

DELEGATED REPORT

e-mail: eamon.cassidy@hounslow.gov.uk

References: P/2018/2595 01076/W/P2

Address: Steam Packet Steps, Strand on the Green, Chiswick, London, W4 3PU

Proposal: Formation of residential boat mooring including driving four nr piles, installing timber grid, two pontoons, bridge and access ramp with gate and mains services.

Drawing numbers: 185P.L1A, 185P.L2A, Design & Access Statement, Flood Risk Assessment (draft). Received: 03/07/2018.

Application received: 03/07/2018

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The site comprises 578m² of shingle foreshore and an area of river bank adjacent to Steam Packet Steps in the Strand on the Green Conservation Area, the Thames Policy Area and an Archaeological Priority Area. The foreshore is classified as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The river forms part of the Mayor of London's Blue Ribbon Network.
- 1.2 The flood defences are set back from the river wall. The land between is planted with trees and used as a public footpath with sitting areas and benches overlooking the river at the western and eastern ends. The Thames Path passes over the flood defences and along Strand on the Green towards Kew Bridge.

2.0 HISTORY

01076/W/P1 Formation of residential boat mooring including driving 2 nr piles, installing timber grid, pontoon, access ramp and gate and mains services.

Withdrawn: 29/05/2018

3.0 DETAILS

- 3.1 Moorings for 2 residential vessels would be provided, 48 metres overall length and projecting 12 metres into the river and including the installation of 3 steel piles, a timber grid, a bridge from the river bank, an access ramp to the pontoons, and mains services.
- 3.2 The piles would comprise circular hollow steel piles driven 4m into the river bed. The piles securing the pontoons would protrude about 1.5m above flood defence level.

- 3.3 The grid would comprise 300 x 300mm greenheart timbers laid on the foreshore, bolted to each other and to the steel piles, and anchored to the foreshore.
- 3.4 The pontoons would be 23 x 2.4m wide and made of concrete or steel. They would have slip-resistant decks, concealed utilities, and pillars for connecting services to the moored vessels.
- 3.5 The bridge and access ramp would comprise structural galvanised steel balustrades with slip-resistant decks. The bridge would span from the river bank to a landing supported on a steel pile. The access ramp would be hinged at the landing and rest on the downstream pontoon with sliding feet. There would be a gate at the entrance to control access.
- 3.6 Connections would be made to mains electricity, telecom, water and sewage services. Pipes and cables would be concealed below the decks of the bridge, ramp and pontoons. Sewage would be pumped from the moored vessels to a gravity drain at the top of the ramp, discharging to the mains sewer passing along Strand on the Green. Waste would be stored on the vessels and put out for collection and recycling at the appropriate time and place.

4.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Sixty neighbouring properties and amenity groups notified on 05/07/2018. Press and site notices posted on 20/07/2018.

In Support (Eleven responses)	
Comment	Response
Enhance character of the area.	See paragraph
Contribute to the housing stock.	See paragraph
No conflict with neighbouring houses.	
<p>Residential Boat Owners' Association</p> <p><i>This submission, presented by the Residential Boat Owners' Association (RBOA), is to express support for the above Planning Application to create two residential berths (moorings).</i></p> <p><i>RBOA understands that Hounslow has a policy which allows the creation of residential moorings, subject to certain criteria. RBOA is of the opinion that this application addresses all those criteria.</i></p> <p><i>RBOA has long supported small developments of residential moorings; it</i></p>	

being the case that such provisions are acceptable, indeed desirable, for a number of reasons:

- *Residential boats bring added colour and vibrancy to areas in which they exist. It is widely acknowledged that people are often drawn to waterside locations to enjoy the atmosphere created by the very presence of live-aboard residents.*
- *Residential boats/boaters bring added physical security to the area and provide increased safety to others, whether those others be on water or land.*
- *Residential moorings are, by their very nature, a low impact and low carbon footprint housing option.*
- *Living afloat, of necessity, requires residents to be particularly frugal in their utility usages; water, fuel, gas, heating fuels and waste disposal all have to be efficiently controlled within a floating home. Demands upon utilities, and pollution impact, are therefore negligible.*
- *Individually, boats used as homes rarely house large families. As a consequence, pressures on local infrastructure, access/egress routes for instance, tend to be non-existent or minimal.*
- *Residential berths provide a small but valuable contribution to housing stock and, where developed by others, as in this case, at no cost to the Local Authority.*
- *Central Government now recognises the value of floating homes to the point where Local Authorities are actively encouraged to consider the needs of existing and potential residential boaters when developing Local Housing Plans.*

The Residential Boat Owners' Association (RBOA) is the primary, volunteer run organisation representing the interests of those who choose to live afloat in a responsible and respectful manner, on the canals, rivers, marinas, boatyards, coastal waters and estuaries of England and Wales. The RBOA is recognised by government and navigation authorities as a primary source of expertise on all matters related to residential boating, including area and planning considerations.

