

THE OLD DEER PARK, RICHMOND

Re-connecting the Town to its local park - Realising an under-recognised parkland asset

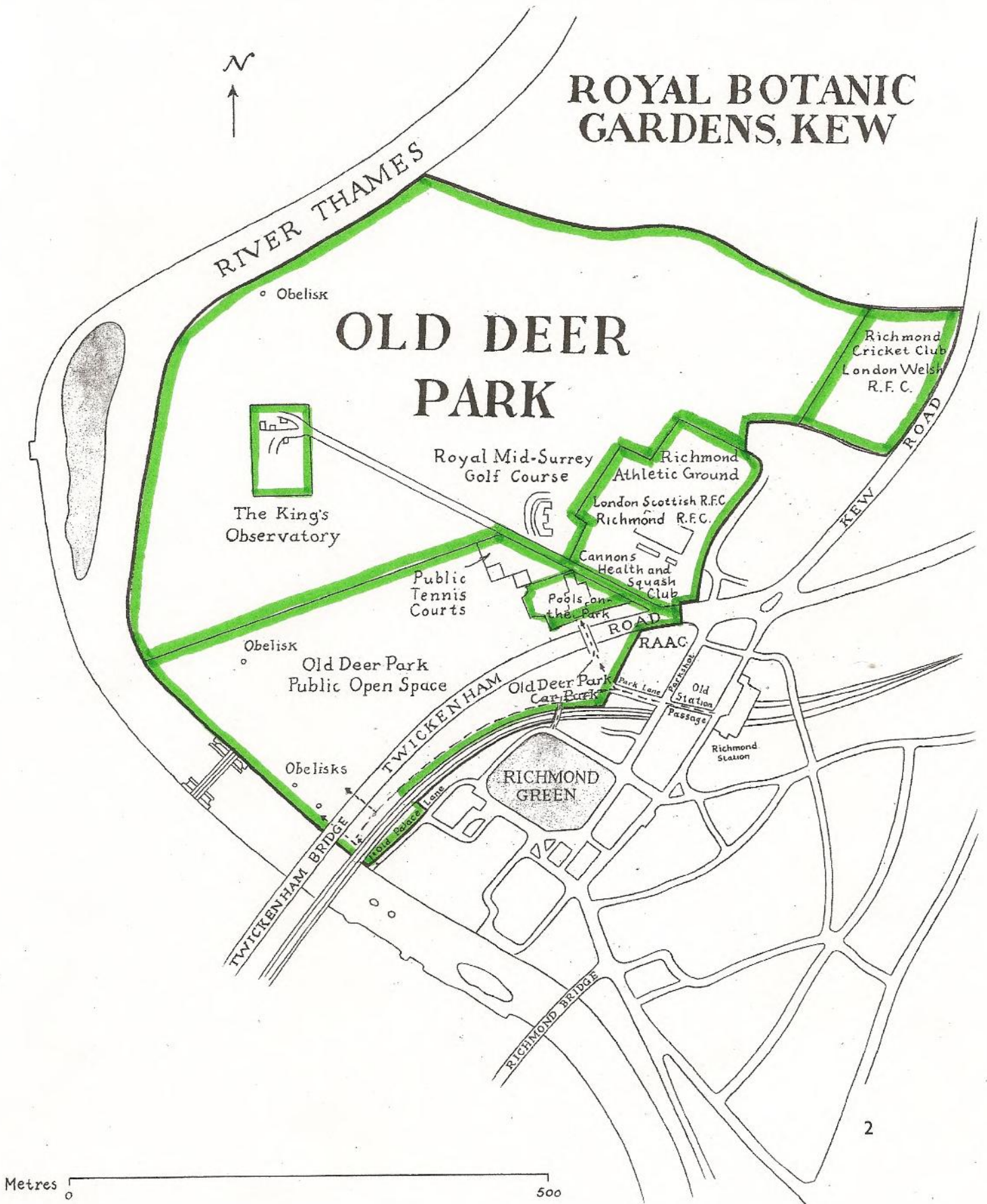
A FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT



JUNE, 2012

THE RICHMOND SOCIETY – THE KEW SOCIETY
THE FRIENDS OF RICHMOND GREEN – THE FRIENDS OF OLD DEER PARK
THE ST. MARGARETS ESTATE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

MAP I - THE OLD DEER PARK, RICHMOND, AND ITS CONSTITUENT PARTS



THE OLD DEER PARK, RICHMOND

Re-connecting the Town to its local park - Realising an under-recognised parkland asset

A FRAMEWORK FOR CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In April, 2016, all but one of the existing leases granted by the Crown Estate for the land comprising the Old Deer Park are due to expire. In relation to the renewal of these leases and what we understand to be negotiations between the relevant parties currently taking place, a number of groups in the local community has come together to consider how best to encourage the effective conservation and improvement of the park by the Crown Estate and its lessees in the context of these discussions and in future years.
- 1.2 The origins and development of the Old Deer Park and its significant Royal and other historical associations extend across six centuries. In 1883, the overall area of the Old Deer Park, Richmond was stated as comprising some 350 acres. Today, the overall area of open parkland has been reduced to some 334 acres as a result of urban encroachments, particularly along its south-eastern edge and by the construction of the Twickenham Road and Twickenham Bridge and its embanked approach between 1930 and 1933 and the creation and extension of the Old Deer Park Car-park in the 1960s and in subsequent years. To the north, the Park is bounded by The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; to the east by the Kew Road and Kew Foot Road; to the south by the railway cutting and viaduct and Old Palace Lane; and to the west by the curve of one of the most beautiful stretches of the Thames near London (see Map 1 attached). The entire Park falls within the freehold ownership of the Crown Estate. Despite the changes of the last one hundred or more years, the Park is formally recognised by UNESCO as a 'buffer-zone' to *The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew World Heritage Site*; included with Kew Gardens at grade I on English Heritage's *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*; and rightly designated as a conservation area in its own right, (the boundaries of these designations are identified in Maps 2, 3 and 4 included in Appendix 3).
- 1.3 This report has been prepared by a Working Group comprising The Richmond Society, The Kew Society, The Friends of Richmond Green, The Friends of Old Deer Park and The St. Margarets Estate Residents Association, and is intended to provide a positive contribution to discussion and debate in the context of the falling-in and renewal of all but one of the existing leases granted by the Crown Estate for the land comprising the Old Deer Park, Richmond. Details about each of the local groups and their objectives are set out in a Appendix I at the end of this report.
- 1.4 Over many years, many living and working in Richmond, Kew and St. Margarets have expressed substantial interest in the effective conservation and enhancement of the Park and have attached considerable value to its amenity, and its particular character and historic, landscape and ecological interest and significance. Accordingly, the Working Group believes that it is timely to set out the corporate views of the constituent bodies on the opportunities that arise and its keen hope that the Crown Estate will progress

the future management of its Old Deer Park estate with a view to assuring its effective conservation and enhancement in addition to its continued use for outdoor sports and recreational activity by the local community. The group is concerned that any development that might be advanced within the area should not only be sustainable in the fullest sense but also consistent with the designation of the Park as a conservation area and its inclusion on English Heritage's *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest* and in the buffer-zone of the *Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew World Heritage Site*.

