

Kingston Power Station



### 4.05.1 Overview 1994-2012

- Part redevelopment of the former Power Station site reflecting the pattern of the Kingston and Teddington reaches, where blocks of 5 storeys have been introduced into the river landscape.
- A re-built Teddington School
- Redevelopment of the former British Aerospace site next to the towpath, where the river end of the site is now a sports complex and community centre (The Hawker Centre).
- Felling of a row of poplar trees on the former power station site adjacent to Canbury Gardens caused much controversy.
- TLS funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for enhancements to Canbury Gardens
- Landscaping around Half Mile Tree has much improved the entrance to Kingston.
- Construction of an upper path for cyclists and walkers between Teddington and Half Mile Tree
- New visitor moorings as part of the Teddington Gateway project have enlivened the towpath route
- Illegal moorings are increasingly a problem between Half Mile Tree and Teddington.
- Half Mile Tree Enhancements 2007
- Timber-yards and boat-yards in Hampton Wick, the Power Station and British Aerospace in Kingston have disappeared and the riverside is more densely built up.

## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

4.05.2 The Hampton Wick Reach curves from Kingston Railway Bridge to Teddington Lock. The reach is characterised by residential areas interspersed with recreation grounds. Yet despite tall apartment blocks at various locations on both banks dating from the last 30 years of the 20th century, the reach remains remarkably green and well-treed.

4.05.3 2012 Update: The beginning of the reach at the entrance to Canbury Gardens retains legacies of the former power station operation and is of poor quality and in need of improvement. The railway bridge and pumping station arches, and the lines of trees beyond, provide a distinct gateway to the reach as a whole, leading to the shaded waterside park.

4.05.4 2012 Update: Canbury Gardens is a much-valued and popular park that was awarded Green Flag status in 2010. The smooth trunks of the plane trees and the high canopy above create an arcade-like frame to the river. The line of mature populars previously screening the power station site was felled when the riverside apartment blocks which replaced the power station were developed on the site, and replacement planting is destined to remain low in order to retain views from these blocks. The riverside space is thronged with walkers, cyclists and



Thames Path, Canbury Gardens



Canbury Gardens

fishermen on the lower path and people just promenading, sitting and watching on the upper benches.

Despite forming Kingston's main public park, Canbury Gardens feels cut off from the town centre - the poor design of Thameside being a barrier to movement between Kingston Bridge and the open space. Development is shortly to take place in the Northern Riverside. Within the Gardens, the line of London plane trees is backed by strips of shrubberies, a pub and a rowing club. Tennis courts and a communitymanaged pavilion occupy the landward edge of the park, creating a complex of formal recreation facilities. Some of the tennis courts are covered by ungainly inflated white structures in winter. A bandstand erected in 1997 acts as a new visual focus for the riverside park. Like the Kingston entrance, the park's other gateways are disappointing and in need of much enhancement – particularly the upstream entrance that if designed well could announce arrival at Kingston for the walker from Teddington. There has been some improvement to paths, benches and lighting within the park. However, at the northern entrance, the riverside path and adjacent slipway are in very poor condition, with deep potholes, poor quality street furniture and uncoordinated signage. Wash from boats and the action of the tides is eroding the riverbanks.

4.05.5 The three other main recreation areas at Broom Road Recreation Ground, the former British Aerospace Sports Ground (now the Hawker Centre) and the Lensbury Club are largely open areas of gang-mown sports pitches with adjacent pavilions and tennis courts. Particularly on the low Middlesex Bank, the glimpses through to open space contrast with the denser tree cover along the rest of the reach. The assortment of exotic trees on the edge of the Lensbury Club creates a slightly discordant note in the river landscape of native willow, alder, oak and ash. The area of scrub woodland on the edge of the former British Aerospace site blends better with the landscape. However, wire fencing on this site detracts from its natural character and interrupts the flow of the upper river walk to Ham Lands.