Objection (One-hundred-and-nineteen responses)

Comment	Response
Harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.	See paragraph 6.16 - 6.21
Harm to the setting of listed buildings.	Noted.
Impact on other river uses.	See paragraph 6.48 - 6.50

Loss of historic river views.	See paragraph 6.16 - 6.21
No mechanism to restrict the scale of the craft moored.	This could be secured via an Operational Management Plan.
River navigation hazard.	See paragraph 6.48 - 6.50
Set a precedent for further moorings.	Each application is assessed on its own merits.
Increase noise and light pollution.	This could be secured via an Operational Management Plan.
Impact on local ecology.	See paragraph 6.43 - 6.47
Impinges on local open space.	See paragraph 6.16 - 6.21 and 6.29
Proliferation of house boats.	Noted.
Additional traffic and lack of car parking.	See paragraph 6.30 - 6.35
<p>West London River Group</p> <p><i>The West London River Group's members are riparian amenity societies and other community groups whose areas of interest are in or near the river Thames between Kew and Chelsea.</i></p> <p><i>The Group strongly opposes the granting of a planning permission for this development for the reasons set out below.</i></p> <p><i>1. The applicant claims their proposal fully complies with the Hounslow</i></p>	

Local Plan Policy GB6, Residential Moorings. We say it does not.

2. While this area of the river was extensively used for commercial traffic many years ago, and this has declined, its use for non-commercial boats and recreational activities has not. It has grown substantially. Therefore the obstruction of wharves and encroachment into the river is to be deplored and is against policy. This proposal would obstruct nearly 50m of wharf space and encroach 12m into the river (GB6 page 166).

3. The London Plan July 2011 specifically says that:

New mooring facilities should normally be off line from navigation routes, i.e. in basins and docks. Proposals should enhance the Blue Ribbon Network (BRN) by preventing development and structures into the water space unless it serves a water related purpose. A boat used as a residence does not have a water related purpose. The BRN should not be used as an extension of the developable land in London nor should parts of it be a continuous line of moored craft. Specific text attached.

4. The policies etc set out in the Thames Strategy – Kew to Chelsea planning strategy which the borough endorsed and referred to in Local Plan Policies, are also relevant. Specific text attached.

5. This proposal would encroach into a significant area of the river preventing its use for river traffic, and recreational activities, such as rowing, sailing, kayaking, paddleboarding etc. Water space is already constrained in this area.

6. Residential boats need facilities and shore access for waste disposal etc., and for security. The adjacent land is open space enjoyed by the public. This mooring, we say, would jeopardise that.

7. The borough's planning policy for residential moorings makes no reference as to the size and character of the craft to be moored there. If the applicant wanted to build homes onshore he or she would have to submit appropriate information. Surely the same should be submitted if the home was to be built a few yards away in the river? A permission would be a blank cheque for a developer to build something huge and ugly, and would fail to assess the impact on the character and conservation in the Thames Landscape (GB page 165).

Therefore we say this planning application should be refused.

The Kew Society

The Kew Society ("TKS") (registered Charity no. 1173016) is more than 100 years old and dedicated to enhancing the beauty of Kew and preserving its heritage. The geographic area covered by TKS includes the whole of the Kew Ward bounded by the River Thames and the northern part of the North Richmond Ward within the London Borough of Richmond on Thames ("LBRuT"). TKS has a fee-paying membership of over 700 and is concerned about the proposals for relating to the above application and wish

to object.

First, we would wish to have clarification that the Port of London Authority has either supported the application or not and in addition ask your office as to whether it is a requirement that planning permission is needed for any homes built on the proposed, or any, moorings along the tidal stretch of the Thames. We understand that no planning permission is required for homes on moorings on non-tidal stretches of the Thames. Does the answer apply also to boats?

Irrespective of any secondary consent, we object to the moorings as it would allow "dwellings (inc boats)" to be erected and as evidenced elsewhere on the river these are of varying designs all of which we consider would be detrimental to the historic views of the river from either side and would be against the various protections in place. These include the Conservation Area of Strand on the Green, the Thames Policy Area and Archaeological Priority Area along with being a Site of Importance of Nature Conservation (SINC). We suggest that these protections have been designed to prevent the river reverting to the Victorian uses which have now disappeared and taken away much of the pollution associated with those past boats and barges.

The application states that there would be full services to the moorings and subsequent dwellings which indicates the greater intensity of use and the disruption to the riverside especially with regards to waste which will accumulate, again as evidenced along other parts of the river. This waste before collection will attract scavengers such as foxes and birds and cause overspill to the footpaths and river itself. Pollution will undoubtedly increase.