- 1.5 Importantly, the Working Group believes that high priority should be given to improving and enhancing physical links between the Town and the Park and is suggesting a number of measures that might be delivered relatively easily and inexpensively.

2. THE PLANNING CONTEXT

- 2.1 The Working Group notes that the Old Deer Park is covered by a number of important heritage and other designations under national, metropolitan and local planning regimes (under the former *Richmond upon Thames Unitary Development Plan* and the current *Richmond upon Thames Local Development Framework*). The boundaries of these designations are identified in the maps included in Appendix 3.

- 2.2 The greater part of the Park is included within the buffer-zone for *The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew World Heritage Site*, formally inscribed in 2003 (see Map 2). The Park in its entirety, including the Old Deer Park Car-park and the Royal Mail Delivery Office, is included with Kew Gardens at grade I in English Heritage's *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest* (See Map 3). The Park is rightly included within the boundary of *The Old Deer Park Conservation Area*, first designated in June, 1990 and modestly extended at its south-eastern corner in November, 2005 (See Map 4). Within the Park, William Chambers' King's Observatory of 1788-1789 is included on the *Secretary of State's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest* at grade I, the Surrey end of Twickenham Bridge of 1931-1933 is included on the *List* at grade II*, *The Pools on the Park* swimming pools complex constructed in 1964-1966 is included on the *List* at grade II together with the late-Victorian sports pavilion/grandstand in the land leased by the Richmond Athletic Association, and Edward Anderson's three stone obelisks, first put in place in 1778. Anomalously, the surviving below-ground remains of *The Charterhouse of Jesus of Bethlehem at Shene*, the largest Carthusian monastic house in pre-Reformation England, located close to the King's Observatory, remain without formal designation as a scheduled ancient monument at the present time.

- 2.3 The group notes that a detailed description, assessment and management proposals for the *Old Deer Park Conservation Area* are contained in a supplementary planning guidance document first published and adopted by the Council in 1990.

- 2.4 Most importantly, the Working Group notes that the Old Deer Park is embraced within the areas adjacent to the river covered by *The Thames Landscape Strategy: Hampton to Kew* – specifically Landscape Character Reach No. 10 – Isleworth.

- 2.5 The greater part of the Park, including the Old Deer Car-park and the British Legion and buildings immediately adjacent, has long been rightly designated as *Metropolitan Open Land* (See Map 5). However, anomalously, the designation excludes the listed *Pools on*

the Park swimming pools complex and its landscaped grounds and the carriageway and footways of The Twickenham Road, despite the inclusion of these areas and features within a grade I Registered Park and the buffer-zone a World Heritage Site, and despite repeated representations by groups in the local community. The MOL designation also excludes the land to the immediate south of the car-park on which the single-storey buildings occupied by voluntary groups stand. The greater part of the Park is designated as part the Thames Special Policy Area under the London Plan, 2011 (Map 7.6 – Hampton to Wandsworth) and its boundaries defined in detail on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map, Adopted November, 2011, supporting the Council's Core Strategy, Adopted 2009 and Development Management Plan, Adopted November, 2011. The Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club course, together with limited parts of the public park at its western extremity adjacent to the river and between the Twickenham Road and the railway cutting and viaduct are designated as Other sites of nature importance, and the publicly accessible part of the Park – the original 'eighty-seven acres' - is designated as Public Open Space (See Map 5). However, anomalously, the designation excludes the Old Deer Park Car-park. The group notes that significant parts of the public park are identified in the adopted Proposals Map as Proposed areas for tree planting.

2.6 The Working Group notes that wholly anomalously, the entire area of the Old Deer Park Car-park is identified by the Council in the adopted Proposals Map as forming part of the designated Richmond Town Centre despite its clearly forming an integral part of the Old Deer Park, despite the inclusion of the area within the grade I Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew Registered Park, and despite repeated representations over past years by groups in the local community questioning its designation as part of an Area of mixed use (See Map 6). That part of the car-park within the freehold ownership of the Council is specifically identified in the Council's Sales/Reinvestment Programme under reference 0538.

2.7 The Pools on the Park complex and its landscaped grounds are covered under the present Local Development Framework under retained project R.8 of the Unitary Development Plan, First Review, Adopted March, 2005, for potential intensification of sports use:

'Increased indoor recreation facilities including expansion of health and fitness suite will increase provision for which there is a need. The pools complex is listed Grade II in the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or historic Interest; its inter-relationship of indoor and outdoor space and its relationship to its parkland setting contribute to its status as an exemplar 1960s swimming baths design. Any proposed improvements must therefore respect the character of the building and its setting in the Old Deer Park (which is included in English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens at grade I), the character of the conservation area, and the location adjacent to Metropolitan Open Land, and must not encroach upon the Old Deer Park area physically and should respect conservation area and historic park status and its location adjacent to Metropolitan Open Land. Car parking should be extensively landscaped to reflect this location. Access by alternative means to the car will be encouraged.'

2.8 The group notes that two 'additional' protected views relating to the Old Deer Park have been specifically identified under paragraph 2.5 and the proposals map supporting the Council's Development Management Plan, Adopted November, 2011, described as follows:

'N_View_001 – New view from St. Margarets Promenade to Kew Pagoda – A historical view to a grade I listed structure across River Thames and the Old Deer Park', and

'N_View_002 – New view from towpath to King's Observatory, Old Deer Park – View recently opened up and marker installed'.

- 2.9 The Working Group recognises that the following policies of the *London Plan, 2011* and the Council's *Development Management Plan, Adopted November, 2011* will be of particular relevance in progressing the conservation of the Old Deer Park and any development proposals within or adjacent to it:

Policy 7.8 (Heritage assets and archaeology), Policy 7.10 (World Heritage Sites), 7.17 (Metropolitan Open Land), 7.18 (Protecting local open space and addressing local deficiency), 7.19 (Biodiversity and access to nature), 7.21 (Trees and woodland) and 7.29 (The River Thames).

Policy DM OS 2 (Metropolitan Open Land), DM OS 4 (Historic Parks, Gardens and Landscape), DM OS 5 (Biodiversity and new development), DM OS 6 (Public Open Space), DM OS 7 (Children's and young people's play facilities, DM OS 8 (Sport and recreation facilities), DM OS 9 (Flood-lighting), DM HD 1 (Conservation Areas – Designation, protection and enhancement), DM HD 4 (Archaeological sites), DM HD 5 (World Heritage Site), DM HD 7 (Views and vistas) and DM DC 4 (Trees and landscape).

3. THE CROWN ESTATE'S LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Working Group commends the Crown Estate on its commissioning and adopting a landscape strategy for the Old Deer Park in September, 1999 – *The Old Deer Park Richmond – Landscape Strategy* (by Kim Wilkie Associates) and believes that this excellent document continues to provide a sound and relevant base for the future management, conservation, development and enhancement of the Park in parallel with the relevant protective provisions of the *London Plan* and Richmond upon Thames Council's *Development Management Plan, Adopted November, 2011*. The group believes that the Crown Estate's *Landscape Strategy* is further usefully underpinned by Richmond upon Thames Council's formally adopted *Old Deer Park Study*, published in 1990, and *The Thames Landscape Strategy*. The group considers that the continued implementation of the policies and the realisation or completion of the projects identified in these documents remain most desirable.
- 3.2 The Working Group's comments on specific aspects of the Crown Estate's *Landscape Strategy* are set out in Appendix 2.