4.05.6 2012 Update: The relationship of the community centre — which has a public café — with the path and the river could be much more positive and attractive. A native hedge was planted alongside the fence in 2010.

4.05.7 The residential areas divide into two main types. Downstream of the Albany, Edwardian houses line stretches of the river and its side-channels, particularly at Lower Ham Road and Broomwater. The associated domestic boathouses contribute to the character of the river. The whimsical peaked roofs, barge boards and arched windows of the architecture on the water's edge give the area a special identity. The brick boundary walls on Lower Ham Rd are a contributing element to the character of the riverside scene; some are in poor condition, and their maintenance and the survival of their detailing is important.

4.05.8 Upstream of the Albany, a number of blocks of flats change the character and scale of the residential areas. The three Albany blocks stand out along the river, built on the site of Point Pleasant with its commanding views to north and south. However the mature cedars, old

garden walls and Boston ivy growing on the buildings help to reduce some of the impact. Similarly, riparian trees on the Middlesex bank mask some of the bulk of the modern blocks of flats of up to 8 storeys high. From a distance however, such as the view downstream from the Queen's Promenade, these blocks still stand out harshly in the river scene. Between the flats, opposite Canbury Gardens, a number of older houses with extensive gardens and boathouses offer a softer view across the river.

4.05.9 The trees on the islands also play an important part in the leafy character of the reach. Steven's Eyots are surrounded by houseboats and pilings, but the willows help to screen some of the clutter and break the expanse of the reach. Though the upper end of Trowlock Island is covered in wooden bungalows, the downstream half is densely wooded with alder, ash and willow, creating a narrow, shaded side-channel where the moored boats all appear to be painted in a co-ordinated blue and white.

The islands and recreation areas are dotted with boat clubs. Some of the sheds and club houses are relatively new and brightly painted, others date back at least a century. Some of the finest brick boathouses on Lower Ham Road have been converted into offices. The informal character of the clubs, surrounded by equipment, masts and hulls, bring the river edge alive and the cluster of river-related boat clubs makes the Thames brim with activity.

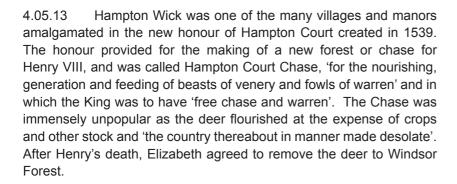
4.05.10 2012 Update: The Thames Path makes its way from Kingston along the Surrey Bank towards Teddington Lock. succession of landscape characters that the walker experiences in this reach is important - a series of events merging the peace and tranquillity of the sylvan fields of Ham with the hustle and bustle of Kingston Town. Both Canbury Gardens and the Lower Ham Road help to make this transition, bringing the countryside into the town and visa versa. On Lower Ham Road, most walkers follow the road rather than the upper path – this does not seem to provide any major problems with the majority of vehicles passing at an appropriate speed although the need to resolve this potential conflict between different users has been identified by the Royal Borough of Kingston. The visitor is rewarded by magnificent views to the river. The river edge itself has been colonised by a diverse range of native riparian plants. At the Half Mile Tree the river bank rises up two short terraces, with parallel paths, the upper path has been surfaced to improve conditions for cyclists and pedestrians. The Thames Path continues past the Borough Stone towards Ham, gradually becoming more rural in character.

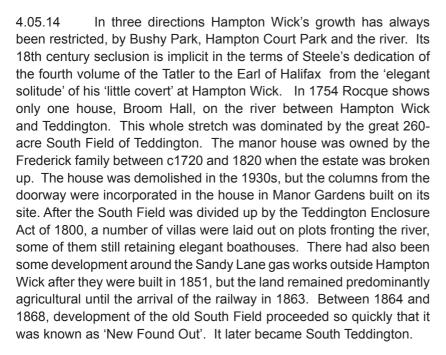
4.05.11 2012 Update: At the downstream end of the reach, the new Teddington School building appears as a backdrop to the riverside and clubhouses. New flood lighting has been installed and adjustments are being made to minimize their impact. Further along, the river is dominated by the buildings of the Lensbury Club and television studios, and by the pilings, weirs and rushing water of Teddington Lock. The open expanse of Ham Lands opposite acts as a rough contrast to the manicured Middlesex banks. This southern end of Ham Lands has been narrowed by the residential development which crosses Riverside

Drive. However the 2-storey houses, 100 metres back from the river, are partly screened by the raised river edge and some tree-planting.

