



www.landuse.co.uk

Report on the Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) within the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Area: Local Character and Views



Final Report
Prepared by LUC
April 2016

Planning & EIA
Design
Landscape Planning
Landscape Management
Ecology
Mapping & Visualisation

LUC LONDON
43 Chalton Street
London
NW1 1JD
T +44 (0)20 7383 5784
london@landuse.co.uk

Offices also in:
Bristol
Glasgow
Edinburgh



Land Use Consultants Ltd
Registered in England
Registered number: 2549296
Registered Office:
43 Chalton Street
London NW1 1JD
LUC uses 100% recycled paper

Project Title: Report on the Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) within the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood
Area: Local Character and Views

Project: 6387

Client: Knightsbridge Residents Management Company Limited

Version	Date	Version Details	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
1.0	17/02/2016	First draft report issued to Turley	Mary Jansson	Rebecca Knight	Philip Smith
2.0	23/02/2016	Second draft: amended to respond to comments from Turley	Mary Jansson	Rebecca Knight	Philip Smith
3.0	11/03/2016	Final draft: amended to respond to client comments	Mary Jansson / Rebecca Knight	Rebecca Knight	Philip Smith
4.0	11/04/2016	Final Report	Mary Jansson	Philip Smith	Philip Smith

Contents

1	Introduction	3
	Uses and Application of the Report	3
	Scope and structure of the report	3
2	Approach	5
	Study Area	5
	Relevant Guidance and Approach	5
	Key Steps	5
	Data and Information Sources	6
	Field Survey	6
3	Background	7
	Historical Overview	7
	Policy Background	13
4	Appraisal of Local Character and Views	17
	Area Description	17
	Appraisal of Local Character	17
	Views and Visual Amenity	21
	Viewpoint 1 The Albert Memorial from West Albert Lawn	23
	Viewpoint 2 Royal Albert Hall from the South Carriage Drive	24
	Viewpoint 3 West Carriage Drive	25
	Viewpoint 4 Serpentine Bridge	26
	Viewpoint 5 Kensington Road at Junction with Ennismore Gardens	27
	Viewpoint 6 Prince of Wales Gate	28
	Viewpoint 7 Trevor Square	29
	Viewpoint 8 South Carriage Drive, near Park Close	30
	Viewpoint 9 Eastern Serpentine Lake	31
	Viewpoint 10 View across the Serpentine from North Bank	32
5	Summary	33
	Opportunities and Guidance	34

Figures

Figure 1 Site and Study Area

Figure 2 Rhodes Map of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens 1762

Figure 3 A Plan of Hyde Park by B Baker 1810

Figure 4 Cary's New and Accurate Plan of London 1792

Figure 5 Town Plan Map 1867

Figure 6 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1896

Figure 7 Second Hyde Park Barracks in 1960

Figure 8 The present Hyde Park Barracks in views from Hyde Park to the north

Figure 9 Metropolitan Open Land

Figure 10 Registered Parks and Gardens

Figure 11 Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and London Squares

Figure 12 View westwards along the South Carriage Drive towards the Queen's Gate

Figure 13 View eastwards along the South Carriage Drive from Alexandra Gate

Figure 14 View north from Montpelier Street to the south of Montpelier Square

Figure 15 View south from Hyde Park and the South Carriage Drive towards the Barracks

Figure 16 Appraisal Viewpoint Locations

1 Introduction

- 1.1 LUC was commissioned by the Knightsbridge Residents Management Company Limited to prepare **an evidence report on local character and views related to the potential 'Hyde Park Quarter' of the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Area.**
- 1.2 At the time of writing the report there was no agreed spatial definition of **the 'Hyde Park Quarter'**. In anticipation of what may be agreed, LUC **considered a 'study area' as defined in Figure 1.** This lies within the north of the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Area and comprises the areas of the Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens areas of Metropolitan Open Land (**as defined in Westminster's City Plan**) which fall within the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Area. This is with the exception of a small area to the south of the Albert Memorial.
- 1.3 The study area historically formed part of Hyde Park. Whilst most of the study area has remained undeveloped, in the late 18th **Century a cavalry barracks was constructed with the King's** Permission at the eastern end. This area has since remained occupied by a succession of barracks.
- 1.4 In 2012 the Ministry of Defence (MoD) issued details of Project Rose, a plan to sell the present Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment barracks in Hyde Park subject to a suitable alternative home within 4km of Horse Guards Parade (a 35 minutes ride at walking pace) being found. There is considerable uncertainty regarding when or if the sale of the site might occur, but potential development scenarios have attracted considerable publicity.
- 1.5 This report focuses on the identification of issues and opportunities which should influence any **future change or development within the potential 'Hyde Park Quarter'.**

Uses and Application of the Report

- 1.6 This report is intended to provide a sound evidence base which could be used:
 - by the Neighbourhood Forum to inform work on policy development as part of the Neighbourhood Plan;
 - by developers to guide development¹ and land management that is sympathetic to local character and amenity;
 - by decision makers to inform decisions on planning applications that respect local character and amenity; and
 - by groups that may undertake reviews of existing policies or designations, such as the Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) designation.

Scope and structure of the report

- 1.7 The report sets out the historical context of the study area, relevant planning designations and policy context, existing character, and existing views and visual amenity. It also identifies current issues and opportunities to enhance and improve the area.
- 1.8 Finally, the report sets out opportunities and guidelines for future change in the area that could be used by the parties outlined in paragraph 1.6, above.

¹ Landscape and townscape matters are planning considerations that should be considered as part of any planning application for i) demolition of existing buildings ii) erection of new buildings or iii) alterations, extensions or redevelopment of existing buildings and it is intended that this report could provide the evidence to inform these matters.

- 1.9 The study area and its immediate surroundings contain a significant concentration of designated heritage assets. These and key aspects of the historic environment are considered insofar as they contribute to the distinctive character of the area but this study does not provide a detailed assessment of the heritage significance of these assets or of the area.
- 1.10 The report is structured as follows:
- **Section 2** provides an overview of the approach;
 - **Section 3** provides an overview of the history of the site and policy background;
 - **Section 4** provides an analysis of the existing local character and visual amenity of the area and key issues and opportunities;
 - **Section 5** provides a summary of the findings of the appraisal and guidelines for future change in the area.

Figure 1: Site and Study Area

- Study Area
- Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Area



Source: OS, GiGL, Historic England, London City of Westminster

Map Scale @ A3: 1:5,500



2 Approach

Study Area

- 2.1 The study area historically formed part of Hyde Park and today falls within the Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens Metropolitan Open Land as defined in the Westminster City Plan. Adjacent areas, including Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens to the north and Knightsbridge to the south, are also considered in terms of how they affect character and views.
- 2.2 The study area is shown in **Figure 1**.

Relevant Guidance and Approach

- 2.3 This appraisal was informed by the principles set out in Natural England's guidance *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*² and the Greater London Authority's Supplementary Planning Guidance *Character and Context*³, the latter of which applies the key principles of character assessment within an urban context. In addition, given the presence of the Peninsular Tower (the 33-storey, 94m block which houses the regiment's married quarters within the Hyde Park Barracks), this study has also drawn on English Heritage/CABE guidance on tall buildings⁴.
- 2.4 The English Heritage / CABE guidance identifies the need for consideration of the historic context of a site, characterisation of the local landscape and consideration of other important features and constraints (paragraph 2.7), including:
- Natural topography;
 - Urban grain;
 - Significant views of skylines;
 - Scale and height;
 - Streetscape; and
 - Landmark buildings and areas and their settings, including backdrops and important local views, prospects and panoramas.

Key Steps

- 2.5 This appraisal involved a combination of desktop and field study. The key steps undertaken were as follows:
- the local character of the study area was analysed through field survey and a review of baseline information and studies undertaken;
 - key views and visual receptors (i.e. people who use or visit the area and enjoy these views) were identified;
 - current issues were identified;
 - opportunities for enhancing the existing character and visual amenity of the site and surrounding areas were identified; and

² Natural England, 2014, *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*

³ GLA, 2014, *Character and Context Supplementary Planning Guidance*

⁴ English Heritage and CABE

- guidelines for future change in the area were developed.

Data and Information Sources

2.6 Key documents and map data used to inform this study include:

- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014) Natural England
- ***Heritage, Views and Tall Buildings*** Westminster City Plan Revision Booklet No.15 (2014) City of Westminster
- Character and Context Supplementary Planning Guidance (2014) Greater London Authority
- The London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2011) (2015) Mayor of London
- ***Design*** - Westminster City Plan Revision Booklet No.8 (2014) Westminster City Council
- ***Open Space and Green Infrastructure*** - Westminster City Plan Revision Booklet No.10 (2014) City of Westminster
- **Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies** (2013) City of Westminster
- **Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies Map** (2013) City of Westminster
- London View Management Framework SPG (2012) Greater London Authority
- Conservation Area Audit & Management Proposals – Knightsbridge, Knightsbridge Green, Albert Gate – Westminster City Council (2009)
- City of Westminster Unitary Development Plan (2007) City of Westminster
- Metropolitan Views Draft SPD (2007) City of Westminster
- Hyde Park Management Plan 2006-2016 (2006) The Royal Parks
- Kensington Gardens Management Plan 2006-2016 (2006) The Royal Parks
- Historic Parks and Gardens in Westminster (2004) City of Westminster
- ***The Sir Basil Spence Archive***, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland
- ***Survey of London: Volume 45*** (2000) ed. John Greenacombe [online: British History Online]
- Royal Parks Historical Survey – Hyde Park (1982) LUC

Field Survey

2.7 Site visits were carried out between February 2015 and January 2016 in mixed but generally clear weather conditions, and records were made in the form of notes and photographs. Field survey work included visits to viewpoints and travel around the study area to consider the character of the area and its views.