The water level difference is high – circa 6 metres and we suggest that it is not possible to assume that any structure from moorings to final homes will have no affect on the way in which the sediment deposits and water movement remains as it is now. We are extremely conscious of the neglected river banking on the south side of the Thames which is the responsibility of the PLA and the relatively new flood plain areas as defined by the Environment Agency.

We consider the application to be a dangerous precedent for further encroachment of this area of the river and should remain confined to the present moorings already to the West of Kew Bridge and those close to Kew Bridge to the South.

Grove Park Group Residents' Association

On behalf of the Grove Park Group Residents' Association, I would like to object to this Planning Application.

Our association (est. 1970, with 250 current members) represents residents in the Grove Park area, directly to the east of Strand On The Green, and we share many of the same considerations of, and concerns for, the very beautiful and inspiring stretch of that part of the Thames which runs

from Kew Bridge, past Chiswick Bridge, and on to Hammersmith.

One of the many amenities of our area is the riverside, which is a source of great enjoyment for residents as well as attracting non-residents to the area, which leads to some of them moving here and becoming members of the community, and of course ratepayers. It is also, as an adjunct to Duke's Meadows, the focus of Hounslow Council's main initiative for Chiswick, as part of their 15-year 'Local Plan'.

The stretch of the Thames between Chiswick and Kew Bridges in particular is an inspiration for painters, photographers and walkers, and would be immeasurably blighted by the introduction of residents in houseboats, with the resultant irrevocable change to the views across the water, issues with refuse disposal and parking, as well as possible noise concerns.

Our view, and that of our colleagues in the Strand On The Green Residents Association, is that this stretch of the river, as well as the (currently) glorious view of it from Kew Bridge, is a unique and special part of West London that should be preserved as it is, notwithstanding the lively and very positive usage of the river by sailors, rowers and pleasure boats.

Many thanks for the consideration for our objection to the proposal, to which we could not be more opposed.

The River Thames Society

The River Thames Society (RTS) is a charity which aims to:

- *Protect the natural beauty of the river, adjacent lands and buildings of historic interest*
- *Promote nature conservation*
- *Support and contribute to the efforts of other organisations with a similar interest in the river*
- *Preserve and extend amenities which allow and encourage the use of the river for all purposes*

Comments made on behalf of the RTS are thus related to those overall aims which go from protecting and preserving what is currently best about the river, to enabling the public to have maximum benefit from what the river has to offer. We ask that this application is rejected.

This is a rerun of the previous application 2018/1715 to which we also objected. This time the proposed residential mooring has the boats in line rather than abreast, so not to project as far into the river and thereby hoping to get past objections from the PLA on navigational grounds. It is still proposed to be just downstream of Steam Packet Steps, adjacent to a small public park. In spite of what the applicants say, the boats to be moored there would be prominent in the vista from the Kew bank and in that between the (listed) Kew Bridge and the (listed) Strand on the Green row of houses. The entrance gate and bridge would be visible whatever the state of the tide from all sides. As the applicant acknowledges, this would involve a change

of use to residential in a Conservation Area which is in Metropolitan Open Land, and which is also an Archeological Priority Area and Site for Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). In such circumstances, there would have to be very exceptional reasons for any such application to be given approval, and there appear to be none. On the contrary, there are several reasons for rejection in addition to these and other major conflicts with local and London standing policies.

I note:

- This application is just for the mooring, but is incomplete without consideration of the houseboats to be moored here. Although chattels, houseboats can be made subject to planning controls when, as here, they are newly established, by using conditions attached to the approval. Note most new houseboats on the Thames are non-mobile square boxes with large picture windows – nothing like the working vessels that moored here briefly when unloading a century ago.*
- The Council has a history of difficulties with residential boats moored adjacent to public parks. Yet again, the applicant does not give the riparian owner, and indeed the land may be unregistered, albeit the Council has been maintaining this frontage for the public good. The access bridge with entrance gate is shown to link to the land above MHWS, ie above the demarcation with the PLA's remit, and it would be normal for the riparian owner to have to give consent. Consent would also be expected for the running of services across the adjacent bank including the essential foul water drainage. Planning approval of a mooring at this location without clarity over land registration could lead to a claim of adverse possession of the land access, and should be resisted. If Hounslow Council does not already own this land, they should register it and then maintain public access which is unrestricted for all users. It is misleading to give the PLA as if they are the only owners, since their control is not for the totality of the site in this application*
- The adjacent land is currently available for the public's benefit: a residential mooring at this site would interfere with the public's enjoyment of the river, most especially when the tide is in. There would be denial of this bank to the fishermen who currently enjoy its use. There is no direct road access nor is there discussion of parking arrangements, even for bikes. There seems to be an expectation that the standard system would be used for disposal of refuse. So the public park risks being used more than just for temporary access, further interfering with the rights of the general public.*
- The pilings and grid would lead to permanent interference with the foreshore and the mooring also has the potential to obscure Steam Packet Steps, necessary for safe access and egress to/from the foreshore. The mooring would provide another place where floating debris can collect. Vague promises of shielding of lights may be inadequate to safeguard local wildlife including the bats. Even if the PLA is said not to have any longer any navigational objections, they*