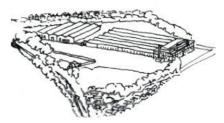
### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.05.12 The village of Hampton Wick grew up as a hamlet at the point where Kingston Bridge crossed over into Middlesex. Despite being a single parish until the 1830s, the main connection with the village of Hampton, a mile upstream, seems to have been their shared contiguity with Hampton Court and its park. In the Anglo-Saxon period, a single manor of Hampton covered the whole of this peninsula. The lordship was vested by William the Conqueror in Walter de St Valery, who also held Isleworth. The manor remained with the de St Valerys until 1217, shortly afterwards coming to the Knights Hospitallers.





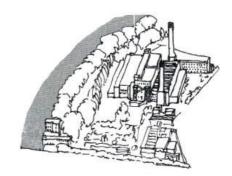
4.05.15 On the Surrey side, Canbury Gardens formerly lay in the shadow of the 1947 power station. In the 1850s, despite the presence of the gas works on the east side of the Lower Ham Road, the area was a tract of marshes and osier beds in which only a solitary cottage stood. Steven's Eyot is named after the boatman who lived there in the late 19th century and the site of his cottage is now a pub. After the arrival of the railway in 1863, the land became attractive for industrial use and



Former British Aerospace works



Half Mile Tree, 1920



The site of the former power station still undergoing redevelopment

by 1887 it was an eyesore. The proposal for a public garden was made in terms of a borough motion 'to remove as soon as possible ...the tar paving manufactory, the road materials and other miscellaneous and unsavory objects deposited there ...that the view from the river shall be a pleasant one and not, as at present, unsightly and obnoxious'. After initial objections on the grounds that a public garden 'would be used by working men', the gardens were laid out to a design by the borough surveyor Henry Macaulay, on topsoil brought in from the nearby reservoir excavations. The park was opened in 1890.

4.05.16 The site of the power station was occupied from about 1877 by the municipally owned Kingston-upon-Thames Fertiliser Department, where raw sewage was toasted in huge ovens to produced a garden fertiliser sold as 'Native Guano'. King's Passage, at the end of Canbury Gardens, was known as 'Perfume Parade' after the filter beds which adjoined the avenue. Despite all this, Canbury Gardens were immensely popular, with weekly concerts and beautiful planting.

4.05.17 2012 Update: The power station was closed in 1980 and the site developed with 5-storey apartment blocks set back 50 metres from the river. The felling of the line of poplars planted to screen the power station aroused much public opposition. In 2011, on appeal to the Secretary of State permission was given for the development of the remaining power station site including an eleven and sixteen storey block, despite local opposition.

4.05.18 The Bank Farm estate, owned and renamed Point Pleasant by General St John, was the subject in 1796 of a Red Book by Humphry Repton. The proposals included a new house by Nash, the first completed collaboration by the two men. The scheme's aim was to take advantage of the views both up and down the river, and Repton praised the 'quite new and unexampled' solution which his 'ingenious friend Mr Nash' contrived. This was a house very close to the water's edge, turned at an angle to the river, with three bows on two fronts. The Repton plan indicates too the un-diverted footpath along the river's edge through the estate. By 1899 it was the Albany club, but the house has been demolished and the site is now occupied by three blocks of flats – The Albany. The raised situation still commands the river bend and the two fine Lebanon Cedars which survive may date back to Repton.