4 THE SPECIFIC CONCERNS OF THE WORKING GROUP

- 4.1 The Working Group believes that since the publication of the Crown Estate's *Landscape Strategy* in September, 1999, the poor condition of the physical environment in the area around the entrance to the Old Deer Park and Car-park from Park Lane, close to the *Royal Mail Delivery Office* and the buildings occupied by *The Royal British Legion* and *North*

- Richmond Scout Group*, and in that part of the Park leased by *Richmond Athletic Association* adjacent to the Kew Foot Road has deteriorated further and significantly. In addition and importantly, the condition of the Council-owned and long-closed public conveniences building adjacent to the Old Deer Park Car-park is in a seriously deteriorating condition, with little if any evidence of any remedial work by the Council. Some of the single-storey buildings used by voluntary groups located between the Old Deer Park Car-park and the railway land and cutting also appear to be unused or little used and in a deteriorating condition.
- 4.2 Similarly, the unused or little used, Council-owned ancillary building located on land designated as MOL to the immediate north-west of the landscaped grounds of *The Pools on the Park* complex (and outside the boundary of Project R 8) together with the adjacent sports changing-rooms and club-room building, designed and built as an integral part of the original swimming pool complex) appear to be in a seriously deteriorating condition. The listed *Pools on the Park* swimming pools complex suffers from poorly designed and insensitively located banner-signs and other features that seriously detract from the external appearance and architectural integrity of the award-winning building. In addition, the replacement of the original, carefully detailed, patinated copper-sheet cladding of the upper parts of the main building (deliberately designed to assist in the integration of the building into its landscaped setting) with a poorly detailed and aesthetically inferior material has had an adverse impact on the integrity of Leslie Gooday's award-winning design. In addition, the condition of the landscaped area serving the listed *Pools on the Park* swimming pools complex has diminished from the once impeccable state it enjoyed in its early years.
- 4.3 Most depressingly, within the north-eastern part of the *Richmond Athletic Association's* ground, once the home with other clubs of *Richmond Town Cricket Club* and *Richmond Town Bowling Club*, the once immaculately tended bowling-green and attractive club-house fell into a derelict state after the falling-in of the club's lease and the departure of the club; a situation only relieved in modest part by the use of the former green in the last year as an additional play-space by the nearby Falcon's Preparatory School. Further to the north-east, the nearby golf-driving range remains fenced-off and disused, whilst to the south-west, the surfaced areas devoted to car-parking for *London Scottish Rugby Football Club*, *Richmond Rugby Football Club* and *Cannons Health and Squash Club* and to what is understood to be contract car-parking have been increased substantially in recent years.
- 4.4 By contrast, the condition of that part of the Old Deer Park immediately to the south of the Royal Botanic Gardens occupied by *Richmond Cricket Club*, *London Welsh Rugby Football Club*, *Mid-Surrey Bowling Club*, *Richmond Tennis Club* and *Richmond Archery Club* has been considerably enhanced since 1999. *The Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club's* club-house has been rebuilt and enlarged in recent years to an improved design further to a major fire which destroyed the earlier club-house opened in 1937, and its immediate setting, including the car-parking area improved. In recent years the seven grass and five hard tennis-courts located in the adjacent part of the public park, to the north-west of *The Pools on the Park* leisure complex have been improved by the Council. In addition, the landscaped area around The King's Observatory is being improved as part of a major project for the refurbishment of the building and its setting.

- 4.5 Finally and importantly, the Working Group is concerned that Council should give urgent consideration to reviewing and adjusting limited sections of the boundaries of *Metropolitan Open Land, Public Open Space and the Richmond Town Centre* in the area of the Old Deer Park as presently drawn in the Council's *Local Development Framework Proposals Map, Adopted November, 2011*, as repeatedly urged by groups in the local community over past years, in order to remedy the serious zoning anomalies referred to in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6 above.

5. THE WORKING GROUP'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE POSITION REGARDING THE EXPIRY OF LEASES

- 5.1 The Working Group believes that the expiry and renewal of the leases of key parts of the Old Deer Park in the near future provide the opportunity for advancing more successfully than in the last twelve years the realisation of the policies, projects and landscape management recommendations set out in the *Landscape Strategy*, including many major benefits for the local community.
- 5.2 The group notes that the Richmond-upon-Thames Council's current lease of the surviving part of the original '87 acres' of publicly accessible parkland first leased by the Crown to the former Richmond Council in 1898 (now effectively reduced to some 73 acres of parkland through the construction of the Twickenham Road between 1930 and 1933 (some 5 acres), the creation of the Old Deer Park Car-park and the single-storey buildings for voluntary groups (some 5 acres), and by the development of *The Pools on the Park* complex and the adjacent car-park in the mid-'sixties (some 4 acres) is due to expire on the 4th April, 2016.
- 5.3 The group notes that the Council's lease (dated 23rd October, 1934) covering some 80 acres of land to both north and south of the Twickenham Road originally provided for a term of sixty years from 5th April, 1932. However, an agreement between the Crown Estate Commissioners and Richmond-upon-Thames Council dated 27th February, 1970, and a deed of variation dated 4th May, 1971, provided *inter alia* for the extension of the term by twenty-four years from 5th April, 1992 so as to expire on the 4th April, 2016. It is assumed that the Council would wish to maintain existing arrangements for the use of parts of the Park for continued schools and amateur outdoor sports use, and limited parts for specified occasional use for fairs and circuses.
- 5.4 The group further notes that on the 27th November, 1985, the Crown Estate granted a lease with a term of thirty-three years from the 5th April, 1983, on the open land located to the rear of the former East Surrey Regiment Territorial Drill Hall of 1912 and Annexe of 1932, now occupied by the Royal Mail, and used as a playing field by the Richmond County School for Girls, close by, in Parkshot (now Richmond Adult Community College) from ca. 1960 until the closure of the School in 1974. This land was developed as a landscaped car-park by the Council (together with the other open land to the rear of the former County School, immediately adjacent, already owned by the Council (the freehold of the school and its grounds having passed to the Richmond-upon-Thames Council from the Surrey County Council on the re-organisation of local government in 1965) as an extension (with 106 spaces) to the existing Old Deer Park Car-park to the south-west (with 291 spaces), bringing up the total number of spaces

(with the 58-place extension on the Council's freehold land) to 455. The Council's lease on the leasehold part of the car-park extension expires on 4th April, 2016.