could well have other grounds to refuse a River Works Licence.

This application must be rejected.

Strand on the Green Residents' Association [Summary]

On behalf of our membership, we would want to register the following specific matters and concerns:

1. Visual impact on a Conservation Area: The installation of a permanent new mooring for 2 residential vessels together with associated infrastructure will have both a significant and negative visual impact on the upriver view from Strand on the Green footpath and houses thereon taking into account the bend of the river and a physical impact on pedestrians walking the Strand on the Green footpath which forms part of the Thames National Trail. At high tide the present unrestricted view of those listed properties on the north side of Strand on the Green will be impaired by the height of the proposed vessels. No enforceable measures can be imposed with respect to the size and visual appearance of residential vessels, or ensuring that these are maintained to a high standard.

2. Houseboat creep: By giving permission to install residential moorings in this location a precedent will be set for further applications which would have a very serious effect on the nature of the foreshore where river conservancy is of prime importance. SoGA would also strongly object to the ethical principle of committing the use of public amenity space for development and private financial gain by a developer.

3. Navigation hazard: The mooring facility would be a navigational hazard to vessels approaching or leaving Kew Bridge Pier including the occasions when they need to wait against the river wall for favourable tide conditions.

4. Conflict with leisure amenities: The installation of a new permanent mooring will be damaging to the leisure activities of the SotG sailing club which regularly races along the river to Kew Bridge and where the tidal currents can dictate a course of navigation close to the river wall also to the sports activities based at Kew Bridge which include kayaking and paddle boarding and where novices under training could potentially be injured by the structure of the decking its vessels and mooring ropes. P/2018/2595 Steam Packet Steps, Strand on the Green, Chiswick W4.

There would be denial of access for other leisure activities at Ball's Wharf including the fishermen who regularly fish and compete along that reach of the SotG foreshore.

5. The Foreshore: The development at the proposed location will effect and disrupt the established ecology in this location.

6. Land based services: The presence of residential vessels will require the installation of major land based fixed infrastructure including sewage disposal – gas -electrical and fresh water supply - household rubbish disposal all of which will require facilities to be installed on the public land

adjacent to the proposed mooring and tapping into already old and overused sewer system along Strand on the Green. The land adjacent to the proposed mooring is a public amenity space and the loss of such land for private use would be inappropriate.

7. Noise & light pollution: The presence of residential vessels will require the use of generators combined with residential heating which will result in noise light and air pollution. There is additional concern about noise from parties and music.

8. Parking: Parking is now restricted along Strand on the Green Thames Road and adjacent side streets. The presence of a permanent residential mooring will inevitably lead to further increased traffic and congestion from the vessels' residents their visitors and deliveries. Residential parking and visitor permits should not be made available to houseboat residents or staff in accordance with current LBH policy applied to new land based developments.

9. Detritus: Floating river rubbish inevitably gets caught by any obstruction in the river and the presence of a fixed mooring will lead to a buildup of unsightly and potentially toxic waste between the vessel and the river wall.

SoGA has registered a number of objections from individual residents and also notes that objections have been lodged by the Grove Park Group, the Kew Society and the River Thames Society.

This application in its current form is invalid and should be rejected on the basis that it is seeking 'change of use', which is inappropriate given the context and with insufficient supporting documentation provided. Notwithstanding this, the proposed development would be a departure from numerous planning designations at this location and the applicant has provided minimal information to support the case for approval.

Accordingly, SoGA would request that the Local Planning Authority recommends REFUSAL of this application.

4.2 External Statutory Consultation Responses

4.3 Port of London Authority

4.4 Thank you for consulting the Port of London Authority on this revised planning application, following the withdrawal of the previous scheme by the applicant. The principal change from the previous application is a reduction in the projection of the scheme into the river, although there are some other changes and inconsistencies in the documentation.

4.5 The PLA has no in-principle objection, in terms of its statutory duties, to the revised scheme as now submitted, although would comment that its consent under the Port of London Act 1968 (as amended) is also required. Any submission for its consent under the 1968 Act would need to be accompanied by a Navigational Risk Assessment prepared in consultation with recreational river users within the arches at Kew Bridge (Edge Canoe

Club, Chelsea Kayak Club and Action 360) and Strand on the Green Sailing Club.

