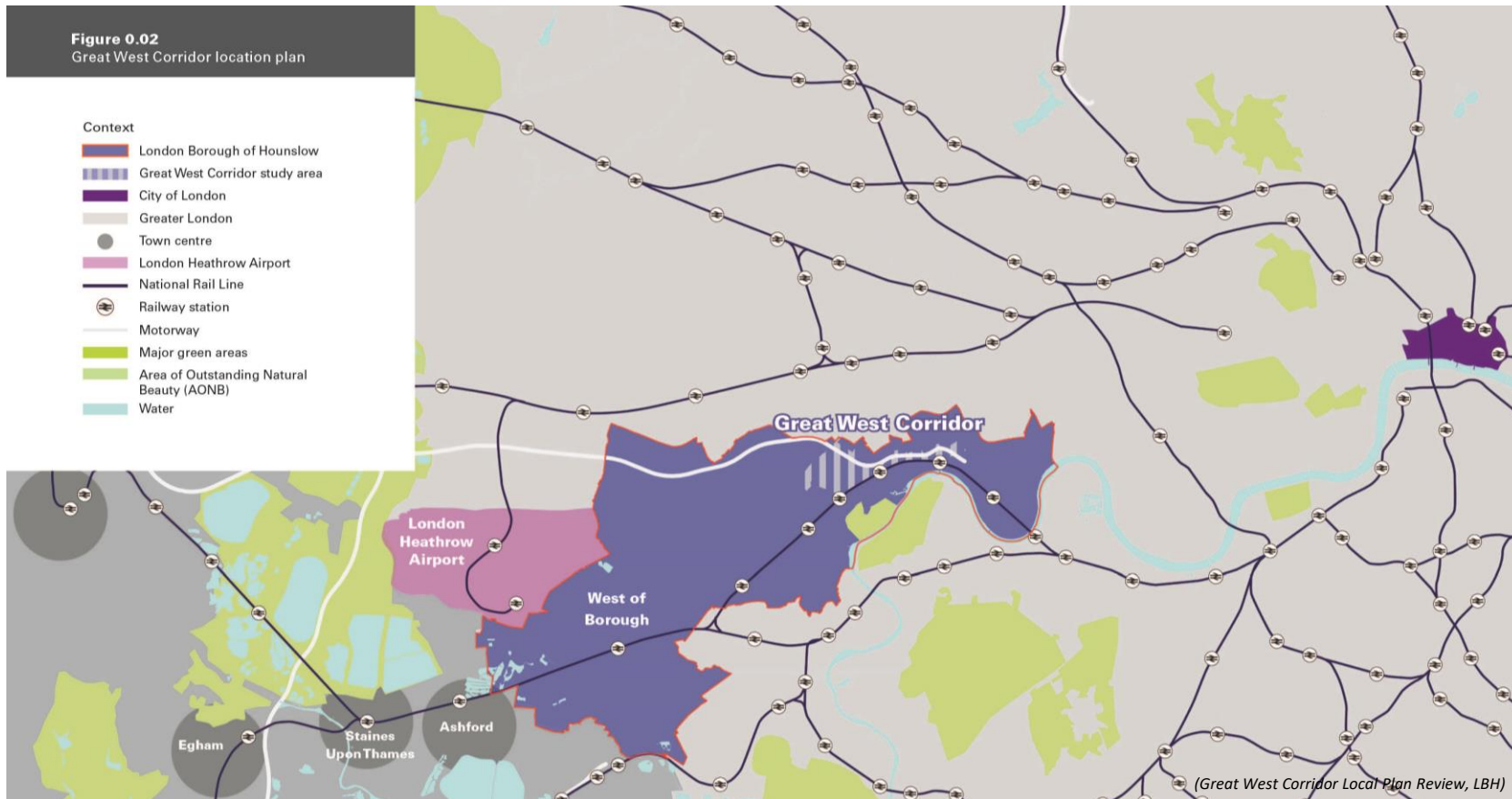


Brentford Opportunity Area

Figure 0.02
Great West Corridor location plan

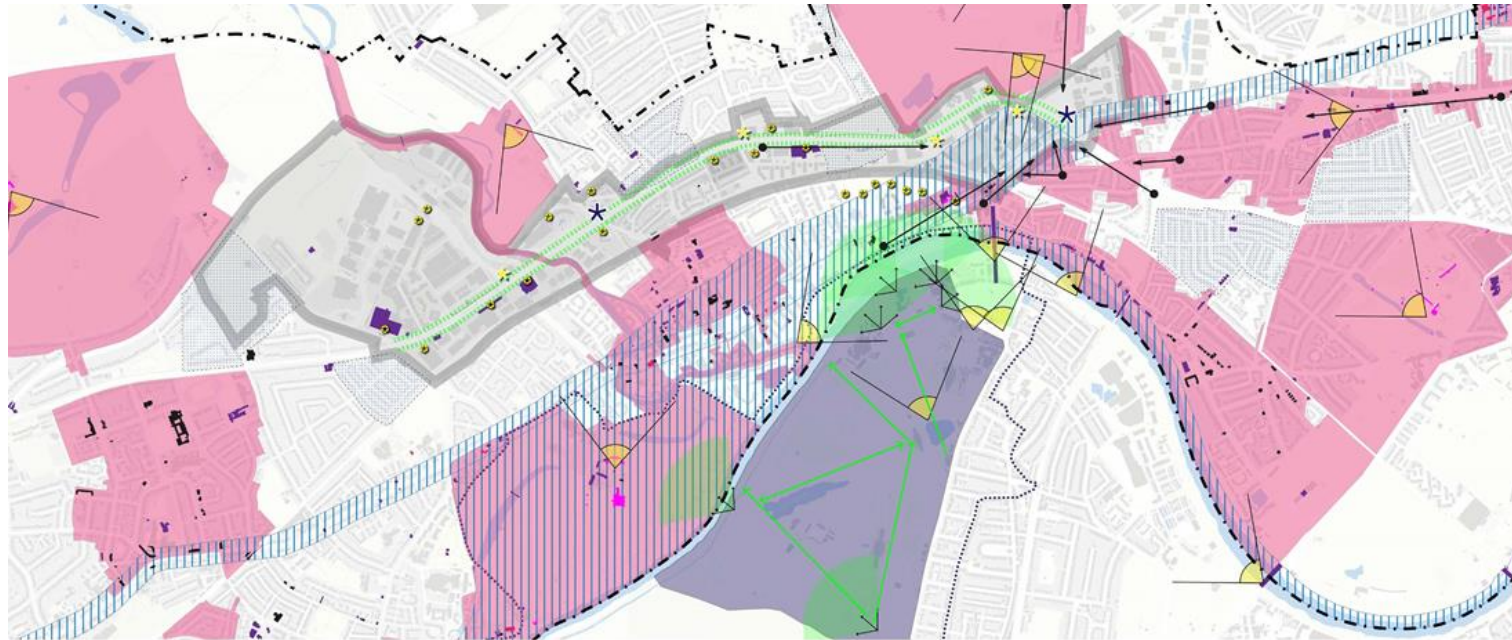
Context

- London Borough of Hounslow
- Great West Corridor study area
- City of London
- Greater London
- Town centre
- London Heathrow Airport
- National Rail Line
- Railway station
- Motorway
- Major green areas
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Water



(Great West Corridor Local Plan Review, LBH)