- 5.5 The Working Group notes that some 6.5 acres of this land was developed by the Council in the mid-1960s for the present, award-winning, statutorily-listed *Pools on the Park* swimming pools complex. The management and operation of the refurbished complex, including the gym and health club, and the landscaped grounds adjacent to the pools building are currently formalised through a Management Agreement between the Council to Spring Health Leisure, rather than through a sub-lease. It is assumed that the agreement terminates on 4th April, 2016 unless otherwise agreed between the parties.
- 5.6 The group notes that other, small parts of the Council's leasehold land are sub-leased for various leisure and other purposes. Part of the narrow strip of land between Old Palace Lane and the railway viaduct, together with the entire strip of land between the railway embankment and the rear of the residential properties further up Old Palace Lane, are sub-let as allotments – a much valued and well used resource for the local community. The group assumes that the British Legion club-house and ancillary buildings and the adjacent building occupied by the North Richmond Scout Group located on the east side of the original part of the Old Deer Park Car-park, and the buildings occupied by the Air Training Corps, the St. John's Ambulance Brigade and the Sea Cadet Corps located on the south side of the Car-park and backing on to the Network Rail owned land and railway cutting beyond, are the subject of separate sub-leases granted by the present Council and its predecessor over the years since the last War.
- 5.7 The group notes what is understood to be the intention to divide the leasing of the land within the Old Deer Park presently leased by the Council into two separate parts, north-west and south-east of the Twickenham Road, and would value clarification of the purpose of such an arrangement.
- 5.8 The lease of the largest part of the Park, comprising some 200 acres, is held by *The Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club* and expires on 5th July, 2043.
- 5.9 The Working Group assumes that Richmond Athletic Association's lease of the some 25 acres of land in the eastern part of the Park expires on 4th April, 2016. The group assumes that Cannons Health and Squash Club, located in premises within the Athletic Ground, and London Scottish Rugby Football Club and Richmond Rugby Football Club have sub-leases granted by the Richmond Athletic Association which are co-terminus with the Association's own lease from the Crown Estate.
- 5.10 The group notes that that part of the Old Deer Park occupied by Richmond Cricket Club, London Welsh Rugby Football Club, Mid-Surrey Bowling Club, Richmond Tennis Club and Richmond Archery Club, comprising some 15 acres, is leased from the Crown Estate by Richmond Cricket Club. The lease expires in 2016. A Deed of Partnership between Richmond Cricket Club and London Welsh Rugby Football Club signed on 1st June, 1957, incorporates a sub-lease granted by the cricket club to the rugby club to occupy the ground for a term co-terminus with the main lease. Under the Deed of Partnership, the cricket club has the use of ground for five months of the year, and the rugby club for seven months. The Working Group understands that other sub-leases

granted by the cricket club provide for the occupation of specific parts of the land to Mid-Surrey Bowling Club, Richmond Tennis Club and Richmond Archery Club.

- 5.11 The Working Group assumes that the lease of that part of the Park occupied by *The King's Observatory* and the land immediately adjacent, comprising some 6.5 acres, is the subject of a new lease granted to the new residential owner by the Crown Estate, or of an assignment of the earlier lease granted by the Crown Estate to the former commercial occupier.
- 5.12 The group understands that the lease dated 8th December, 1972 on *the Richmond Royal Mail Delivery Office* off Park Lane (otherwise known as *The Post Office Depot*) expires in October, 2070 and that the Royal Mail sub-leases the Drill Hall part of the premises to the Territorial Army under a lease expiring in June, 2015 for use by the South-West London Army Cadet Force.

6. THE WORKING GROUP'S SUGGESTIONS REGARDING THE POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES ARISING FROM THE RENEWAL OF LEASES

- 6.1 The Working Group would urge that the imminent falling-in and renewal of the leases of key parts of the Old Deer Park – and of the various sub-leases – should be used as means of reversing the marked decline in the environmental condition of a number of key parts of the Park identified in paragraphs 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 above and in the Crown Estate's *Landscape Strategy* and beginning to progress the policies, projects and landscape management recommendations contained in the *Strategy*.
- 6.2 The Working Group believes that particular priority needs to be given to reversing the deplorable state of the primary vehicular and pedestrian access to the Park from the Town – reinstating the missing Park Lane gateway-piers and marking and celebrating this important entry-point into the Park with a sensitively and imaginatively designed landscape scheme. For many visitors, this area serves as an entry-point to the Town as well as to the Park and should reflect the quality and character of Richmond. The group believes that the other entry-points into the Park should be similarly defined and celebrated (see below).
- 6.3 The Working Group considers that the pedestrian entry-points into the Park from Twickenham Bridge, from the lower end of Old Palace Lane by Asgill House, and from the towing-path close to Richmond Lock and Footbridge (in addition to those from Park Lane and Kew Foot Road referred to below) should be more clearly defined and celebrated. The group considers that there is considerable scope to improve the way-marking of safe and attractive pedestrian links between these entry-points, to and from the sports facilities at the heart of the Park, and between the footbridges across the railway and the Twickenham Road and the archways and underpass below the railway and Twickenham Road and Twickenham Bridge (see annotations in red on Map 5 included in Appendix 3).
- 6.4 As anticipated in the Crown Estate's *Landscape Strategy*, the Working Group considers that the potential relocation of the voluntary groups presently occupying the series of unattractive single-storey buildings adjacent to the Old Deer Park Car-Park into

- improved accommodation elsewhere within or adjacent to the Park would provide a positive opportunity for recovering the parkland character of an important part of the Park closest to the Town, and provide a natural space through which an attractive pedestrian route could be easily devised linking the improved Park Lane gateway directly with the much valued and attractive part of the Park between the railway and the Twickenham Road leading down towards the river.
- 6.5 The Working Group considers that particular attention should be given to improving safe and attractive pedestrian connection between those parts of the public Park to the north-west and south-east of the Twickenham Road pending the realisation of the project for the creation of a sensitively and imaginatively designed pedestrian bridge as recommended in the *Landscape Strategy*. The group believes that more modest benefits might be secured in the shorter term by the adoption of more affordable measures, such as the opening-up and enhancement of the existing underpass below the Twickenham Road, the realignment of the lowest ramp of the existing bridge on the south-east side of the Twickenham Road in order to relate more directly to an enhanced pedestrian route through the car-park, and possibly too, the provision of a second at-grade, light-controlled, pedestrian crossing.
- 6.6 With a view to encouraging increased and improved use of the Old Deer Park for outdoor sports uses by schools and local amateur clubs, and in providing enhanced facilities for voluntary groups presently located adjacent to the Old Deer Park Car-park, the Working Group suggests that consideration should be given to the potential conversion and extension or reconstruction of the unused or little used, Council-owned ancillary building located to the immediate north-west of the landscaped grounds of *The Pools on the Park* complex (and outside the boundary of Project R 8) and to the extension or reconstruction of the much-used, sports changing-rooms and club-room building, thus providing a central location (with direct public-transport access) for functions and facilities relating to the use of the public park for outdoor, amateur sports and other recreational purposes.
- 6.7 The group considers that a coherent study needs to be commissioned as a matter of urgency addressing the very poor state of the area within the north-eastern part of the *Richmond Athletic Association's* ground adjacent to the Kew Foot Road, once the home of *Richmond Town Bowling Club*, including the once immaculately tended bowling-green, the now derelict club-house, and the run-down condition of the boundary wall and entrance gateways opposite *The Triple Crown*, P.H. and *The Royal Hospital*, and formulating measures through which these problems can be speedily and effectively resolved.
- 6.8 The Working Group considers that particular attention needs to be given to addressing and resolving the adverse effects of the enlarged surfaced areas devoted to car-parking within the *Athletic Association's* ground and of the significant number of unattractive ancillary buildings, structures and fences within the ground and on improving the entrances to the ground from the Twickenham Road and Kew Foot Road.
- 6.9 The group believes that consideration should be given to exploring and realising landscaping measures for mitigating the visual and acoustic impact of vehicular traffic as it passes along the Twickenham Road through the Park, and defining more clearly and celebrating the point where the Twickenham Road enters the Old Deer Park from the east close to the site of the former Clarence Gate; distinguishing the stretch of the road