4.6 *The PLA would also note that whilst it is the owner of the foreshore and river bed in the vicinity of the application boundary, it is not the owner of the riparian land over which access is obtained to the scheme and the Authority would expect to see evidence that rights to obtain this access have been obtained within any application for its consent.*

4.7 **Environment Agency**

4.8 *Thank you for consulting us on the above planning application which we received on 09 July 2018. We object to the application as submitted for the following reasons:*

4.9 *The FRA submitted with this application does not comply with the requirements set out in paragraph 159 of the National Planning Policy Framework (24 July 2018) which states that for areas at risk of flooding a site-specific flood risk assessment must be undertaken which demonstrates that the development will be safe for its lifetime. It does not comply with paragraph 149 of the National Planning Policy Framework which requires local planning authorities to adopt proactive strategies to adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change.*

4.10 *The submitted FRA does not, therefore, provide a suitable basis for assessment to be made of the flood risks arising from the proposed development. In particular, the submitted FRA fails to demonstrate that the development will be protected in the extreme water level and will remain secured at all times so it does not become a flood risk hazard in a flood event.*

4.11 **London Borough of Richmond upon Thames**

4.12 *The London Borough of Hounslow is advised that this Authority raises objections to the proposal.*

4.13 *The proposed pontoons and piles would introduce an entirely new and substantial built element to this part of the river, which had remained previously undeveloped and unimpeded by large structures. The attributes of the modern mooring structures would result in a development which is obvious and intrusive in the riverside scene than that which precedes it.*

4.14 *Rather than the water of the River Thames dominating the site, the pontoons would dwell in that mantle. Additionally, when occupied, vessels attached to the piles and pontoons would further obscure views into, across and out of the riverside setting. In particular the views from the stretch of relatively open northern riverbank. The proposed pontoon and piles would represent an unwelcome encroachment of permanent built development into open space, and fails to preserve the open character of the riverside setting, which gives this part of the conservation area much of its charm.*

4.15 *It is acknowledged that this site may have historically been a focus of boating activity, however this would have been transient in nature (comings*

and goings of 'working' boats). By contrast to the historic arrangement, the physical presence of the proposed pontoons and the typically longer periods of mooring residential vessels, would suggest stability, permanence and uniformity. This formal layout and use of high quality modern materials for the construction of the pontoon, would bear no resemblances to any historic activity.

- 4.16 *Were the London Borough of Hounslow minded to approve, this Council asks that, given the importance of the riverside location, a condition is imposed to maintain control over size of the vessels moored (in particular the number of storeys permitted). Furthermore, no external lights are to be permitted as this would impact the movement of bats along the river's edge.*
- 4.17 The application was placed on the Pending Decisions List dated 10th – 17th August 2018 (Week 33) and there was no request for the application to be considered by committee.

5.0 POLICY

Determining applications for full or outline planning permission

- 5.1 The determination must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Local finance considerations must also be assessed.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published on 27 March 2012 and the revised version was published on 24 July 2018, and from April 2014 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) in the form of an online guidance resource to support the NPPF came into effect. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) considers that, where pertinent, the NPPF and NPPG are material considerations and as such, will be taken into account in decision-making as appropriate.

The Development Plan

- 5.2 The Development Plan for the Borough comprises the Council's Local Plan (adopted by the Council on 15 September 2015), the West London Waste Plan and the London Plan Consolidated with Alterations since 2011.
- 5.3 The Local Plan documents can be viewed on the Planning Policy pages of the Hounslow website.

Determining applications in a conservation area

- 5.4 In considering whether to grant planning permission with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Determining applications in respect of listed buildings

- 5.5 In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

6.0 PLANNING ISSUES

The acceptability in principle

- 6.1 London Plan policy 7.17 (Metropolitan Open Land) 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. Chapter 13 (Protecting Green Belt Land) of the NPPF is therefore relevant.
- 6.2 The NPPF states that the fundamental aim of the Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
- 6.3 The Green Belt serves five purposes:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - To assist urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 6.4 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.
- 6.5 As with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 6.6 The NPPF states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 6.7 The construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is considered inappropriate. Exceptions to this are:

- Buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- Provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- Limited infilling in villages;
- Limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

6.8 Furthermore, certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. These include:

- Mineral extraction;
- Engineering operations;
- Local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
- Material changes in use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
- Development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

6.9 Local Plan policy GB1 (Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land) states that the Council will protect and enhance Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land to maintain its openness, quality and permanence. This will be achieved through the positive management of both designations and improving public access. The Council will achieve this by:

- Protecting Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land by ensuring that any development is not inappropriate and meets the purposes of the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open land; and
- Working with partners to improve public access to the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land, including the promotion of sports, recreation, leisure and cultural uses that fall within the acceptable uses outlined in the NPPF.