The former British Aerospace Works (closed in 1992) evolved during the First World War from Sopwith and Hawker's in Kingston. The Works were built on part of the Ham Lands.

4.05.19 2012 Update: Their former sports buildings are now the Hawker Centre – a sports and leisure facility with a café and links to the riverside path.

4.05.20 The housing, Wates' Riverside Estate, swallowed up 60 acres of the Ham Lands in the 1960s, much of it the former Lammas lands whose copyholders forfeited their rights to the Dysart family under the 1902 Act for the Preservation of the View from Richmond Hill. However, the remaining land not already in public ownership was then

bought by Richmond Council. After the Council had developed five acres in 1983, there was public outcry, leading to the designation of the rest as Metropolitan Open Land.

### NATURE CONSERVATION AND FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

4.05.21 2012 Update: The river bank at Canbury Gardens, grazed by geese, ducks and other waterfowl, is largely colonized by the invasive plant hypericum with few another native riparian species present. The summer annuals and riverside shrubs do however provide a habitat for nocturnal wildlife including five species of bat. The lower area is regularly inundated by water during the spring tides. Current management does not account for this and action is required to restore a more natural riverbank that is designed in a way to deflect the wash from passing boats and the action of the tides from eroding the riverbanks. The reintroduction of native riparian planting could be encouraged and small beaches could be created both as places for waterfowl to use and for children to play by the water.

4.05.22 The banks of Steven's Eyot have a number of pollarded willow trees and have been improved by the Environment Agency to be more sympathetic to wildlife. There is a tiny island downstream of the Eyot with just a few trees which provide a quiet refuge for birds - cormorants can be seen roosting in the top of the trees. Similar to many of the other islands, these two would benefit from more sympathetic bank treatment and more trees.

On the Middlesex bank, Broom Road Recreation Ground presents a hard concrete wall topped by a fence to the river front. As well as grading and vegetating the river wall, the fence could be set back or indeed removed and the lower part of the recreation land managed as a grassy hay meadow gradually falling to the water's edge.

4.05.23 There is some mature woodland on Trowlock Island, but regular mowing has reduced the areas of understorey and value to wildlife. As the trees start to die and decay they will become more valuable for woodpeckers, but the woodland should be managed to provide a shrub layer, a more natural woodland ground flora, and a more diverse age-range of trees.

4.05.24 2012 Update: The island provides an excellent habitat for bats and nesting wildfowl.

4.05.25 The towpath beside the former British Aerospace factory site, now the Hawker Centre, has an attractive green swathe of grassland on either side of it and the river banks are well-vegetated, although scrub has become too dense in places. The future management of the site needs to incorporate sympathetic landscaping and management for wildlife opening up more grassland areas.

There is a range of common grasses, including oat grass on the slope up to Ham Lands, beside the towpath. The remaining grassland is mown regularly. Amongst the grasses can be found wild flowers such



Volunteers from CARA help tidy Lower Ham Road

as crow garlic, sorrel, yarrow and hardheads. While pathways can be kept closely mown, a late hay cut, with the removal of all the cuttings to avoid fertility build up, enables more flowers to set seed and thereby ensure their survival and spread.

4.05.26 2012 Update: Ham Lands lie just to the north of the former British Aerospace land and are discussed more fully in Reaches 6 and 7. The part of Ham Lands which lies within the Royal Borough of Kingston comprises riverside grassland with a few bushes and trees. In places, swathes of grassland are allowed to grow over the summer and an interesting mix of species is developing. The TLS Towpath Management Plan suggests greater links between Richmond and Kingston's grassland management of the towpath — the resulting mowing changes abruptly at the Borough Stone. Opportunities to combine the two operations could be explored.

4.05.27 At Teddington Lock the long narrow island in the centre of the river has a number of trees and demonstrates well how green areas can be built artificially in the river. Although the river is only partly tidal between here and Richmond Lock, areas of gravel and mud are exposed at low tide and black-headed gulls, mallards, coots and other waterfowl hunt for invertebrate morsels. Several species of fish – notably eels - swim upstream to breed in the Thames' upper reaches. To assist their migration, Teddington Weir has been altered so that they can now gain passage at high tide.