3 Background

Historical Overview

- 3.1 From the 11th Century Hyde Park was monastic land, belonging to the Abbey of Westminster, and Knightsbridge was a small hamlet, centred on Knightsbridge Green. Hyde Park was appropriated by Henry VIII in 1536 at the dissolution of the monasteries and enclosed as part of his hunting grounds. In 1630 the **Park was formally opened to the 'respectable' public**. During the reign of William III a royal residence was established at Kensington and over the first half of the 18th Century the Kensington Gardens were progressively extended into Hyde Park.
- 3.2 **Rhode's map of 1762 (Figure 2)** illustrates that the study area was historically part of Hyde Park (a park wall can be seen enclosing it) albeit an awkwardly shaped piece of land butting up to the **central area of Knightsbridge**. The **'Knights Bridge' was a bridge** over the River Westbourne, which by the early 18th Century had been dammed to form the Serpentine. There was limited development around the Park at this time, other than to the east. By this time Knightsbridge had extended westwards from the Green, including immediately to the south of the study area, but beyond this there were only a few properties set within what was still a largely rural landscape of small field enclosures.

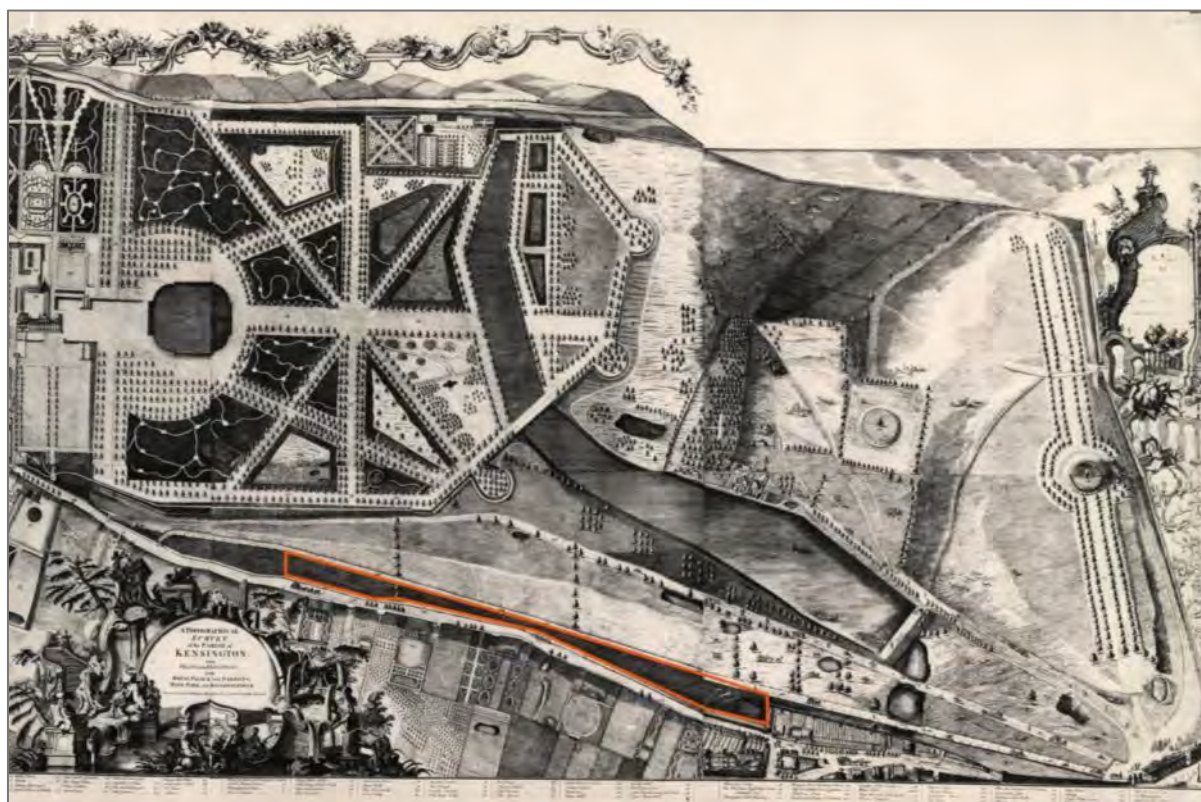


Figure 2. Rhodes Map of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens 1762 (with the study area indicated in orange)

19th Century

- 3.3 The Military Sketch of Hyde Park (**Figure 3**) shows the first barracks which were constructed between 1793-5. The barracks were built at a time of urban discontent and as part of a program of improvements in organisation of the military in the wake of the revolution in France and Britain's involvement in the resulting war. In this plan the barracks are clearly bounded by the

Park's wall to the south and east. The strip of Hyde Park on which it was built seems to have been used by the King's permission⁵, as was the case for earlier military works elsewhere within the Park⁶.

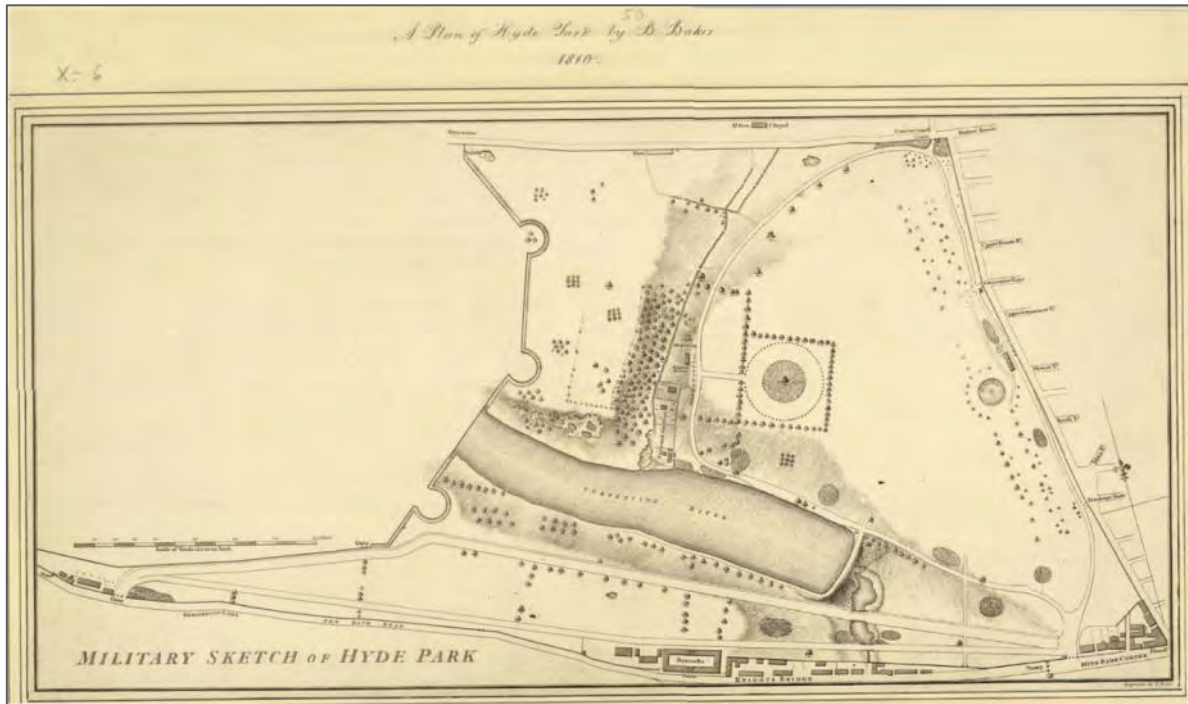


Figure 3. A Plan of Hyde Park by B Baker 1810

- 3.4 The barracks were located close to the royal family (George III bought Buckingham Palace as his principal residence in the 1760s) and centre of government and had a functional relationship with the Park which provided open space for ceremonial events, exercising horses and drilling. Its proximity to Buckingham Palace allowed for the Household Cavalry to be available to respond quickly in case of civil unrest.
- 3.5 As Cary's New And Accurate Plan Of London of 1792 (**Figure 4**) indicates, by the turn of the 19th Century there was still relatively little development to the south of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, although plots had begun to be developed along the southern edge of Kensington Road. By the time of the Town Plan map of 1867 (**Figure 5**) Knightsbridge has expanded significantly.

⁵ *Survey of London: Volume 45*, 2000, ed. John Greenacombe

⁶ The site of the Barracks remains held under an 1879 Act of Parliament and no lease from the Royal Park exists.