6.10 The Council expects development proposals to:

- Be compatible with and not inappropriate development in the Green Belt (as set out in the NPPF);
- Carefully consider the cumulative impact of extensions and alterations to existing development in the Green Belt;
- Conserve and enhance the nature conservation, landscape and recreation and amenity value of Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land through positive management;
- Improve public access to the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land; and
- Maintain the openness, setting and visual amenity where it is located near the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land, with particular attention given to the location, setting, design, materials, height and landscaping.

6.11 The proposal involves the mooring of 2 residential vessels, 48 metres overall length and projecting 12 metres into the river, and including the installation of 3 steel piles, a timber grid, a bridge from the river bank, an access ramp to the pontoons, and mains services. This infrastructure is by definition inappropriate development in MOL since it is not included in the list of exemptions in paragraph 145 of the NPPF. As such, 'very special circumstances' need to be demonstrated.

6.12 The existing riverbed is free from built development and unimpeded by large structures. The adjacent open green is likewise undeveloped and contributes to the openness of the site and surrounding area. The proposal would introduce entirely new and substantial built development at this part of the river. Given the open nature of the site and surrounding area, this infrastructure would be very prominent when viewed from both the north and south bank of the river as well as Kew Bridge. The proposal would result in a bulky and incongruous development in this setting and intrusive in the

riverside scene. The proposal would therefore affect the openness site and surrounding area.

- 6.13 It is necessary to demonstrate that harm to MOL by reason of inappropriate development and the impact on openness is outweighed by other considerations amounting to very special circumstances.
- 6.14 The applicant has not submitted any information to demonstrate very special circumstances.
- 6.15 The harm to the MOL by reason of inappropriate development and the impact on openness is not therefore outweighed by any material considerations amounting to very special circumstances. The proposal is therefore unacceptable in principle.

The impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area

- 6.16 It is acknowledged that historically there were boats along Strand-on-the-Green riverside, however these accompanied the industrial buildings along the river frontage and would have been transient in nature. The permanence and uniformity of the proposal and use of modern materials would bear no resemblance to any historic activity.
- 6.17 The existing riverbed is free from built development and unimpeded by large structures. The adjacent open green is likewise undeveloped and contributes to the openness of the site and surrounding area. This provides much needed relief from the pressure of built development immediate surrounding the site to the north, east and west and reinforces the area's character as a small riverside ribbon development. The open character of this part of the Conservation Area is an important aspect and makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a whole.
- 6.18 The Draft Strand-on-the-Green Conservation Area Appraisal states that the view of the Conservation Area from the south side of the river is a particularly vital view which is key to the special interest of the Conservation Area and the wider Thames landscape, with a carefully effectively designed composition of river, historic waterfront and uninterrupted sky. The open green is considered to provide a positive visual impact.
- 6.19 It is considered that the pontoons, piles and moorings would be very intrusive in this location and would alter the open nature of the site. The presence of moorings at this part of the river would begin to clutter the riverbank and would appear bulky and incongruous and an unwelcome addition to the area.
- 6.20 The presence of moorings would disrupt the transition between the river and the open green and would effectively limit access to this part of the bank because their presence would limit the benefit of visiting this part of the bank.
- 6.21 It is therefore considered that the proposal would fail to preserve the

character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The impact of the proposal on amenity of the area

- 6.22 The NPPF requires sustainable development, and as part of this development should aim to minimise adverse effects on the local environment, which includes neighbouring properties.
- 6.23 Local Plan policy CC2 says development should respond sensitively to site constraints and avoid harming the environment of neighbours having regards to outlook, privacy and access to daylight and sunlight.
- 6.24 Local Plan policy GB6 says the position and concentration of residential moorings require due consideration, so that conflicts with other water-related uses are avoided, and that the moorings and associated development and servicing do not impede other waterside uses, paths or access to the waterway.

Neighbouring properties

- 6.25 The riverside site has few neighbouring properties as the moorings would adjoin the open space to the north. The nearest residential properties are 81-84 Strand-on-the-Green to the north and 1-7 Thames Road to the east.
- 6.26 The proposed access point to the moorings is at least 30m from the nearest residential property.
- 6.27 Given the separation of the boats from the dwellings and the relative height differences, the presence of the proposed boats is not considered to result in any overshadowing, loss of privacy or loss of outlook to the nearby residential units.
- 6.28 The use of generators would be prohibited by an Operational Management Plan in order to reduce the level of noise and disturbance to neighbouring residents. This could be secured via condition.