## **PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION**

4.05.28 This is one of the main reaches for boat clubs on the Thames. Rowing, sailing and canoeing clubs cluster along the banks, interspersed with private boathouses and moorings. A skiff roller at Teddington Lock allows canoes and small boats to bypass the lock. Canbury Gardens, Broom Road Recreation Ground and the Lensbury Club provide substantial areas of formal recreation, with tennis courts, bowling greens, putting greens, football and cricket pitches and playgrounds. The Ham Lands and towpaths offer extensive spaces for informal recreation, cycling and walking. Canbury Gardens is a key site on this reach and offers continuing opportunities for enhancement, especially at its upstream and downstream entrance areas where the surfaces, planting and street furniture are of poor quality.

4.05.29 2012 Update: Public access, using the Thames Path along the Surrey bank, is continuous from Kingston right through to Kew and beyond. There have been major improvements carried out by the Environment Agency around Teddington Lock to increase access and temporary mooring for boats, and a new landing stage and moorings extend from the footbridge to opposite the end of the weir. There is a now a virtually continuous line of moored barges and large traditional boats as far as Trowlock Island, providing plenty of interest and informal activity particularly on summer evenings. Upstream of the Teddington Lock moorings boats are often moored illegally where there is no proper provision which contributes to poor conditions on the towpath. Richmond Council has proposed a byelaw to help control this issue.



Bandstand in Canbury Gardens

4.05.30 2012 Update: The riverside route between Teddington and Kingston is well-used but the view from the lower path to the river is limited by scrub growth. The lower path is maintained as an unbound rural walk, so some walkers prefer to use the more accessible upper path by walkers as well as cyclists. The Hawker Centre café is a welcome addition to facilities on the route but could have a clearer relationship with the riverside path to attract users.

Boatyards: None

Water recreation: Ariel Sailing Club

Albany Park Canoe and Sailing Centre

BP Leisure Teddington Club

'Leander' (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

Kingston Rowing Club Royal Canoe Club Small Boat Club

Twickenham Sea Cadets Corps

Tamesis Club

Land recreation: Former British Aerospace Sports Ground

**Broom Road Recreation Ground** 

Canbury Gardens Ham Lands Lensbury Club

**Teddington Sports Centre** 

Thames Path

Landmarks: Albany apartment blocks

Albany Boat Hire

Kingston Railway Bridge

**Teddington Lock** 

Canbury Garden plane trees

## **LOCAL INTEREST GROUPS**

Amenity and Local History:

Borough of Twickenham Local History Society

Canbury and Riverside Association

Hampton Wick Association

Kingston Society

River Thames Society (Teddington-Windsor) Kingston upon Thames Archaeological

Society

**Teddington Society** 

## **PRINCIPAL LAND USES**

With the demise of the power station and the British Aerospace Works, the reach has become equally divided between residential and recreation uses. Many of the houses are Edwardian, but a number of prominent blocks of apartments have also been built in more recent years on both banks. The recreation areas form substantial open spaces of sports pitches and formal facilities, regularly alternating from bank to bank along the river. The recreation areas are interspersed with a large number of riverside boat and sailing clubs.

#### SITE UNDER PRESSURE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Former Power Station Site. The southern end remains undeveloped and has been the subject of controversial planning applications for high buildings.

2012 Update: Planning permission was granted on appeal in 2006 for a hotel and 148 flats with a further 22 flats to be erected on the western part of the site. The buildings are likely to reach up to 16 storeys.

## Review of Guidance, Project and Management & Maintenance

Projects and management proposals will evolve over time, with details and priorities set in the TLS Annual Action Plan and project briefs. The Action Plan provides greater detail for each project and provides the basis for ongoing monitoring. Please refer to the Appendix for a copy of the 1994 Policy, Project and Management Proposals.