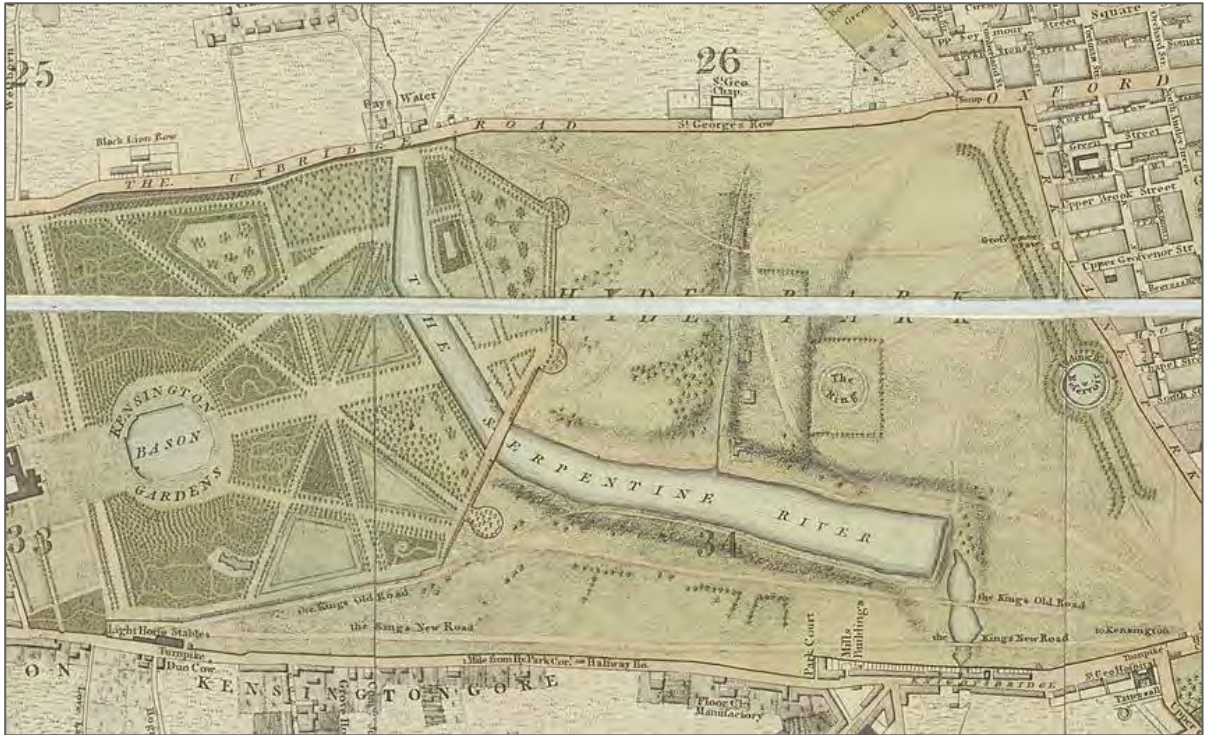


Figure 4. Cary's New and Accurate Plan of London 1792

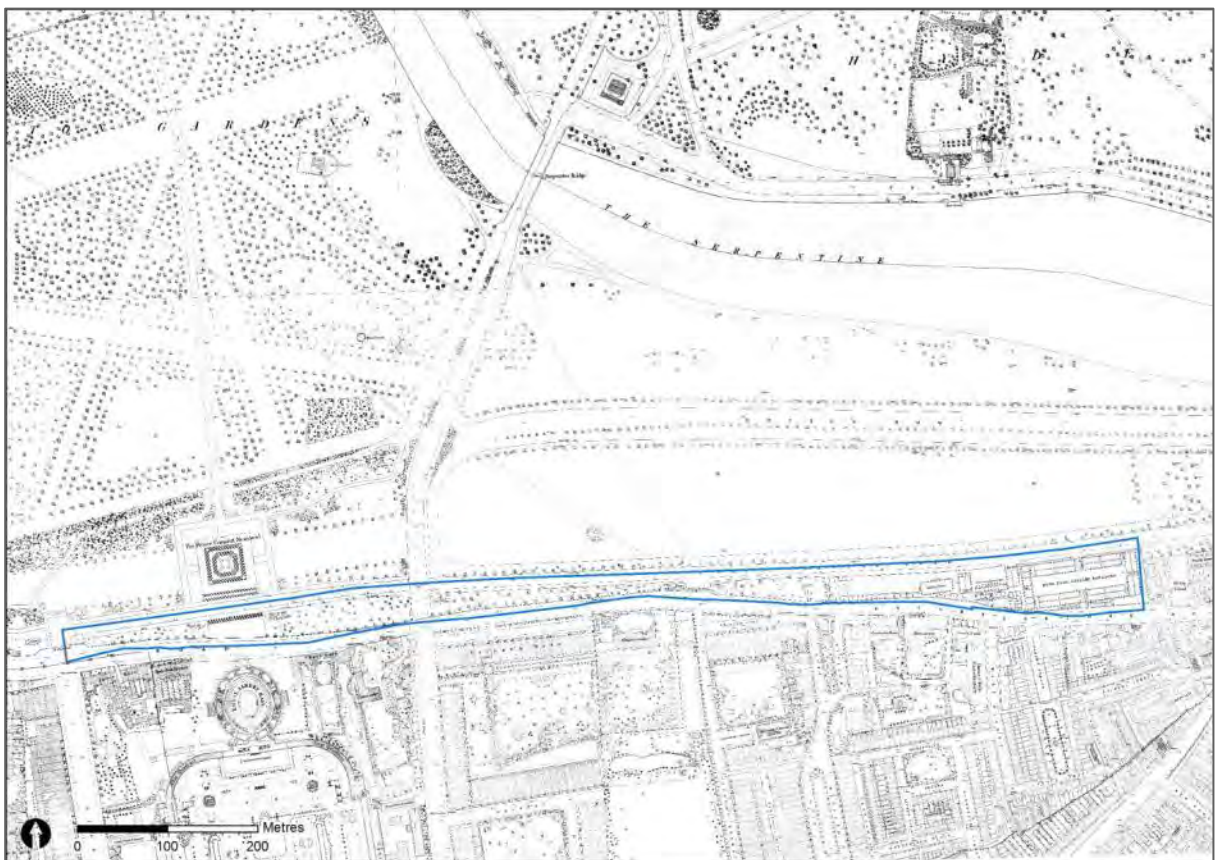


Figure 5. Town Plan 1867

- 3.6 This expansion of development around the two parks placed increasing pressure on them, including the need for access. This was a period when the park evolved increasingly in response to the demands of the public who were using the park for recreation in larger numbers.
- 3.7 A number of key developments and 'improvements' that took place established the structure of the Victorian Hyde Park which still predominates today, starting with the Great Exhibition of 1851. This included, controversially the extension of the West Carriage Drive over the Serpentine Bridge to connect the Victoria Gate in the north and the newly created Alexandra Gate in the south, which quickly became a major thoroughfare although originally only intended for temporary use. New formal gates and lodges were introduced in the mid-19th Century to link the new area of Knightsbridge to the parks of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. The network of paths and riding routes were also expanded and a program of works from 1823-29 replaced the enclosing wall (or the sections still remaining of it) with railings mounted on a low wall, allowing views into Hyde Park from the surrounding roads⁷.
- 3.8 The second edition 1:2500 scale OS map of 1896 (**Figure 6**) shows the Barracks which replaced the Georgian barracks in 1878-80, following a similar layout. The strip of land on which the barracks were located had been reduced by the widening of Knightsbridge Road to improve traffic flow, reducing the area available for development. This second complex of buildings was five storeys high on the Knightsbridge side (including roof level) and four on the Hyde Park side (due to sloping ground). The second Barracks development was *"a mixed classical style, chiefly Renaissance Italian but with a strong French influence evident, particularly in the roofs of the main barrack blocks – most appropriate to the boulevard-like location. They were faced in red brick with Portland-stone dressings and sculptured decoration"*.

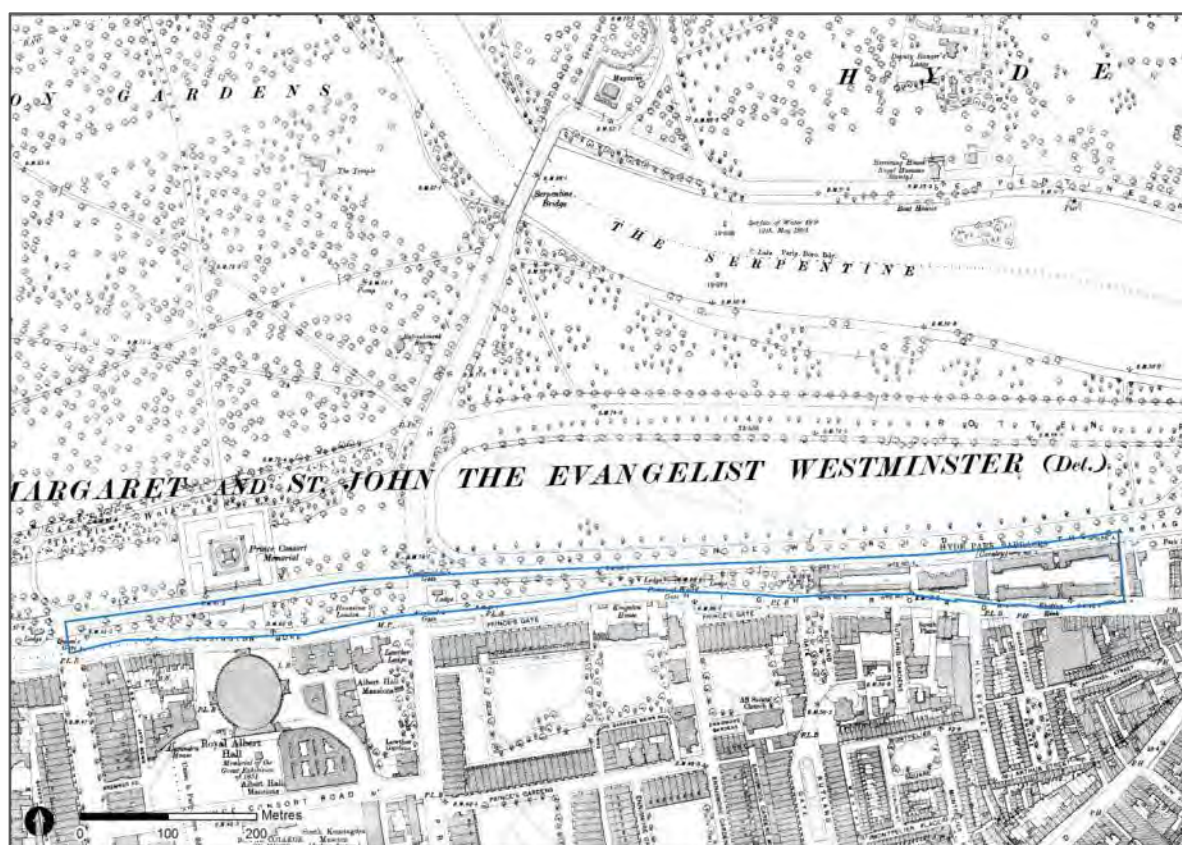


Figure 6. 2nd Edition OS Map 1896 (with the study area indicated in blue)

⁷ Royal Parks Historical Survey – Hyde Park (1982) LUC. Page 22

- 3.9 A photographic print from 1960 (Figure 7), showing the officers' Quarters and riding school in the foreground and the main barracks beyond, shows the relationship of the buildings with the tree level in the park, indicating that there was an attempt to integrate the barracks with the parkland as well as the character of the neighbourhood.