Brentford Opportunity Area



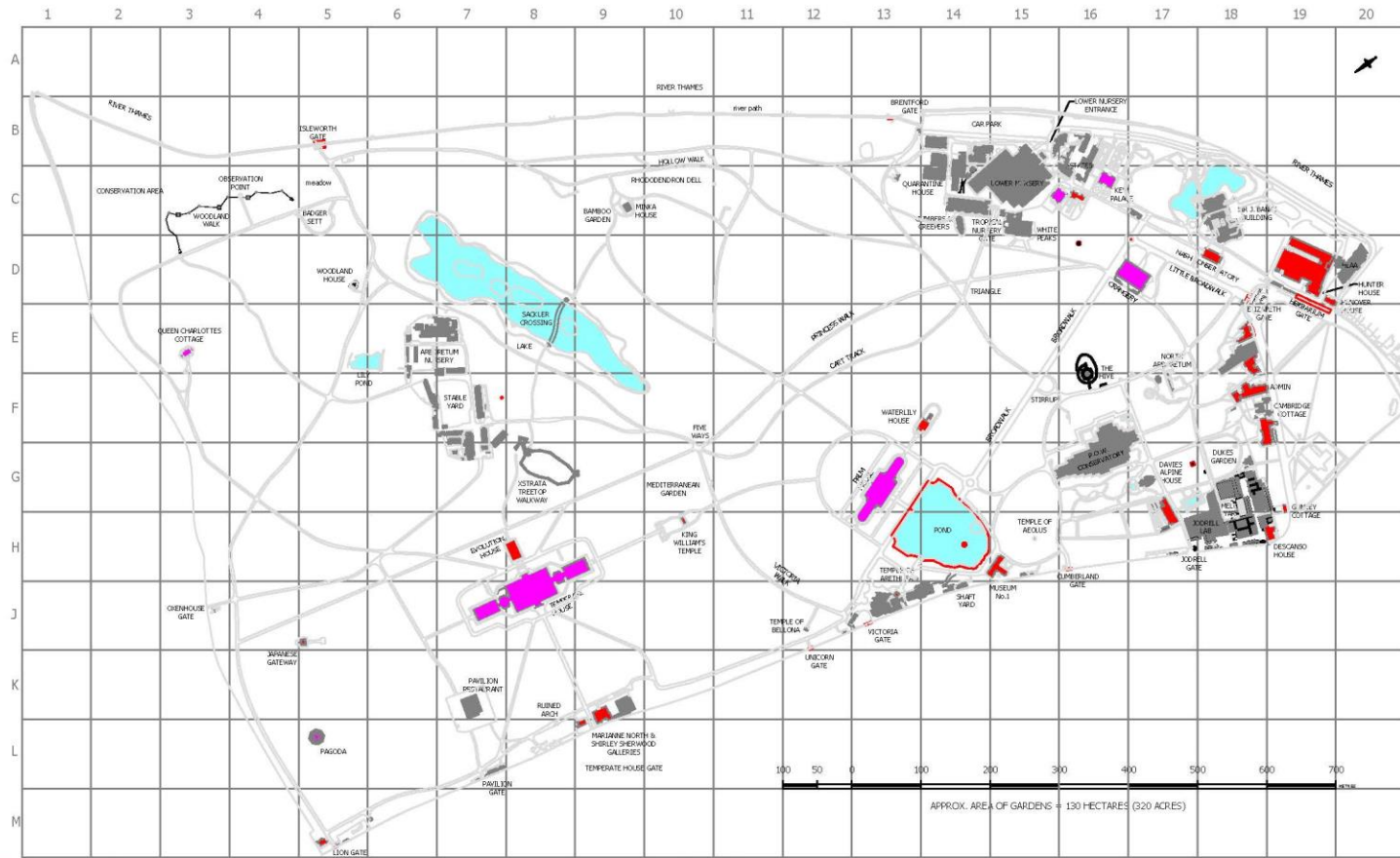
Context

- London Borough of Hounslow boundary
- Great West Corridor study area
- Archaeological Priority Area
- Conservation Area
- Areas of Special Character
- World Heritage Site
- World Heritage Site buffer zone
- Waterbody

Listed Buildings

- Grade I
- Grade II*
- Grade II
- Locally Listed (LBH)
- Panoramic view
- Linear view
- Significant view identified by Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew World Heritage Site Mangement Plan 2014

- Significant vista identified by Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew World Heritage Site Mangement Plan 2014
- Existing landmark
- Proposed Gateway to Great West Corridor
- Proposed landmark
- Building Set Backs for Soft Landscaping Improvements



GRADE I LISTED BUILDING
 GRADE II LISTED BUILDING

Chiswick Curve Inquiry



Appellants Case



© W2 LONDON

1.6 m above ground

09:59 17 March 2016

The Site contains **no listed buildings** and is not located within a Conservation Area.

The Site is located within Hounslow's Golden Mile, a **recognised regeneration area** (identified in Hounslow's Local Plan as a potential Opportunity Area).