Key: Green: Taken from the 1994 TLS Report with minor amendment

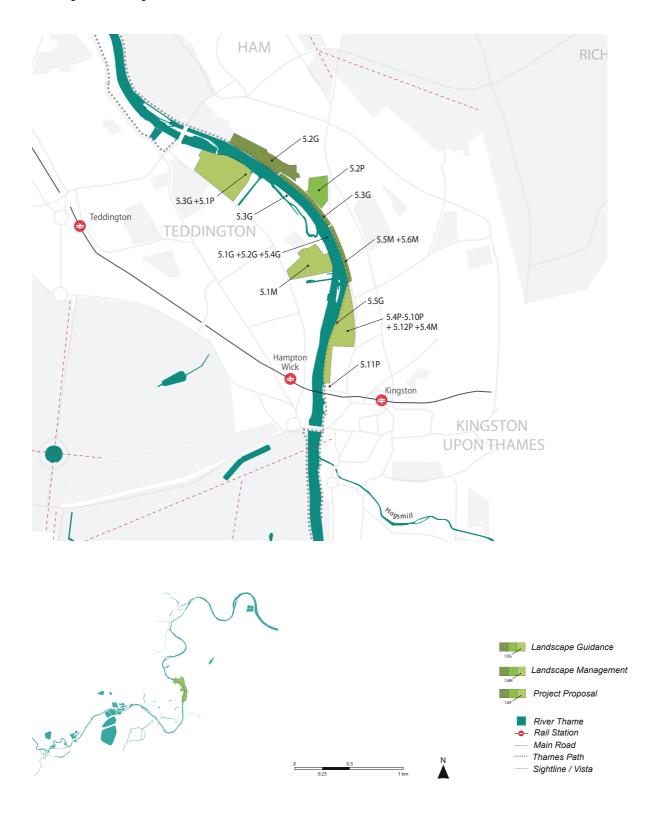
where appropriate

Blue: New proposal for 2012 Review

Yellow: Deleted since 1994 due to completion or changing

policy or priority

# **Policy and Project Review**



| Guidance Promoted by the Thames Landscape Strategy and How this Relates to Planning Policy |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| TLS Ref.   | 2012 Guidance  | Related Planning Policy Cross Reference   |  |
| 5.1G   | Conserve and enhance the leafy character and extensive recreation use of the reach   | London Plan – 7.29<br>LBRuT – CP 11, DM OS 11, DM OS 12                           |  |
| 5.2G   | Conserve and enhance the nature conservation interest of the river and its corridor, with particular attention to Ham Lands, Trowlock Island, Canbury Gdns and recreation grounds. | London Plan – 7.19<br>LBRuT – CP 4, CP 11, DM OS 5                                |  |
| 5.3G   | Retain and enhance the important tree planting along the banks   | LBRuT – DM DC 4   |  |
| 5.4G   | With the exception of the Boaters PH moorings, the Canbury Gardens riverbank should be kept free of moored boats to allow views to the river and use of the water by rowers        | Policies CS4, DM7, KT1 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012);                             |  |
| 5.5G   | Manage the impact of tall buildings on the Kingston bank through a tall buildings SPD.   | Policies CS8 & DM12 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012) and emerging Tall Buildings SPD |  |
| 5.6G   | Consider traffic management options to improve pedestrian environment on the Lower Ham Road  | Policy KT1 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012)  |  |
| Completed  | Extend the Metropolitan Open Land designation to Canbury Gardens   | Done. Now a conservation area.  |  |