Figure 7. The second Hyde Park Barracks in 1960

20th Century

- 3.10 Over the course of the 20th Century the western part of the Study area changed little in structure from that laid down by the Victorians, including the pattern of tree planting which today broadly follows that present in the 1st Edition OS, although the age of the trees along the South Carriage Drive indicate they were planted in the first half of the 20th Century⁸. The area underwent change mostly through the progressive widening and upgrading of the roads that bounded it which altered its qualities through the increasing vehicular traffic at its boundaries.
- 3.11 Piecemeal changes to the residential buildings facing into Kensington Road took place, with a number of buildings inserted to replace older ones, but predominantly both the scale and arrangement of these developments followed the existing pattern and building lines established in the 19th Century.
- 3.12 The third and present barrack complex, designed by architect Basil Spence, was built in 1967-70 with the benefit of Crown immunity from planning approval. The designs were controversial at the time. When the plans were submitted to the Royal Fine Arts Commission & London County Council, they commented that the Peninsular Tower would '*seriously damage local amenities*'. The London County Council objected to a tower in a location so close to Hyde Park, recommending that a single tower should only be located in a 'nodal' position, with some civic or visual significance.
- 3.13 The design, whilst controversial, was however a solution to a problem of accommodating required amenities for the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment within the limited space available, including sufficient ground space for mounting. Basil Spence reasoned that a tower would cut out less light to the park, and interfere less with views from properties on Knightsbridge whilst an

⁸ Royal Parks Historical Survey – Hyde Park (1982) LUC. Page 56

alternative design with larger massing would make development at the western end of the site too dense.

- 3.14 There are widely differing opinions on the complex today. In 2015 The Twentieth Century (C20) Society, with endorsement from Historic England (HE), recommended listing the Barracks complex at grade II in recognition of its historical military function and its expression in architecture. However, after considering submissions from HE, other experts and interested parties, including site owner the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Heritage Minister did not accept the recommendation.



Figure 8. The present Hyde Park Barracks in views from Hyde Park to the north

Policy Background

- 3.15 The following provides an overview and analysis of the key planning policies of relevance to this study and their implications for any future development within the study area. Planning policy area designations are shown on **Figure 9** Metropolitan Open Land, **Figure 10** Registered Parks and Gardens, and **Figure 11** Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and London Squares.

National Policy

- 3.16 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government are planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The overarching principle which runs through the NPPF is the *'presumption in favour of sustainable development'*, whereby economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. Relevant core planning principles outlined in the document include:

- Delivering high quality design and a good standard of amenity;
- Taking account of the different roles and character of different areas;
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; and
- Conserving heritage assets.

London Plan

- 3.17 The London Plan provides the overall strategic plan for London, setting out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20–25 years. It is the London-wide policy context within which boroughs set their detailed local planning policies.

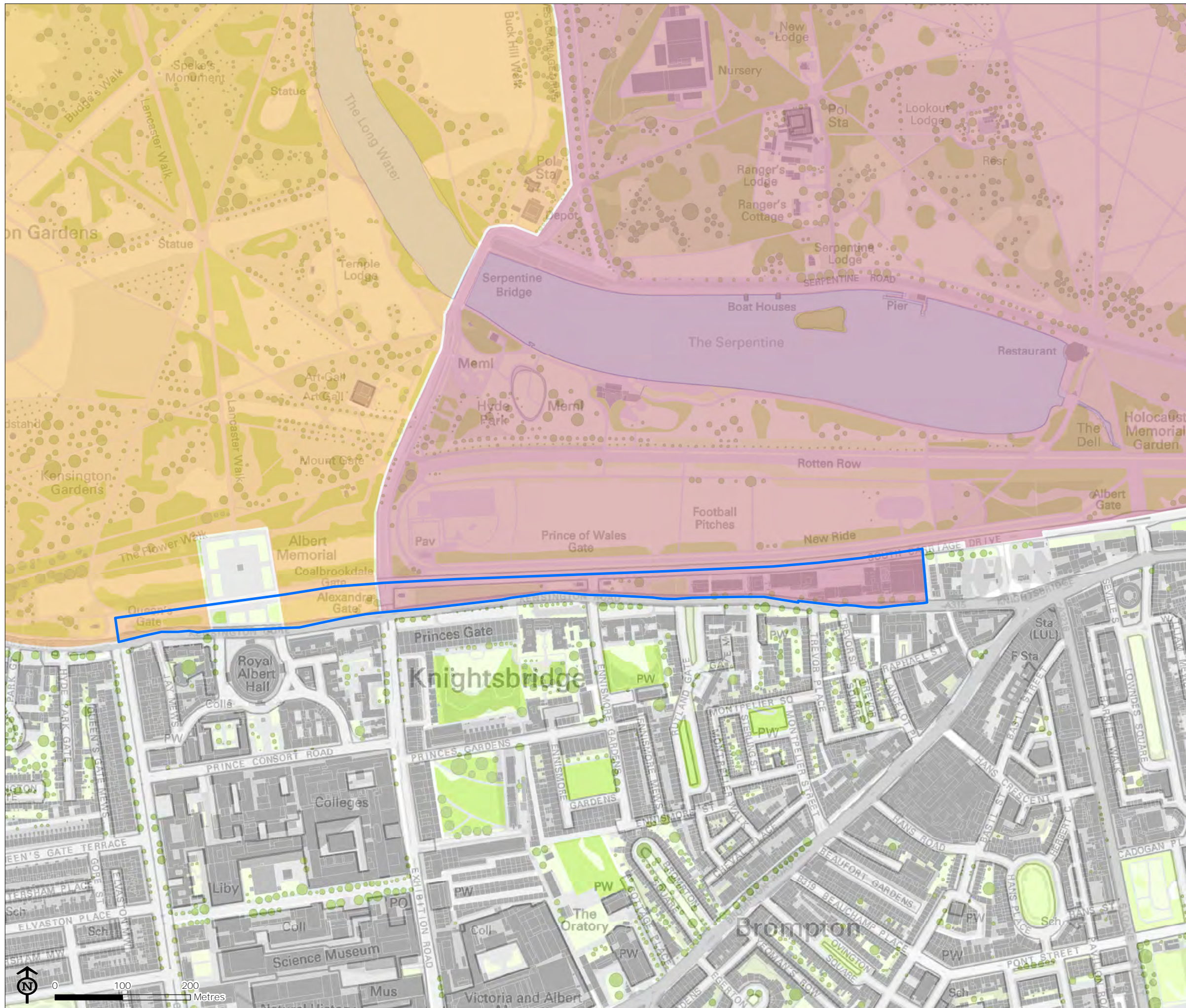
Metropolitan Open Land

- 3.18 In comparison with Green Belt, MOL is a relatively recent planning designation, having been introduced in the 1976 Greater London Development Plan. Its origins can be found in the Public Open Space designation in the preceding Greater London Plan and the Initial Development Plans.
- 3.19 The Greater London Development Plan did not define the purposes of MOL; rather it described it as open land in public and private ownership which provides attractive breaks in the built-up area and is of significance to London as a whole. The Plan recognised that these areas are not **appropriately situated for inclusion in the Green Belt because "they form islands embedded in the urban fabric or penetrating deeply into the urban area as green wedges"**. However, it indicated that they should be safeguarded for predominantly open uses, as much as Green Belt. The current London Plan broadly follows this approach.
- 3.20 London Plan Policy 7.17 states that:
- "The strongest protection should be given to London's Metropolitan Open Land and inappropriate development refused, except in very special circumstances, giving the same level of protection as in the Green Belt. Essential ancillary facilities for appropriate uses will only be acceptable where they maintain the openness of MOL"*.
- 3.21 The Plan indicates that land designated as MOL should meet the following criteria:
- *land that contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built-up area*
 - *land that includes open air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, arts and cultural activities and tourism which serve the whole or significant parts of London*
 - *land that contains features or landscapes of historic, recreational, nature conservation or habitat interest, of value at a metropolitan or national level;*
 - *land that forms part of a Green Chain and meets one of the above criteria.*

Evidence Report for the MOL within the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Area

Figure 9: Metropolitan Open Land

- Study Area
- Metropolitan Open Land
 - Hyde Park
 - Kensington Gardens



Source: OS, GiGL, Historic England, London City of Westminster

Map Scale @ A3: 1:5,500



Figure 10: Registered Parks and Gardens



- Study Area
- Registered Parks and Gardens**
- Kensington Gardens
- Hyde Park
- Other