Design, townscape and heritage evidence presented by the Appellant determined that the Proposed Development will not cause substantial harm to or total loss of significance of any designated heritage asset, and in many cases would **bring 'benefit' due to the quality of the design.**

The earlier '**Citadel' permission** for the site has been implemented and could be built and its architecture is of lower quality therefore the effects on the settings of heritage assets would not be as beneficial due to the quality of the design



Townscape 'layering', where heritage assets receive a new 'back drop', can be acceptable where a conscious decision has been made to design buildings to harmonise with the asset and qualitative excellence arises.

Kew's Case



The Chiswick Curve threatens the authenticity and integrity of two key attributes of the WHS: **(1) its rich and diverse historic cultural landscape** and **(2) its iconic architectural legacy**.

The 109m tall glass and metal structure would appear as a massive intrusion into numerous views within the designed landscape, including views protected by the WHS Management Plan, and in the settings of listed buildings.

RBG Kew made the case for **'substantial harm'** to the setting and significance of the World Heritage Site based on the **cumulative impact of previous buildings** including the Haverfield Towers, Kew Eye and Hyperion.

Chiswick Curve would be the **'tipping point'** resulting in substantial harm to the OUV, authenticity and integrity of the World Heritage Site.

This is the first instance where RBG Kew has participated as a Rule 6 party in a planning inquiry.

Accurate Visual Representations



MSE ENVIRONMENTAL

VIEWPOINT 10 VIEW FROM KEW GREEN, EAST SIDE
Figure 10.3 Photomontage



VIEWPOINT 14 **VIEW FROM ORANGERY, FROM WEATHER STATION**
 Figure 14.3 Photomontage



VIEWPOINT 15 VIEW FROM ORANGERY, FROM LAWN
 Figure 15.3 Photomontage



VIEWPOINT 19 **VIEW FROM ORDER BEDS**
Figure 19.3 **Photomontage**



Viewing Information
 This photograph is available for viewing at the following location:
 Location: Kew
 Date: 2019-10-10
 Time: 10:00 AM
 Duration: 10 minutes
 Access: Public
 Contact: Kew Gardens
 Website: www.kew.org.uk

Photograph Details
 Title: Viewpoint 20 - View from Rockery
 Author: Kew
 Date: 2019-10-10
 Time: 10:00 AM
 Duration: 10 minutes
 Access: Public
 Contact: Kew Gardens
 Website: www.kew.org.uk

VIEWPOINT 20 VIEW FROM ROCKERY
 Figure 20.3 Photomontage





Photograph Location Plan



Viewing Information

The photograph was taken from the viewpoint indicated on the map. The viewpoint is located on the east bank of the pond, near the large tree. The photograph was taken on a clear day, with a blue sky and some light clouds. The water in the pond is calm, reflecting the sky and the trees. The railing in the foreground is made of black metal.

Viewpoint 16 is located on the east bank of the pond, near the large tree. The photograph was taken from this viewpoint. The photograph was taken on a clear day, with a blue sky and some light clouds. The water in the pond is calm, reflecting the sky and the trees. The railing in the foreground is made of black metal.

VIEWPOINT 16 VIEW FROM PALM HOUSE, BY POND
Figure 16.3 Photomontage

Lessons Learnt



1. To be more proactive with requesting specific AVR's from future planning applications.
2. Engage with Hounslow on their Emerging Local Plan and Tall Buildings study.
3. Update the Management Plan and undertake a Setting Study to better characterise setting and significance for future developers.

Continuing Development Pressure



The Brentford East Collective

Plot 01: Brentford Community Stadium

Plot 02: Capital Interchange Way

Plot 03: Citroen Site

Plot 04: Chiswick Curve

Plot 05: Hudson Square

Plot 06: Gunnersbury Avenue

Citroen Site



(Design & Access Statement, Hawkins/Brown, 2018)

Brentford Community Stadium



(Design & Access Statement, AFL Architects)

Capital Interchange Way



(Design & Access Statement, ALL Design 2016)

Albany Riverside



Cumulative Impacts



Future Challenges



- The Chiswick Curve decision
- Hounslow Local Plan Review & Tall building strategy
- Potential for the Chiswick Curve, Citroen and Citadel setting the height for tall building clusters in Hounslow's urban master planning
- Acceptance of harm as an inevitable result of the Great West Corridor's urban development
- Increasing pressure from affordable housing targets
- Reaching the tipping point for cumulative impact