- that passes through the historic Park from the remainder of the A.316 to the east and the south-west.
- 6.10 The group believes that particular priority needs to be given to reversing the deplorable state of the long-closed public conveniences adjacent to the Old Deer Park Car-park, securing the sensitive repair and appropriate re-use of this attractive little building.
 - 6.11 The Working Group considers that particular attention needs to be given to addressing and resolving the poorly designed and insensitively located banner-signs and other features that seriously detract from the external appearance and architectural integrity of the listed, award-winning *Pools on the Park* swimming pools complex building.
 - 6.12 Finally, the group suggests that that consideration should be given to exploring and realising landscaping measures to provide sloping, bonded gravel pathways running obliquely down the embankments to either side of the Twickenham Road at the north-east end of Twickenham Bridge at a shallow gradient to facilitate access into the Park for pedestrians crossing from the St. Margarets side of the bridge.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The Working Group understands that discussions between the Crown Estate and Council officers about the renewal of the Council's lease of the public part of the Park are being undertaken and that the Crown Estate has or is appointing consultants to prepare a *Leisure and Development Plan*. The Working Group is concerned that such a plan should be firmly based on the Estate's 1999 *Landscape Strategy* and should not involve any built development within the Park other than that which is wholly consistent with the policies set out in the *Landscape strategy* as underpinned by national, metropolitan and local conservation and planning policies.
- 7.2 The Working Group believes that the Crown Estate should progress the future management of its Old Deer Park estate with a view to assuring its effective conservation and enhancement and ensuring that any development that might be advanced within the area should not only be sustainable in the fullest sense but also consistent with the designation of the Park as a conservation area and its inclusion on English Heritage's *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest* and in the buffer-zone of the *Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew World Heritage Site*. The group believes that only that development which serves the interests of the Park as a much valued open space and as a resource for continued outdoor schools and amateur sports should be encouraged.
- 7.3 The Working Group stresses its readiness to engage in discussions with the Crown Estate and its professional team, Council members and officers, and all others with a direct or other interest in the future use and management of the Park, with a view to encouraging the effective conservation and enhancement of the Old Deer Park.
- 7.4 Finally and importantly, the Working Group urges the Council to give urgent consideration to reviewing and adjusting limited sections of the boundaries of *Metropolitan Open Land, Public Open Space and the Richmond Town Centre* in the area of the Old Deer Park as presently drawn in the Council's *Local Development Framework*

Proposals Map, Adopted November, 2011, as repeatedly urged by groups in the local community over past years, in order to remedy the serious zoning anomalies referred to in paragraphs 2.5, 2.6 and 4.5 above.

COMMENTS ON THIS REPORT

Any written comments or suggestions relating to the issues raised in this report should be sent to The Old Deer Park Working Group, c/o The Hon. Secretary, The Richmond Society, 5, Kelvin Court, Marlborough Road, Richmond, T.W.10. 6.J.S. or e-mailed to secretary@richmondsociety.co.uk.



APPENDIX I

THE CONSTITUENT MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP

The Richmond Society

The Richmond Society was founded in 1957 and has a long established reputation for positive engagement in local conservation, development and planning issues. The Society has charitable status and has approaching one thousand paid members, generally without restriction. The Society encourages an active interest in Richmond and its community. It is run by a committee of volunteers who communicate with members through regular newsletters and meetings. Its interests include the natural and built environment, infrastructure which includes roads, transport and aircraft, and uses of Richmond town and surrounds in terms of licensing, policing, cleansing and events. The Society campaigns to preserve and enhance Richmond's historic character and the quality of life for residents and visitors. It arranges events for social interaction and enjoyment of its members and the public. It works with other amenity groups and the Council and other public bodies. It covers no defined geographical area but focuses on Richmond Town and its surrounds, including the associated stretch of the River Thames. It has sound finances and raises funds from subscriptions, legacies and campaigns. The money raised is used to run the charity and to invest in projects that benefit the community.

The Kew Society

The Kew Society, founded more than one hundred years ago, is an influential organisation dedicated to enhancing the beauty of Kew and preserving its heritage. It became a Society in the 1970s and a Registered Charity in 1987 and remains as one of the larger and more active community groups in Greater London, with a subscribed membership of around six hundred. Its main aims are to review all planning applications in Kew with special regard to the architectural integrity and heritage of the neighbourhood and to play an active role in the improvement of local amenities. To achieve its aims, The Kew Society works closely with local authority councillors and the Member of Parliament; monitors all the planning applications and comments as needed; makes representations to public and private organisations; and provides a forum for local groups to strengthen Kew's voice in the area and in London. The Society is run by unpaid volunteers. The Executive Committee meets eleven times a year while sub-committees look after particular areas of interest. The society organises community events including parties, picnics, lectures and outings and produces the *On Kew* newsletter with information about general local issues, events, planning matters and forthcoming activities.

The Friends of Richmond Green

The Friends of Richmond Green is an amenity action group. It operates for the benefit of residents located in the immediate vicinity of The Green. In geographical terms, the FoRG 'constituency' encompasses the area bounded by the triangle of the railway line, the river Thames and George Street. Its key aims and objectives are: To promote

public interest and civic pride in Richmond Green and vicinity; To improve the quality of life and long-term attractiveness for residents; To improve the character and quality of the built and natural environments; and To encourage responsible use of The Green and surrounding area. FoRG was started over forty years ago and has worked with the Council and other local groups on a number of projects – major improvements to the pedestrian Gateway to Richmond between Old Deer Park and Richmond Green; the up-grading of the network of paths on the Green. A current project is looking into the re-installation of the crested bollards and rails on Greenside to tie in with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. FoRG initiated the formation of the *Richmond Heathrow Campaign* (RHC). The RHC, convened by Friends of Richmond Green and the Richmond and Kew Societies, amalgamates and co-ordinates the efforts of the three bodies to more effectively represent our mutual interests as far as Heathrow expansion and related proposals are concerned. FoRG successfully lobbied the Council to revise the daily timetable for litter collection and in the last couple of years we have seen major improvements in this area. Membership is open to any person who resides in the immediate vicinity of the Green. We do not currently levy any form of charge on our members. Management is vested in an Executive Committee which meets around 8 times a year. The committee and officers are elected each year at an AGM. A newsletter is produced annually.