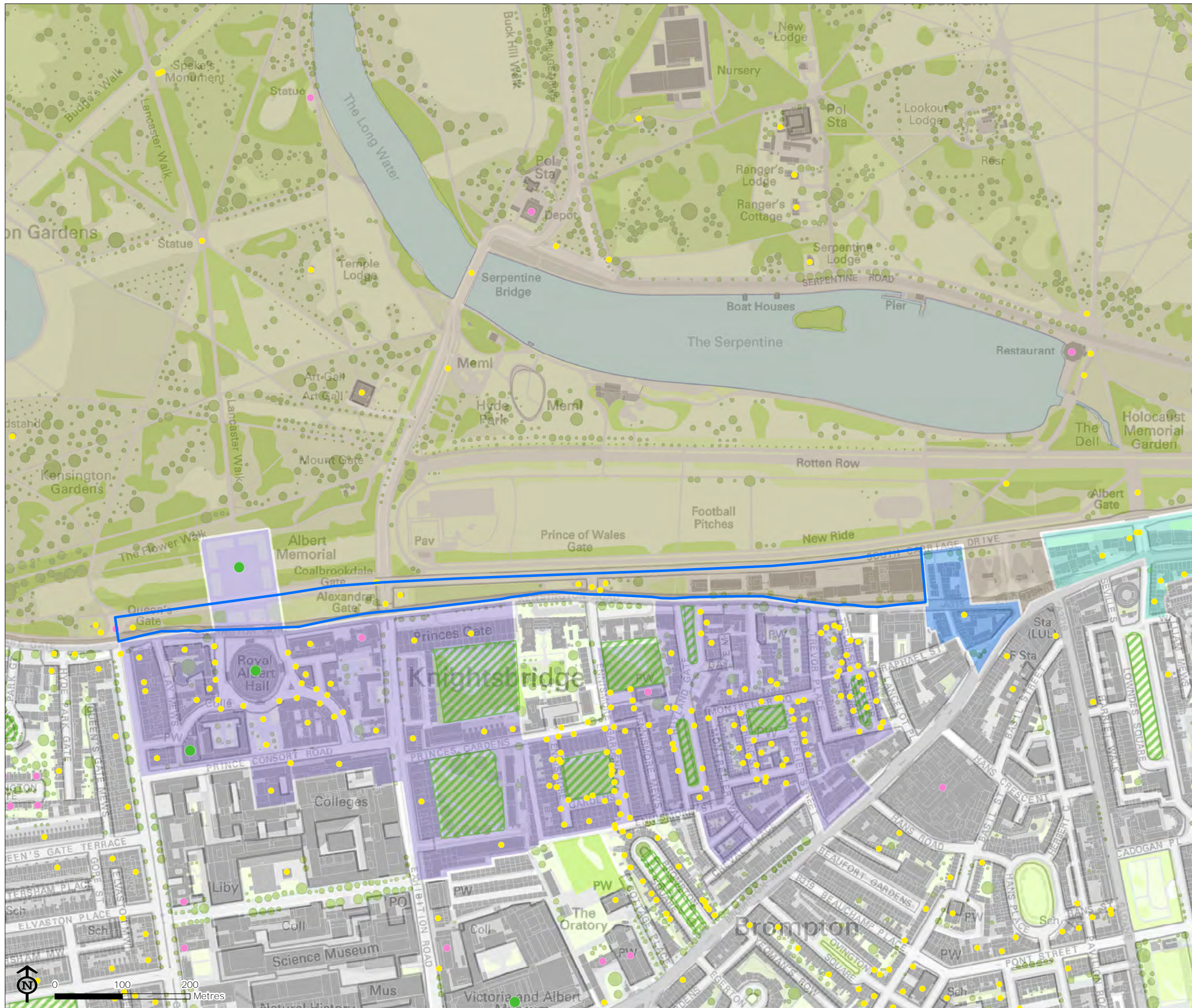
Source: OS, GiGL, Historic England, London City of Westminster

Map Scale @ A3: 1:5,500



Evidence Report for the MOL within the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Area

Figure 11: Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and London Squares



- Study Area
- London Square
- Listed Buildings**
 - Grade I
 - Grade II*
 - Grade II
- Conservation Areas**
 - Royal Parks
 - Knightsbridge
 - Knightsbridge Green
 - Albert Gate

Source: OS, GiGL, Historic England, London City of Westminster

Map Scale @ A3: 1:5,500



- 3.22 The policy also emphasises the important contribution of MOL to London’s multifunctional green infrastructure and indicates that the Mayor supports improvements “*in its overall quality and accessibility*”.
- 3.23 All of the study area is designated as MOL except for a small area at to the south of the Albert Memorial, see **Figure 9**. It can be assumed that the inclusion of the Barracks buildings within the MOL was a deliberate decision by decision-makers at the time, given that it historically formed part of Hyde Park and there would come a time when the Barracks would become surplus to requirements and future uses for the site considered.

Strategic Views

- 3.24 The London View Management Framework (LVMF) SPG identifies important views across London, from parks, public spaces and urban landscape which reveal important buildings or places that “*help define London*”. The views are protected within the London Plan and the SPG provides specific guidance on each view. Policy 7.11 states that “*Development will be assessed for its impact on the designated view if it falls within the foreground, middle ground or background of that view*”.
- 3.25 The study area falls within the protected view from the Serpentine Bridge in Hyde Park. Any future development within the area would be considered against the specific guidelines provided for this viewpoint:

“Development proposals that are overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view as a whole should be refused. Seen from this viewing Place, new development should relate well in terms of height, scale, massing and materials, and relationship to other buildings and landscape elements in the view, including the focus of the Strategically Important Landmark and the historic features within the World Heritage Site.”⁹

Local Character

- 3.26 Policy 7.4 Local Character emphasises the need for a thorough understanding of an area’s character and context when planning developments or future change. It sets out a number of criteria against which development proposals should be judged. It states that
- “Buildings, streets and open spaces should provide a high quality design response that:*
1. *has regard to the pattern and grain of the existing spaces and streets in orientation, scale, proportion and mass;*
 2. *contributes to a positive relationship between the urban structure and natural landscape features, including the underlying landform and topography of an area;*
 3. *is human in scale, ensuring buildings create a positive relationship with street level activity and people feel comfortable with their surroundings;*
 4. *allows existing buildings and structures that make a positive contribution to the character of a place to influence the future character of the area;*
 5. *is informed by the surrounding historic environment.”*

Westminster City Plan

- 3.27 Westminster City Council adopted the Westminster City Plan: Strategic Policies on 13 November 2013. Westminster **also has ‘saved’ policies from the** Unitary Development Plan (UDP) approved on the 24th January 2007.
- 3.28 The Westminster City Council Strategic Policies Map indicate that the study area is considered in planning terms a part of Knightsbridge, but that it is also mostly designated as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and is part of the Royal Parks Conservation Area (These areas are shown on **Figure 9** and **Figure 11** respectively).
- 3.29 The following provides an overview and analysis of the key policies within the Westminster City Plan of relevance to this study and their implications for any future development within the study area.

⁹ LVMF, page 202

Metropolitan Open Land and Royal Parks

- 3.30 While Westminster's City Plan does not have a specific policy on MOL, City Plan Policy S11 is concerned with the Royal Parks which are also designated as MOL. This states that:

The Royal Parks, their settings, views and tranquillity will be protected from inappropriate development and activity. Developments will only be allowed where they are essential and ancillary to maintaining or enhancing the value of the park as open space, and that do not harm the park's:

- Open landscape character;
- Heritage value;
- Nature conservation value;
- Tranquillity; or
- Value as a public open space.

- 3.31 Saved policies in the Unitary Development Plan also seek to protect and enhance areas of MOL, including ENV14, which states that:

(A) The City Council will support the protection and enhancement of Metropolitan Open Land (the Royal Parks), their settings, including views from them. Permission will not be granted for developments that will harm views into or out of Metropolitan Open Land.

(B) Planning permission will not be granted for development on or under Metropolitan Open Land unless the development is essential and ancillary to maintaining or enhancing that land as valuable open space, and where there is no adverse impact on the open character of the Metropolitan Open Land.

Existing Open Space and Green Infrastructure

- 3.32 The Westminster City Plan also has policies relating to areas of open space and green infrastructure more generally, which are also of relevance to the study area. Policy S35: Open Space states that

" the council will seek to address existing public open space deficiencies, including active play space deficiency, and current and future open space needs by:

- *Protecting all open spaces, and their quality, heritage and ecological value, tranquillity and amenity;*
- *Mitigating additional pressure on open spaces by securing new improved public open space in new developments; space for children's active play; and seeking public access to private spaces; and*
- *Securing contributions to improving the quality, ecological value and accessibility of local public open spaces and delivering new open spaces from under-used land.*

Heritage

- 3.33 Plan Policy CS25 indicates that Westminster's heritage assets will *'be conserved, including its listed buildings, conservation areas, Westminster's World Heritage Site, its historic parks including five Royal Parks, squares, gardens and other open spaces, their settings, and its archaeological heritage. Historic and other important buildings should be upgraded sensitively, to improve their environmental performance and make them easily accessible'*.

- 3.34 **Figure 11** shows that the study area adjoins two Royal Parks and also is adjacent to the Knightsbridge Conservation Area (to the south) and the Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area (to the southeast). Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens are included in the Royal Parks Conservation Area.

- 3.35 Policy S25: Heritage states that:

"Recognising Westminster's wider historic environment, its extensive heritage assets will be conserved, including its listed buildings, conservation areas, Westminster's World Heritage Site, its historic parks including five Royal Parks, squares, gardens and other open spaces, their settings, and its archaeological heritage. Historic and other important buildings should be

upgraded sensitively, to improve their environmental performance and make them easily accessible."

In addition, the Unitary Development Plan Policy DES9 Conservation Areas states that:

(E) Changes of use within conservation areas: Permission will only be granted for development, involving a material change of use, which would serve either to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, bearing in mind the detailed viability of the development.

(F) Setting of conservation areas: Development will not be permitted which, although not wholly or partly located within a designated conservation area, might nevertheless have a visibly adverse effect upon the area's recognised special character or appearance, including intrusiveness with respect to any recognised and recorded familiar local views into, out of, within or across the area.