| Project Prop | usais<br>T  |   |
|--------------|---|---|
| TLS Ref.     | 2012 Project  | Other Stakeholders  |
| 5.1P         | Encourage Lensbury Club to plant its riverside with more appropriate native deciduous trees.  | Landowners  |
| 5.2P         | Investigate the long term potential to soften the river edge at Broom Rd Recreation Ground  | LBRuT / EA  |
| 5.3P         | Improve appearance of Hawker Centre fencing and setting from riverside path, and improve access route to café. Take opportunities to make more of the café's riverside setting.   |   |
| 5.4P         | Upgrade path surfaces, benches and other street furniture in Canbury Gardens  | Policy KT1 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012)  |
| 5.5P         | Re-route cyclists in Canbury Gardens along a shared top path allowing the bottom path to form a quiet pedestrian route. Ensure vehicular access to Canbury Gardens is restricted to authorised key holders.             | Policy KT1 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012)  |
| 5.6P         | Restore the intrinsic Victorian character of Canbury Gardens  | Policy KT1 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012)  |
| 5.7P         | Promote the use of and enhance the Canbury Gardens riverside promenade  | Policy KT1 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012)  |
| 5.8P         | Develop a consistency of lighting throughout the Canbury Gardens using bat friendlier light sources.  | Policy KT1 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012)  |
| 5.9P         | Enhance the hierarchy of gateways to Canbury Gardens  | Policy KT1 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012)  |
| 5.10P        | Establish a palette of materials for Canbury Gardens  | Policy KT1 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012)  |
| 5.11P        | Enhance the Thameside area to create a better link between Kingston town centre and Canbury Gardens   | Policies CS4, DM7 & KT1 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012)   |
| 5.12P        | Investigate the potential to enhance the bank edges of Canbury Gardens to create a more natural riverside habitat   | Policies CS4, DM7 & KT1 (Kingston Core Strategy 2012)   |
| Delete       | Modify bank edges of Canbury Gdns to enable wildfowl to move more easily to and from the water  | See 5.12P   |
| Completed    | Open wooded area on edge of British Aerospace site to the public to continue line of upper river path, and remove unsightly fencing   | Completed 2008. See 5.4M  |
| Delete       | Upgrade path surfaces and benches in Canbury Gdns; replace concrete street lamps with more sympathetic lighting   | Partly achieved – new benches. New bandstand in 2004 provided focus for riverside area. See 5.5P Lamps - partially completed 2007 |
| Completed    | Re-design northern half of Canbury Gdns to make more of river views currently cut by linear shrubbery.  | Completed 1999/2000. Shrubberies have been opened up.   |
| Delete       | Consider upgrading and integrating formal recreation facilities of Canbury Gdns with redevelopment of power station site  | Not achieved, and no longer possible as development completed.  |
| Completed    | Replace failed trees on edge of Ham Lands and plan the length of upper river path as woodland to help create sense of enclosure back from river's edge and screen housing and proposed industrial development to north. | Some trees planted. Managed for wildflowers.  |
| Completed    | Open permanent views through the British Aerospace site to the river  | Hawker Centre established with café. Friends Group in operation.  |
| Completed    | Separate cyclists and pedestrians along parallel paths on Ham Lands river edge terraces   | Completed 1998  |
| Completed    | Identify a cycle link between Bushy Park, Teddington Station and Teddington Lock  | Completed   |

| Management and Maintenance Proposals |  |                  |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|------------------|--|
| TLS Ref.                             | 2012 Proposal  | Stakeholders     |  |
| 5.1M                                 | Limit areas of close-mown grass in recreation areas to reduce maintenance costs and increase nature conservation interest                              | LBRuT            |  |
| 5.2M                                 | Control scrub growth between Ham Lands footpath and river, and manage adjacent grasslands as hay meadow.   | LBRuT / EA / PLA |  |
| 5.3M                                 | Manage the islands more sympathetically for wildlife, drawing up positive management plans for each island.  | LBRuT / EA / PLA |  |
| 5.4M                                 | Manage the vegetation along the Lower Ham Road riverbank through a three year rotational coppice of the tree stock and a two year shrub layer coppice. |                  |  |
| 5.5M                                 | Establish a monthly volunteer group to pick up flotsam and jetsam deposited from the spring tides along the Lower Ham Road.                            |                  |  |