The Friends of Old Deer Park

Established in 1987, The Friends of Old Deer Park is a group within the local community constituted with the overall aims of fostering, promoting and sustaining recognition and appreciation of the unique parkland character, amenity value, and particular historic, architectural, archaeological and ecological interest of the Old Deer Park, and securing its preservation and enhancement for the benefit of all. The Friends played an important role in supporting the establishment of the working group for *The Thames Landscape Strategy* in 1991, and successfully worked for and secured the designation of the Old Deer Park by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Council as a conservation area in June, 1990, the inclusion of the Old Deer Park on English Heritage's *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest* (as an integral part of the already registered grade I Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew historic landscape) in June, 1998, and its inclusion within the buffer-zone of *The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew World Heritage Site* in 2003, and the listing of the 1960s *Richmond Swimming Pools* complex in January, 1996, and the late-Victorian sports pavilion/grandstand in the grounds leased by *Richmond Athletic Association* in November, 1997.

The St. Margarets Estate Residents Association

The St. Margarets Estate Residents Association was established some forty years ago to protect and conserve the area that originally covered the St Margaret's Estate of 1854. The Association includes approximately 330 houses, mainly within the area bounded by the A316, St Margaret's Road, Kilmorey Road and Ranelagh Drive which looks over the river onto the Old Deer Park. The main remit of the Association is to monitor all planning applications within the boundaries of the Association and it also monitors tree lopping and felling, traffic, aircraft noise and any other matter that affects the environment.

APPENDIX 2

THE DETAILED COMMENTS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE CROWN ESTATE'S LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

- A2.1. The group endorses unreservedly the three 'Guiding policies' and supports the realisation or completion of the three 'Principal projects' and the adoption of the three recommendations regarding general landscape maintenance set out under the Summary of the *Landscape Strategy*.
- A2.2. The Working Group welcomes and concurs fully with the assessments of the significance of the Old Deer Park set out in Sections 4, 5 and 6 of the *Landscape Strategy* on the significance of the Old Deer Park.
- A2.3. The group keenly supports the four policies, one project and one landscape management recommendation relating to 'Significance' recommended under paragraph 4.17 of the *Landscape Strategy*.
- A2.4. The Working Group endorses the four policies, four projects and one landscape management recommendation relating to 'Contemporary use' recommended under paragraph 5.14 of the *Landscape Strategy*. However, the group recognises that the realisation of the first of the four projects (which, it assumes, would involve the removal of the existing footbridge) would be costly and may well take a considerable time to implement and that more modest but still valuable benefits might be secured in the shorter term by the adoption of more affordable measures, such as the re-opening and enhancement of the existing underpass below the Twickenham Road, the re-alignment of the lowest ramp of the existing footbridge on the south-east side of the Twickenham Road in order to relate more directly to the pedestrian route through the car-park, and possibly too, the provision of a second, at-grade, light-controlled pedestrian-crossing, subject to sensitive design.
- A2.5. The group welcomes and supports the recommendations relating to 'Nature Conservation' set out in paragraphs 6.4, 6.6, 6.10 and 6.15 of the *Landscape Strategy*.
- A2.6. The Working Group endorses the three policies and one project relating to 'Urban context' recommended under paragraph 7.6 of the *Landscape Strategy*.
- A2.7. The group endorses wholeheartedly the recommendation regarding the potential pivotal role of the Crown Estate relating to 'The landscape of the Old Deer Park' set out in paragraph 8.5 of the *Landscape Strategy*.
- A2.8. The Working Group supports the one policy, seven of the eight projects and three landscape maintenance recommendations relating to the central part of the Old Deer Park recommended under paragraph 9.9 of the *Landscape Strategy*. However, the group believes that the removal of the ornamental plantings under the second of the eight projects should only be pursued if the health of the cherries, maples, robinias and poplars gives rise to serious concern and their future survival is in doubt.

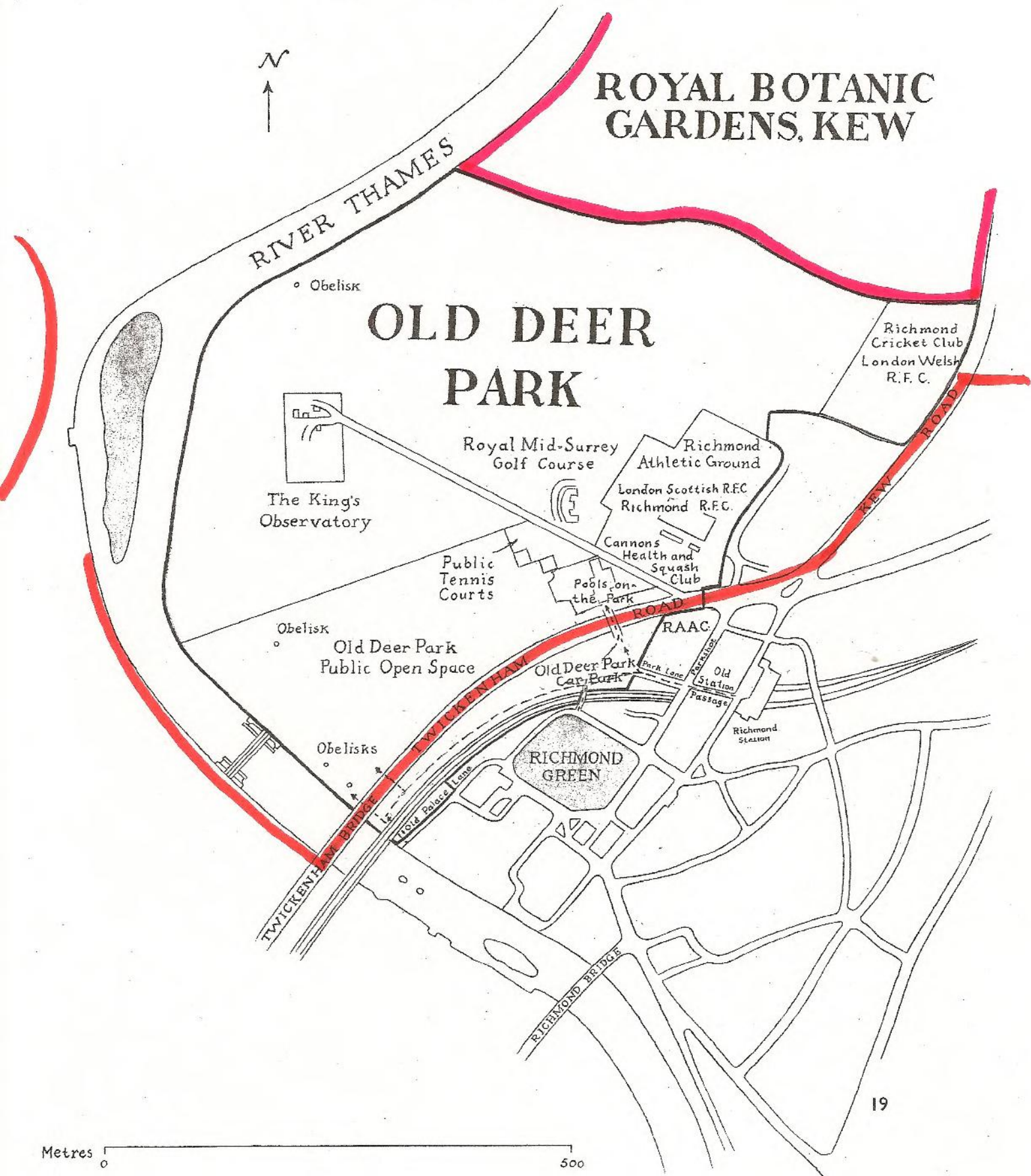
- A2.9 The group welcomes and concurs fully with the assessment of the present condition of the southern part of the Old Deer Park – in particular, that of the area around the Old Deer Park Car-park (covered in paragraphs 9.14, 9.16 and 9.17) and fully endorses the three policies, thirteen projects and three landscape maintenance recommendations relating to the southern part of the Old Deer Park recommended under paragraph 9.22 of the *Landscape Strategy*. However, in relation to the second of the thirteen projects and as noted in paragraph A2.4 above, the group recognises that that the realisation of the project may well take a considerable time and that more modest benefits might be secured in the shorter term by the adoption of more affordable measures, such as the re-opening and enhancement of the existing underpass below the Twickenham Road, the re-alignment of the lowest ramp of the existing footbridge on the south-east side of the Twickenham Road, and possibly too, the provision of a second at-grade, light-controlled pedestrian-crossing. In relation to the third and sixth of the thirteen projects, the group notes that the suggested works have been successfully completed in recent years.
- A2.10 The Working Group welcomes and concurs fully with the assessment of the present condition of the eastern part of the Old Deer Park – in particular, significant parts of the land leased by the *Richmond Athletic Association* and occupied by *London Scottish Rugby Football Club*, *Richmond Rugby Football Club* and *Cannons Health and Squash Club*, and the boundary wall along the Kew Foot Road (covered in paragraphs 9.28, 9.29 and 9.30) and fully endorses the four policies, ten projects and landscape management recommendation relating to the eastern part of the Park recommended under paragraph 9.31 of the *Landscape Strategy*.
- A2.11 The group supports the four projects and three landscape management recommendations relating to the western part of the Old Deer Park recommended under paragraph 9.36 of the *Landscape Strategy*, noting that much valuable work on realising the projects has been carried out successfully under the *Thames Landscape Strategy* and *Arcadia* projects.