Metropolitan Views

- 3.36 The Westminster Metropolitan Views Draft SPD identifies significant views that *'demonstrate the outstanding qualities of Westminster's environment'*¹⁰. These can be understood to sit within a hierarchy with the more strategic Protected Views identified in the LVMF. They include views from popular public spaces and views of prominent landmarks. The SPG identifies and describes the significance of each view and sets out which features within each view should be protected, and where there is potential for enhancement.
- 3.37 There is a single metropolitan view identified within the study area, at the Royal Albert Memorial.
- 3.38 The saved Unitary Policy DES15 Metropolitan and Local Views states that:
- 3.39 *Permission will not be granted for developments which would have an adverse effect upon important views of:*
- (A) listed buildings*
 - (B) landmark buildings*
 - (C) important groups of buildings*
 - (D) monuments and statues*
 - (E) parks, squares and gardens*
- 3.40 There is particular emphasis on to need to consider parks, gardens and squares in relation to views, with DES 12 Parks, Gardens and Squares seeking to ensure that proposals adjacent to these areas do not adversely affect views into and out of them. It states that:
- "The City Council will seek to protect existing views out from the parks, by resisting development which will project above the existing tree or building lines, so maintaining the existing relationship buildings and sky."*

Historic Parks and Gardens

- 3.41 Both Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens are included on English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest and classified as Grade I. Both are of substantial value as an important area of open space within central London, internationally renowned as being of great historic significance as well as important recreational areas that attract large numbers of visitors each year.
- 3.42 **Figure 10** shows the extent of the Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens Registered Park and Gardens. This shows that the area west of the West Carriage Drive forms part of the designated area of Hyde Park, whilst the eastern area falls outside the designated area.

¹⁰ Westminster Metropolitan Views Draft SPG, page 2

4 Appraisal of Local Character and Views

Area Description

- 4.1 The study area lies at the northern edge of Knightsbridge. It covers approximately 5.2 hectares of land, extending between Queen's Gate and the eastern boundary of Hyde Park Barracks. The northern boundary is defined by South Carriage Drive (along which the East-West Cycle Superhighway will be built) and the southern boundary is defined by Knightsbridge/ Kensington Road. The area falls partly within both the Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park Registered Parks and Gardens.

Appraisal of Local Character

Character of the study area

- 4.2 The study area can essentially be divided into two distinct areas: the developed eastern area of the Hyde Park Barracks; and the western area that comprises open space with grassland with mature trees which forms a continuation of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens.
- 4.3 The southern boundary is defined by a low boundary wall topped with rails and hedging (see Viewpoint 5), with the exception of a short section to the south of the Albert Memorial where low railings allow open views across the lawns directly to the Royal Albert Hall (see Viewpoint 2). From the busy Kensington Road to the south, the wall and railings provide a uniform and clearly legible boundary signifying the edge of the parkland.



Figure 12. View westwards along the South Carriage Drive towards the Queen's Gate

- 4.4 **Built structures within the western section of the study area include three sets of lodges: Queen's Gate (Grade II listed), Alexandra Lodge (Grade II listed) and the east and west Lodges to the Prince of Wales Gate (Grade II listed).** These, together with the adjacent gates and gate piers, form clearly defined and formal gateways into the Park from the northern edge of Knightsbridge which were established in the Victorian period.
- 4.5 The open part of the study area west of the barracks forms an important edge to Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens and forms a transition to the developed urban area of Knightsbridge. Trees, both formal lines of plane trees and groups of mixed species, contribute to a parkland character and ensure the area reads on the ground as part of the adjacent parks. The trees are arguably the most important features within the study area, contributing significantly to the quality of the edge of the Parkland.



Figure 13. View eastwards along the South Carriage Drive from Alexandra Gate

- 4.6 To the east of the West Carriage Drive, South Carriage Drive is open to traffic. Its width and the dominance of this as a busy road makes this section feel more detached from Hyde Park, and more peripheral as a greenspace, than the area to the west. There are no specific recreational facilities located within the area of study area west of the barracks, but the area is used for recreation and it nevertheless contributes positively to the character of Knightsbridge to the south and Kensington Gardens/ Hyde Park to the north.
- 4.7 The Hyde Park Barracks occupies the east of the area and represents an abrupt change from the open greenspace of the western part of the study area and the main body of parkland to the north. The complex comprises a series of buildings (mostly between 20m and 28m high) aligned along the narrow strip of land between South Carriage Drive and Kensington Road, with a single tower 94m high positioned west of the centre. To the east of the Peninsular Tower, the complex is enclosed to the north by an almost continuous long, red-brick wall rising immediately from the pavement. The northern boundary is interrupted by a gateway topped by a stone pediment from the earlier, demolished barracks. To the west of the tower, black vertical railings enclose the barracks and allow partial views into and across it.
- 4.8 **This northern interface with Hyde Park is particularly 'hard', with no street trees present on the southern side of the road.** At street level, the high, impenetrable walls, whilst necessarily

defensive due to the function of the building, appear in sharp contrast to the open character of the parkland it overlooks.

- 4.9 To the south the boundary is also formed of a continuous red-brick wall, although this varies in height and alignment with the road. An intermittent line of plane trees along Kensington Road boundary are the only green features within this part of the study area.

Urban context

- 4.10 The western section is strongly influenced by the Knightsbridge Conservation Area, which abuts its southern boundary. Correspondingly, the Conservation Area Audit and Management Proposals notes:

"Of great importance to the character of all three [Conservation] areas is their setting with Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens to the north. The park provides a backdrop to each area, forming a green northern edge to each area. It is visible through gaps between buildings, through formal park gates or over rooftops. Equally, the buildings along Knightsbridge provide the setting to the Royal Parks Conservation Area. The scale, materials and design of these buildings creates a consistent and attractive setting for views across the park."

- 4.11 The Conservation Area Audit and Management Proposals identifies a distinct transition from the grand and larger scale institutional and cultural complexes at the western end (Albertopolis) to the smaller, narrower streets and a sense of tranquillity and intimacy that characterises the eastern parts of the Conservation Area.



Figure 14. View north from Montpelier Street to the south of Montpelier Square

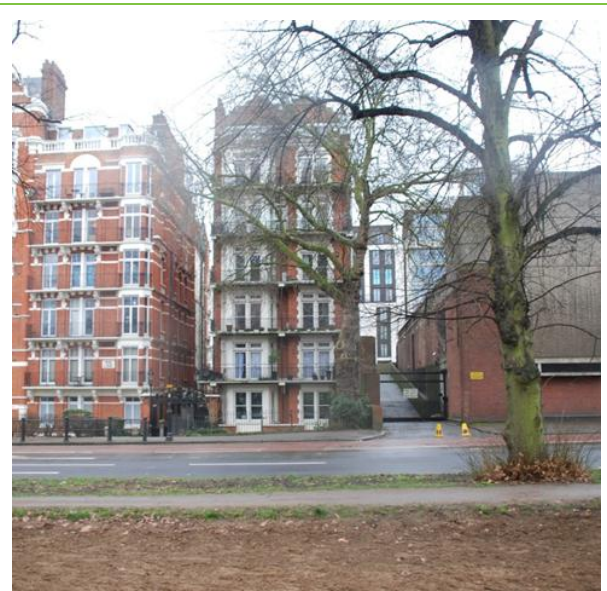


Figure 15. View south from Hyde Park and the South Carriage Drive towards the Barracks which sits alongside mansion blocks to the left.

- 4.12 Large mansion blocks line the southern side of Kensington Road and Knightsbridge. Mansion blocks are also found on the northern side of Knightsbridge for some of its length. As shown in **Figure 15**, Hyde Park Barracks stands in contrast to the neighbouring mansion blocks and this contrast pre-dates the current Barracks, built in the 1960s. Rather than being part of the mansion block setting, the barracks have a clear association with the park, both functionally and visually.
- 4.13 To the south of Knightsbridge there are smaller scale residential streets and squares, largely laid out in the 19th century. These have a sense of intimacy rather than grandeur. Many of these streets include mews, where horses would have been kept, close to Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens.

Important characteristics and values of the study area

- The mature trees which provide a sense of history (dating to the Victorian period), contribute significantly to the landscape quality of the area and provide a continuity of character with the wider parkland to the north;
- The strong historic association with the Royal Parks to the north, including park related features such as railings and listed lodges (Queens Gate, Alexandra Lodge, and the east and west Lodges to the Prince of Wales Gate) and the barracks;
- The historic links between the Royal Parks and the streets to the south which include mews that would have housed stables;
- The consistent scale and materials of the mansion blocks along Knightsbridge and Kensington Road and the Royal Albert Hall that provide a grand backdrop to the Royal Parks;
- The sense of openness and greenspace that the MOL provides as a setting to these buildings, as well as the Albert Memorial;
- The recreational use of the area including walking, cycling and exercising of horses;
- Tree-lined avenues of South Carriage Drive and Kensington Road which, although busy with traffic, provide an important green edge to Knightsbridge, softening the edge to the urban area.

Current issues with the study area

- Dominance of the busy roads of Kensington Road and South Carriage Drive which isolate the **area as an 'island' surrounded by traffic** – in particular the width of South Carriage Drive makes the eastern part of study area (east of West Carriage Drive) feel more distant and cut off from Hyde Park than the western section;
- **The 'hard' edge to Hyde Park in the east of the area created by the Hyde Park Barracks, its high walls and lack of trees;**
- Abrupt change from small scale streets of residential terraced houses to the south to the large, heavy and impermeable forms of the Hyde Park Barracks within the east of the study area;
- Lack of physical and visual connectivity between Knightsbridge and Hyde Park due to the presence of the Barracks.