Open green

- 6.29 The moorings would be separated from the river wall and have a single access point. This separation distance would maintain a sense of public ownership of the river bank and neighbouring open space.

Transport and highways

- 6.30 The site has a PTAL of 3 and is therefore considered to have moderate accessibility to public transport. It is within 450m of Kew Bridge Station and on the periphery of a CPZ.
- 6.31 No off-street parking would be provided for the two houseboats however, given the accessible location of the site, a car free development would be appropriate. Parking permits for the CPZ would be restricted by condition.

- 6.32 Details of cycle parking for the proposed houseboats are required. Given that the occupancy of the houseboats is unknown at this stage and could vary, we would expect at least 2 spaces for each houseboat to be provided. Details of secure and sheltered cycle storage would be secured by condition.
- 6.33 A refuse storage and collection strategy is required to ensure that bins are not left on the public highway, which would harm the street scene and obstruct pedestrians. This would be secured by condition.
- 6.34 The proposal would involve the relocation of a bench. The new location would need to be agreed with the Council prior to commencement, with the cost borne by the applicant.
- 6.35 The gate should open inwards, not over the adjacent footway.

Environmental effects

Land contamination

- 6.36 The Council's Land Quality team have reviewed the proposals and have recommended no further action.

Flooding

- 6.37 Local Plan policies GB6 and EQ3 (Flood risk and surface water management) require development to demonstrate through a Flood Risk Assessment that flood risk is reduced by ensuring that developments incorporate any necessary flood resistance and resilience measures, and also that occupants of moorings would be safe in the event of flooding.
- 6.38 The site is located within Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain) with it at risk of flooding from the river (fluvial and tidal flooding) and so it is not suitable for many built structures or dwellings. However, moored residential boats are classified as 'water compatible' development.
- 6.39 The Environment Agency have objected to the proposal because the submitted Flood Risk Assessment does not provide a suitable basis for assessment to be made of the flood risks arising from the proposed development. In particular, the submitted Flood Risk Assessment fails to demonstrate that the development will be protected in the extreme water level and will remain secured at all times so it does not become a flood risk hazard in a flood event.

Archaeology

- 6.40 Policy 7.8 (Heritage assets and archaeology) of the London Plan seeks to protect, conserve and utilise heritage assets including archaeology. Policy CC4 (Heritage) of the Local Plan has similar objectives.
- 6.41 The site is covered by an Archaeological Priority Areas as designated in the Local Plan. The Thames has been a focus for human activity from the earliest times and archaeological remains may be found.

- 6.42 Given this designation there is potential for archaeological interest at the site. The applicant has not carried out assessment of the potential archaeology, contrary to the NPPF and development plan policies.

Other environmental effects

- 6.43 The mud and shingle riverbed is designated as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). The River Thames including its mudflats, shingle beaches, inter-tidal vegetation, islands and the river banks are recognised as being a Site of Metropolitan Importance for Wildlife.
- 6.44 Local Plan policy GB4 (The green infrastructure network) says the Council will protect and enhance the green infrastructure networks throughout the borough. The network will be improved to maximise the diverse benefits and multiple functions, and improved public access to, and links between open spaces will be encouraged.
- 6.45 Policy GB7 (Biodiversity) of the Local Plan says the Council will protect and enhance the natural environment and seek to increase the quantity and quality of the borough's biodiversity. London Plan policy 7.21 (Trees and Woodland) seeks retention of existing trees of value and additional planting where appropriate. Other policies of the Local Plan and London Plan encourage development proposals to protect and enhance of the natural environment.
- 6.46 The applicant has failed to undertake a detailed habitat and arboricultural survey covering the river and adjacent open green. The site is not currently used for the mooring of boats.
- 6.47 The proposed scheme is an opportunity to improve the natural environment through creation of new habitats from landscaping, tree planting and the retention of existing trees, use of artificial nesting structures for bats or birds and improvement of the mudflat habitat.

River activity and navigational impacts

- 6.48 London Plan policy 7.27 encourages new infrastructure to support water dependent uses but their siting needs careful consideration so that the navigation and needs of its users are not compromised.
- 6.49 Policy GB5 (Blue Ribbon Network) of the Local Plan says proposals within waterbodies will be assessed for the impacts on navigation, in line with the London Plan and guidance from the licensing stakeholder, which in this case is the Port of London Authority (PLA).
- 6.50 The PLA has considered the proposed development in respect of navigational hazards, impacts on the development itself, and impacts on other river users. The PLA does not raise any objection to the proposal however does comment that its consent under the Port of London Act 1968 (as amended) would be required. Any submission for its consent under the 1968 Act would need to be accompanied by a Navigational Risk Assessment prepared in consultation with recreational river users within the

arches at Kew Bridge (Edge Canoe Club, Chelsea Kayak Club and Action 360) and Strand on the Green Sailing Club.