APPENDIX 3

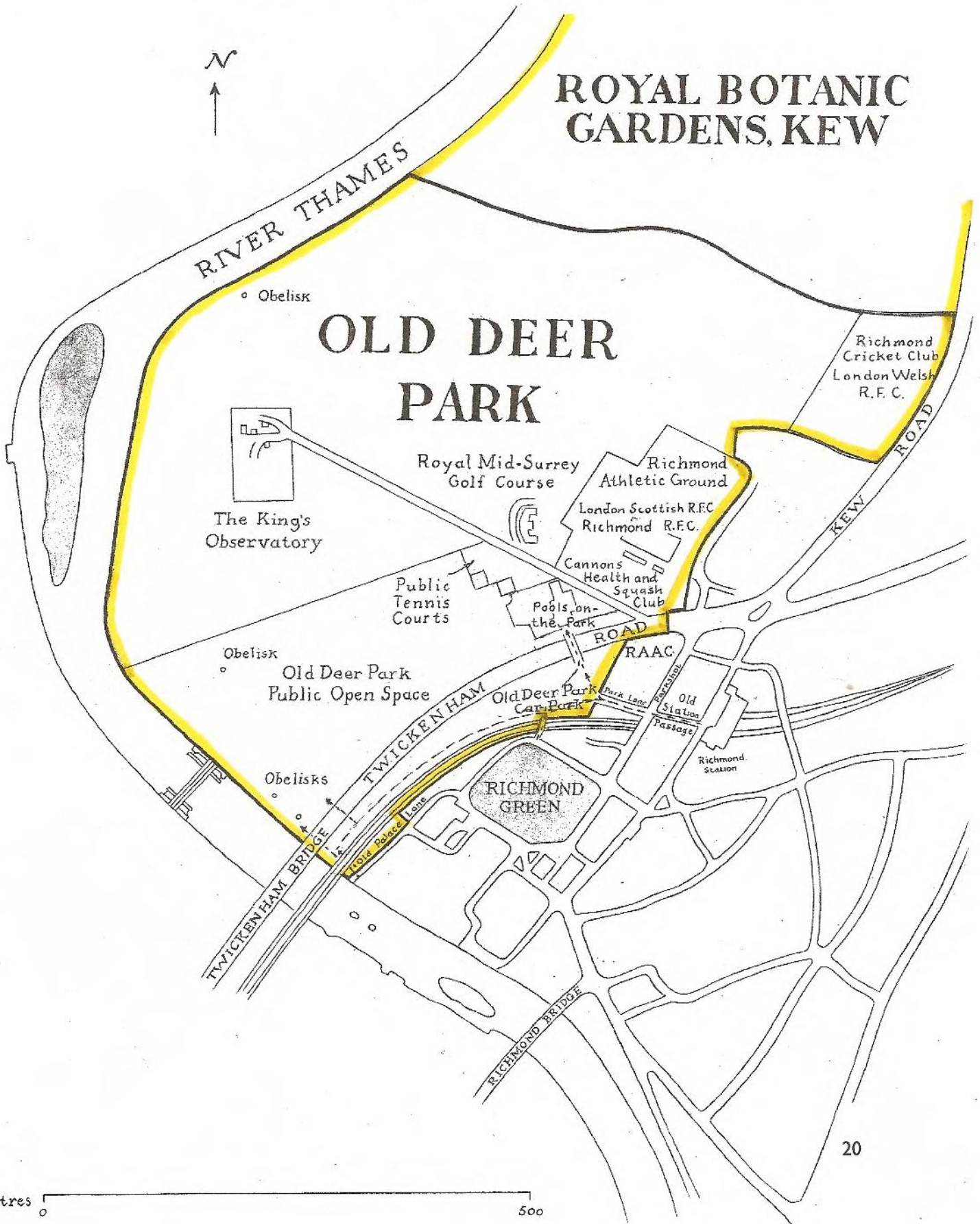
MAPS OF THE OLD DEER PARK SHOWING THE BOUNDARIES OF RELEVANT HERITAGE AND OTHER PLANNING DESIGNATIONS AND THE LOCATIONS OF POTENTIAL ENHANCED CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE TOWN AND THE PARK

MAP 2 - THE BOUNDARIES OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW
WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND BUFFER ZONE