Opportunities for the study area

- Maintain and strengthen the open greenspace character of the whole of the area, particularly the open grassland area and mature trees, planning for the next generation of trees.
- Maintain and strengthen the historic and functional association of the area with the Royal Parks to the north, for example aim to strengthen the relationship of the area east of Alexandra Gate with Hyde Park to the north by reducing the dominance of the South Carriage Drive as a vehicular route – this would help address the impression of the study area as a **'left-over' strip of land in between two roads;**
- Aim to soften the currently hard edge created by the Hyde Park Barracks, its high walls and lack of trees; and
- Increase permeability and connectivity north-south across the area, particularly across the site of the Hyde Park Barracks but also across Kensington Road generally which also the area from the remainder of Knightsbridge to the south.

Views and Visual Amenity

Appraisal viewpoints

- 4.14 Ten viewpoints were selected, including designated views and views that represent people who pass through and enjoy the area, in order to consider the visual character and visual amenity of the area. These were selected to include:
1. Views identified within the London View Management Framework;
 2. Metropolitan Views as identified within the Westminster City draft SPG;
 3. Views that reveal the nature of skylines within the locality (with reference to the role of trees in screening the built skyline);
 4. **Other views that represent people's enjoyment of the area.**
- 4.15 The selected viewpoints are listed in the table below together with a brief summary of their location and reason for inclusion. The viewpoint locations are shown on **Figure 16**.



Appraisal Viewpoints

No.	Viewpoint	Location/reason for selection
1	The Albert Memorial from West Albert Lawn	Metropolitan View 11b The Albert Memorial, as identified in the Westminster Metropolitan View draft SPD.
2	Royal Albert Hall from South Carriage Drive	Located to the southwest of the Albert Memorial, the viewpoint provides views of the Royal Albert Hall and its relationship with the study area. The memorial is well visited.
3	West Carriage Drive	Provides views of the study area on the northern approach from Hyde Park along the West Carriage Drive. In 180 degree views The Albert Memorial is visible to the east.
4	Bridge over the Serpentine to Westminster	View of the palace of Westminster from Hyde Park – View 23 identified in the London View Management Framework as a Protected Vista.
5	Kensington Road at Junction with Ennismore Gardens	View from the southern side of the Prince of Wales Gate, with the East and West Lodges (Grade II listed) in the foreground. View is representative of views along the southern edge of the study area from Kensington Road.
6	Prince of Wales Gate, South Carriage Drive	View from the northern side of the Prince of Wales Gate, with the East and West Lodges (Grade II listed) in the foreground and the Hyde Park Barracks in the middle distance. View is representative of views along the northern edge of the study area from the South Carriage Drive within the MOL.
7	Trevor Square	View from the northern edge of Trevor Square, providing a representative view of the Hyde Park Barracks from the small residential streets to the south of the study area. The viewpoint also reveals the skyline as seen from Knightsbridge (featuring the Peninsular Tower).

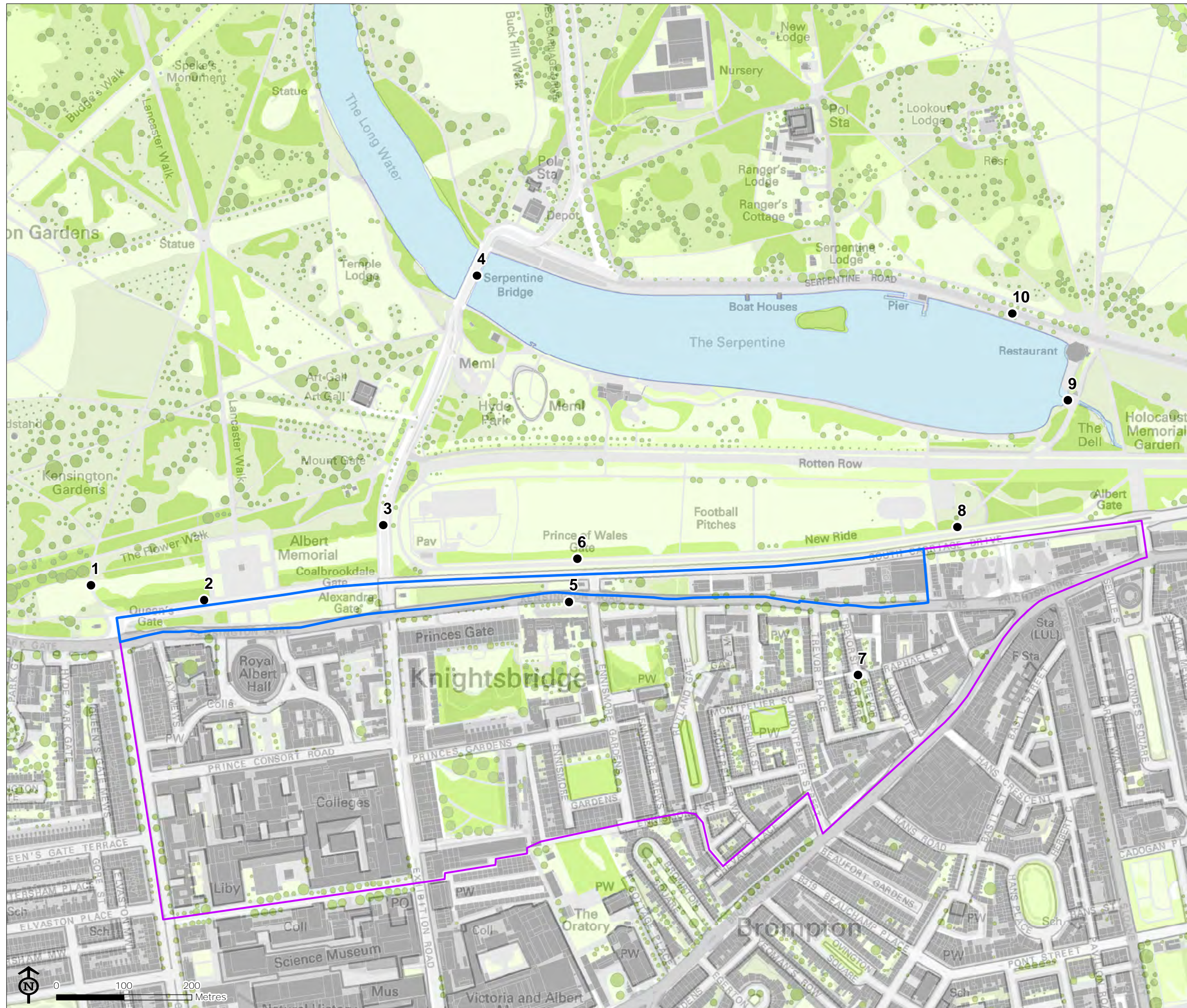
No.	Viewpoint	Location/reason for selection
8	South Carriage Drive, near Park Close	View along the South Carriage Drive towards the eastern end of the study area, occupied by the Hyde Park Barracks buildings. Provides a representative view on the eastern approach to the area from Hyde Park.
9	The Serpentine Lake, east	View from the eastern end of the Serpentine from which the study area forms part of the skyline to the south
10	View Across the Serpentine Lake from the northern bank	Representative of views south across the Serpentine from the Serpentine Road.

Evidence Report for the MOL within the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Area

Figure 16: Appraisal Viewpoint Locations

-  Study Area
-  Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Area
- Viewpoints:

1. The Albert Memorial from West Albert Lawn (Westminster Metropolitan View)
2. Royal Albert Hall from the South Carriage Drive
3. West Carriage Drive
4. Serpentine Bridge (LVMF view of Westminster)
5. Kensington Road at junction with Ennismore Garden
6. Prince of Wales Gate, South Carriage Drive
7. Trevor Square
8. South Carriage Drive, near Park Close
9. The Serpentine Lake, east
10. View Across the Serpentine Lake from the northern bank



Source: OS, GiGL, Historic England, London City of Westminster

Map Scale @ A3: 1:5,500



Viewpoint 1 The Albert Memorial from West Albert Lawn



Important characteristics and values

- The view reveals the Grade I listed Albert Memorial set within a formal avenue of plane trees.
- The tree avenue limits the extent of the views outside the West Albert Lawn, although Kensington Road can be seen to the right of the view below the tree canopy. The avenue focuses views on the monument and provides a formal landscape setting to it.

Current issues

- In winter months the Hyde Park Barracks Peninsular Tower is visible through the trees to the right of the memorial and, although set below the tree line, begins to compete visually with it.

Opportunities and guidelines

- Maintain and strengthen the parkland setting to the Memorial.

Viewpoint 2 Royal Albert Hall from the South Carriage Drive



Important characteristics and values

- The view reveals the late Victorian cultural complex focused around the Royal Albert Hall within the Knightsbridge Conservation Area and the arrangement of the Albert Memorial facing the Royal Albert Hall on an axis.
- The view also reveals the Victorian mansion blocks adjacent to the Royal Albert Hall which have a consistency of scale, materials and design that contributes to the distinctive setting to the southern edge of Kensington Gardens.
- Long views along the South Carriage Drive towards the Alexandra Gate are framed by mature plane trees which screen the remaining urban edge, focusing the view on the Victorian buildings in the foreground.

Current issues

- The Barracks Peninsular Tower breaks the tree line in the distance.

Opportunities and guidance

- Maintain and enhance the open greenspace setting to Knightsbridge as expressed in this view.
- Any new elements proposed in the view should not disrupt or detract from the primary heritage features and the view composition.
- The treeline framing the longer vista along the Southern Carriage Drive should be maintained (this may require planning for their replacement).