The quality of residential moorings proposed

- 6.51 Local Plan policy GB6 requires new residential mooring proposals to provide adequate servicing where appropriate, including provisions for water, electricity, waste and sewage, as well as secure access to the river bank.
- 6.52 The moorings would be accessible via a secure access point leading to a concrete or steel pontoon. Each mooring would be connected to mains electricity, telecom, water and sewage services. Pipes and cables would be concealed below the decks of the bridge, ramp and pontoons. Full details of the servicing arrangements could be secured via condition. Waste would be stored on the vessels and put out for collection and recycling at the appropriate time and place. A refuse strategy could be secured via condition.
- 6.53 Access to the moorings would be controlled by a secure gate, whilst trespassing would be prevented as the pontoon walkways are set off the river wall by an average gap of approximately 6m.
- 6.54 A condition would require the approval of an Operation Management Plan that would cover the use of the moorings, including access and services, emergency egress, as well as the size of boats and their on-board facilities, ensuring that all moorings have good quality facilities and security so that they have good quality accommodation.

7.0 EQUALITIES DUTIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Council has to have due regard to its Equalities Duties and in particular with respect to its duties arising pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, section 149. It is considered that there will be no specific implications with regard to the Council's duty in respect of its equalities duties and that if approving or refusing this proposal the Council will be acting in compliance with its duties.

8.0 LOCAL FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS AND THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

- 8.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that a local planning authority must have regard to a local finance consideration as far as it is material. A local finance consideration means:
 - 8.2 a) a grant or other financial assistance that has been, or will or could be, provided to a relevant authority by a Minister of the Crown; or
 - 8.3 b) sums that a relevant authority has received, or will or could receive, in payment of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- 8.4 The weight to be attached to a local finance consideration remains a matter for the decision maker. The Mayor of London's CIL and Hounslow CIL are therefore material considerations.

- 8.5 Most new development which creates net additional floor space of 100 square metres or more, or creates a new dwelling, is potentially liable to pay the CIL to Hounslow and the Mayor of London.
- 8.6 This proposal would be liable to pay the CIL which is index linked.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE

Reasons:

1. It is considered that the proposal is, by definition, inappropriate development in Metropolitan Open Land. It is considered that the resultant harm to the Metropolitan Open Land caused by this inappropriate development would not be clearly outweighed by other material considerations to amount to 'very special circumstances' and the proposed development would therefore be inappropriate and unacceptable development in Metropolitan Open Land, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, London Plan policy 7.17 (Metropolitan Open Land), Local Plan policy GB1 (Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land) and the NPPF.
2. It is considered that the proposal, due to the inappropriate position and design, would result in an incongruous and unwelcome addition to the area, which would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Strand-on-the-Green Conservation Area, contrary to adopted Local Plan policy CC4 (Heritage) and GB6 (Moorings).
3. The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposal would not increase the number of persons or property at risk of flooding in the area. As such the proposal would be contrary to adopted Local Plan policy EQ3 (Flood Risk and Surface Water Management)

Informatives:

1. To assist applicants, the London Borough of Hounslow has produced planning policies and written guidance, which are available on the Council's website. The Council also offers a pre-application advice service. In this case, the scheme does not comply with guidance and no pre application discussions were entered into. The Council is ready to enter into discussions with the applicants to assist in the preparation of a new planning application if necessary. Clear reasons for refusal were given to assist in any prospective future development of the site.
2. We collect the Mayor of London's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) at the rate of £35 per sq.m of new floor space. Hounslow's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) came into force on the 24th July 2015. For details of the rates please refer to our web page:
http://www.hounslow.gov.uk/community_infrastructure_levy_preliminary_draft_charging_schedule_march_2013.pdf
3. This development is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy. A Liability Notice will follow shortly. For further information please view our CIL web page:

http://www.hounslow.gov.uk/index/environment_and_planning/planning.htm
or the planning portal web page:
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/wps/portal>

CONSULTATIONS CHECKED		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
CIL LIABLE	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO		<input type="checkbox"/>	
DRAFT LIABILITY NOTICE		<input type="checkbox"/>	LIABILITY NOTICE		<input type="checkbox"/>	
PRE-COMMENCEMENT CONDITIONS AGREED BY AGENT?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ADVISE ENFORCEMENT OF DECISION	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
PENDING LIST – WEEK NUMBER		33				
LANDFILL	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO		<input type="checkbox"/>	
AUTHORITY TO ISSUE (Initials)		MR				