Viewpoint 3 West Carriage Drive



Important characteristics and values

- The view reveals the character of the south-western corner of Hyde Park and includes the Grade II listed Alexandra Lodge at Alexandra Gate to the right of the view.
- Long vistas framed by avenues of plane trees extend eastwards along the former exhibition site within Hyde Park (with the Shard and London Eye forming features on the skyline) and westwards across the East Albert Lawn towards the Albert Memorial.
- The view also reveals the edge of the Knightsbridge Conservation Area, visible beyond the trees to the south.

Current issues

- The dominance of the traffic and road to the right of the view, which diminishes the quality of the edge of the Park.
- The Hyde Park Barracks Peninsular Tower departs from the otherwise simple composition of the vista along the south of Hyde Park and the consistent heights and forms and massing of the residential buildings that face onto and form the setting to the Park.

Opportunities and Guidelines

- Maintain the formal trees along the Southern Carriage Drive (this may require planning for their eventual replacement).
- Any new elements proposed in the view should not disrupt or detract from the primary heritage features and the view composition.
- Measures to reduce the dominance of the South Carriage Drive and Peninsular Tower, and soften their impact on the southern edge of the park, should be considered.

Viewpoint 4 Serpentine Bridge



Important characteristics and values

- The towers of the Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey within the Westminster World Heritage site form a distant focal point at the far end of the Serpentine, where the sky, water and landscape converge.
- Trees enclosing the lake on either side screen the surrounding urban context (including Knightsbridge which lies beyond the trees to the right of the view), providing a predominantly parkland landscape composition.

Current issues

- Although not within the Protected Vista which includes views to the towers within the World Heritage Site, the Barracks Peninsular Tower forms a prominent structure that breaks the treeline.

Guidance and Opportunities

- Any future development within the study area should not compromise the parkland landscape setting provided by the treed skyline to the south.

Viewpoint 5 Kensington Road at Junction with Ennismore Gardens



Important characteristics and values

- View reveals the Grade II listed lodges and the gates that form the entrance to Hyde Park from Ennismore Gardens and Kensington Road at the northern edge of Knightsbridge.
- The low wall and hedges clearly form a boundary to the park and the mature plane trees north of the South Carriage Drive and trees beyond these indicate the presence of the extensive parkland beyond.

Current issues

- The treed skyline to the north of the road is broken by the Peninsular Tower and the Hyde Park Barracks appear to step forward beyond the built edge that is formed by the buildings to the south of the road.

Guidance and Opportunities

- The trees to the north of the road and the boundary wall and railings form important elements in this view denoting the boundary to the park and should be maintained.
- Measures to reduce the prominence of discordant visual features such as Peninsular Tower would improve the amenity of this view.

Viewpoint 6 Prince of Wales Gate



Important characteristics and values

- The view reveals the Prince of Wales Gate as a gateway into the Park from the northern edge of Knightsbridge.
- The formal avenue of plane trees and trees to the south of the road which soften and break up views to the urban edge beyond the Park.
- The unpaved sand track in the foreground denotes the carriage drive's long standing function as an area used for horse riding.
- The buildings to the south of Kensington Road provide a continuous and consistent building line, marking the edge of Knightsbridge.

Current issues

- The dominance of the traffic and road to the right of the view, which diminishes the parkland character on this edge.
- The Peninsular Tower departs from the otherwise consistent heights and forms and massing of the residential buildings that face into and form the setting to the Park.

Opportunities

- Measures to reduce the dominance of the road and soften its impact on the southern edge of the park should be considered.
- Measures to reduce the prominence of discordant visual features such as Peninsular Tower would improve the amenity of this view.

Viewpoint 7 Trevor Square



Important characteristics and values

- The view reveals the framed views available along the smaller scale streets of terraced houses within the Knightsbridge Conservation Area.

Current issues

- The lack of a visual link with Hyde Park that lies beyond the barracks building.

Opportunities

- Measures to enable visual links into Hyde Park would improve the amenity of this view.

Viewpoint 8 South Carriage Drive, near Park Close



Important characteristics and values

- Long view along the South Carriage Drive framed by mature plane trees to the north which provide a green and leafy (in summer) setting to Hyde Park to the right and Knightsbridge (to the left).
- The building on the left provides the urban edge to Knightsbridge and the Knightsbridge Green Conservation Area, including a typical Victorian mansion block (Wellington Court) facing into the Park. **Beyond is Basil Spence's Hyde Park Barracks.**

Current issues

- The dominance of the trafficked road to the left of the view, which forms a poorly defined edge to the park and diminishes the parkland character along this edge.
- The Peninsular Tower is an abrupt departure from the otherwise relatively consistent height, form and massing of the residential buildings that face into and form the setting to the Park along the remainder of the road.

Opportunities

- Measures to reduce the dominance of the road and soften its impact on the southern edge of the park should be considered.
- Measures to reduce the prominence of discordant visual features such as Peninsular Tower would improve the amenity of this view.

Viewpoint 9 Eastern Serpentine Lake



Important characteristics and values

- View reveals the expansive views available across one of the central features of Hyde Park (Registered Historic Park and Garden and Conservation Area) - the Serpentine -towards the Serpentine Bridge at the far end of the lake.
- Layers of trees arranged as formal avenues along Rotten Row and South Carriage Drive as well as parkland trees within the Southern Parkland area, provide a parkland landscape setting to the lake which is almost devoid of urban development.

Current issues

- The Peninsular Tower forms a prominent structure above the treeline to the south which interrupts the treed skyline.

Guidance and Opportunities

- Measures to reduce the prominence of discordant visual features such as Peninsular Tower would improve the amenity of this view.
- Any future development within the study area should be set behind the skyline of trees to the south.

Viewpoint 10 View across the Serpentine from North Bank



Important characteristics and values

- Reveals the recreational value of the Serpentine Lake, a central feature and well-used recreational resource within the Park: boathouses line the northern bank of the lake and the wide promenade with seating overlooking the water is visible in the foreground.
- With the exception of the Peninsular Tower, the setting to the lake is **almost entirely a parkland landscape, with little sense of the Park's urban context.**

Current issues

- The Peninsular Tower forms a prominent structure above the treeline to the south which interrupts the treed skyline.

Guidance and Opportunities

- Measures to reduce the prominence of discordant visual features such as Peninsular Tower would improve the amenity of this view.
- Any future development within the study area should be set behind the trees to the south.

5 Summary

- 5.1 The important characteristics of the study area closely relate to its historic relationship with, and as a setting to, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens and the role it plays in the transition between these parkland landscapes and Knightsbridge.
- 5.2 The area has two distinct parts: the eastern area occupied by Hyde Park Barracks; and the western area which comprises open space with grassland and mature trees at the southern boundary of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. Whilst the western area is largely contiguous in nature and character with the parkland to the north, the Hyde Park Barracks (although historically also part of Hyde Park and functionally linked to it) forms a sudden and incongruous edge to the parkland which does not have a readily apparent relationship with it.
- 5.3 The study area forms part of the southern gateway into the parks from Knightsbridge. There are no specific recreational facilities located within it and there does not appear to be any extensive use of the grassed areas for recreation, but it nevertheless contributes positively to the character of Knightsbridge to the south and Kensington Gardens/ Hyde Park to the north.
- 5.4 The Barracks are experienced by the many visitors to Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens and Knightsbridge, as well as by residents. The 94m-high Peninsular Tower is particularly prominent in views across the area.
- 5.5 It is evident that the Barracks are of considerable heritage value in the ceremonial traditions of the monarchy, its functional use as the home of the Household Cavalry and as a notable example of brutalist architecture¹¹. If considered against the London Plan Policy 7.4 (see paragraph 3.26) and current standards and good practice guidelines for design and place-making, however, the present configuration and scale and massing of buildings on the site neither relate obviously to the context of the historic parks to the north nor respond sympathetically to the character of the Knightsbridge and Knightsbridge Green Conservation Areas to the south. **The current buildings also reduce the 'openness' of the MOL.**
- 5.6 The Hyde Park Barracks also create a significant barrier to movement and severs views between Hyde Park and the Knightsbridge Conservation Area. These issues are long standing as the previous buildings on the site similarly restricted connectivity and views between Knightsbridge (which developed extensively over the first half of the 19th Century) and Hyde Park. However, in light of Project Rose, there may be an opportunity to address this and other issues relating to the location, form and configuration of the site.

¹¹ Historic England recommended that the site be listed at Grade II in 2015 however the Department for Culture, Media and Sport determined that the site was not of special architectural or historic interest.

Opportunities and Guidance

5.8 A number of opportunities/ guidelines were identified as part of this study to maintain or strengthen local character and improve visual amenity. In summary, these are:



1.

Maintain, strengthen, and expand where possible, the parkland character and recreational function of the whole area of Metropolitan Open Land, and plan for the next generation of trees.



2.

Maintain and strengthen the historic functions of the study area as an integral part of the Royal Parks; this may be achieved through promoting land uses complementary to the Royal Parks and reducing the dominance of the South Carriage Drive as a vehicular route.



3.

Soften the currently hard edge created by the Hyde Park Barracks so that the site fulfils its role as Metropolitan Open Land and part of Hyde Park.



4.

Increase permeability and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists north-south across the study area, connecting to Hyde Park to the north and the streets of Knightsbridge to the south.



5.

Maintain the treed skyline in views from Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, with particular regard to protected views and views from around the Serpentine and Long Water.



6.

Take measures to reduce the prominence of discordant visual features such as Peninsular Tower which would improve the amenity of many views, especially the otherwise uninterrupted treed skyline.



7.

Maintain the consistency in scale and materials of the urban edge that forms a setting to the study area and the Royal Parks, and ensure that any new development fits with, or enhances, this characteristic.



8.

Maintain and enhance the historic parkland features of the study area that form a setting to the adjacent Conservation Areas and Royal Parks.