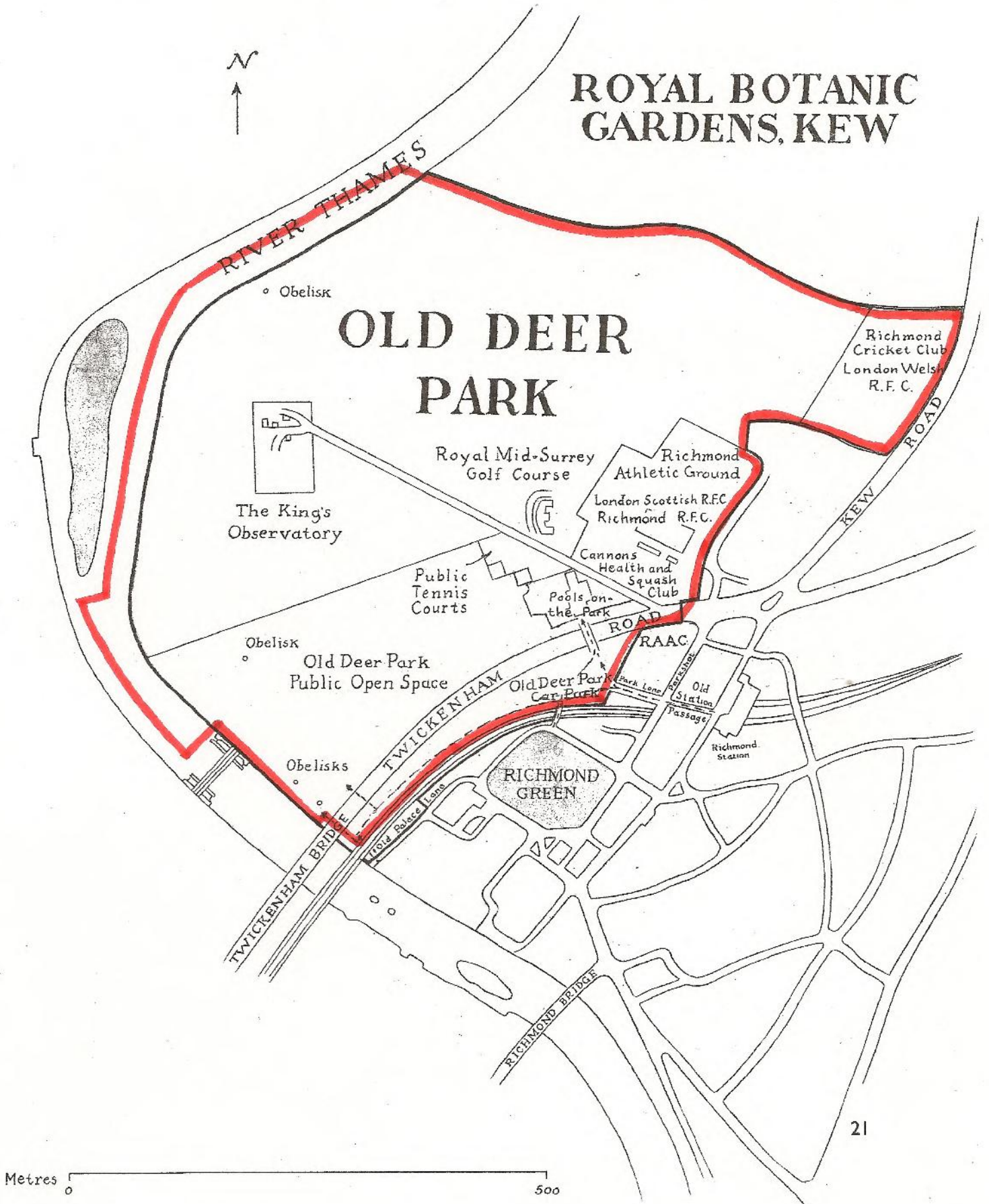


MAP 3 - THE BOUNDARY OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS - OLD DEER PARK REGISTERED LANDSCAPE

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW

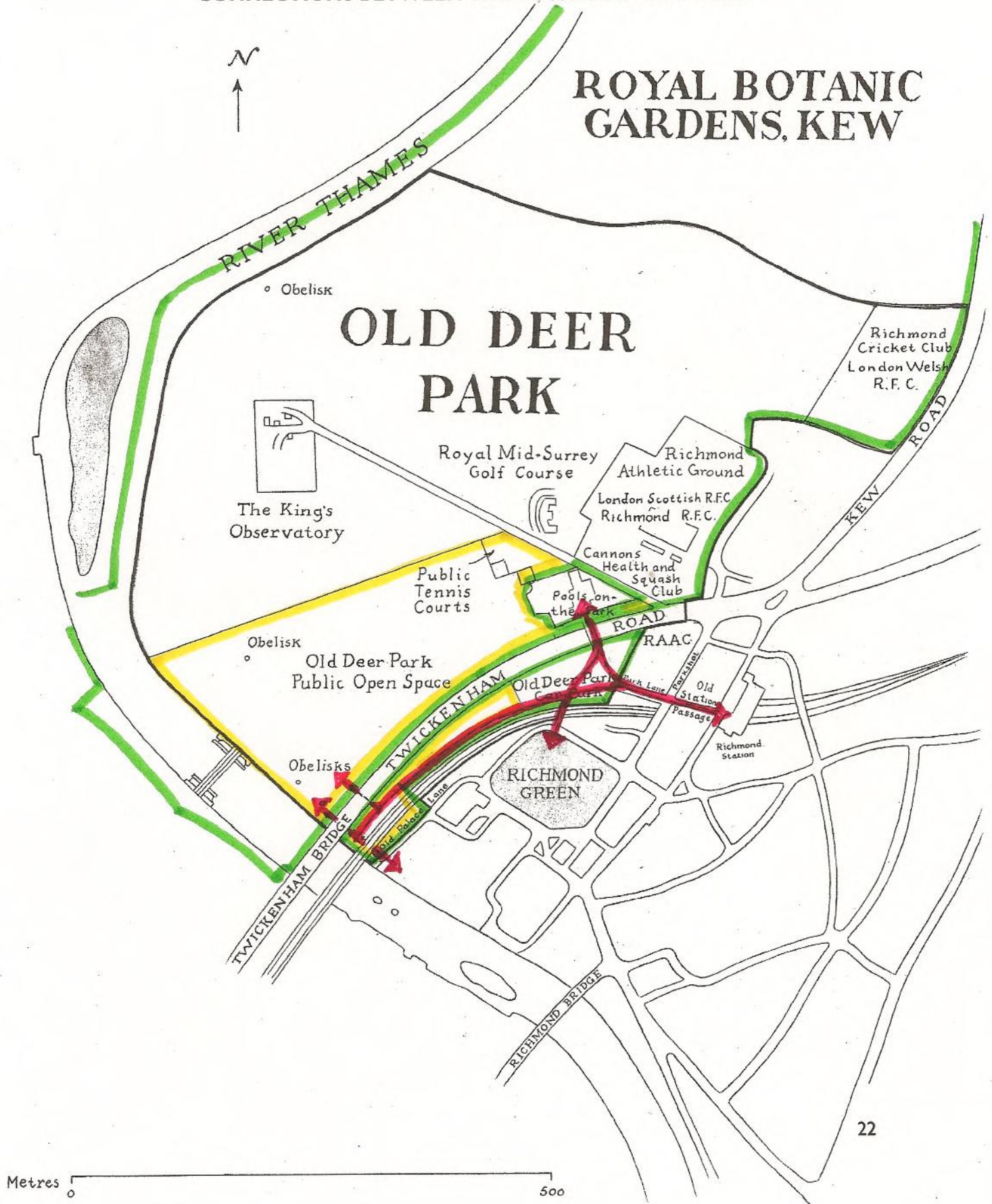


MAP 4 - THE BOUNDARY OF OLD DEER PARK CONSERVATION AREA



MAP 5 - THE BOUNDARIES OF METROPOLITAN OPEN LAND AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND THE LOCATIONS OF POTENTIAL ENHANCED CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE TOWN AND THE PARK

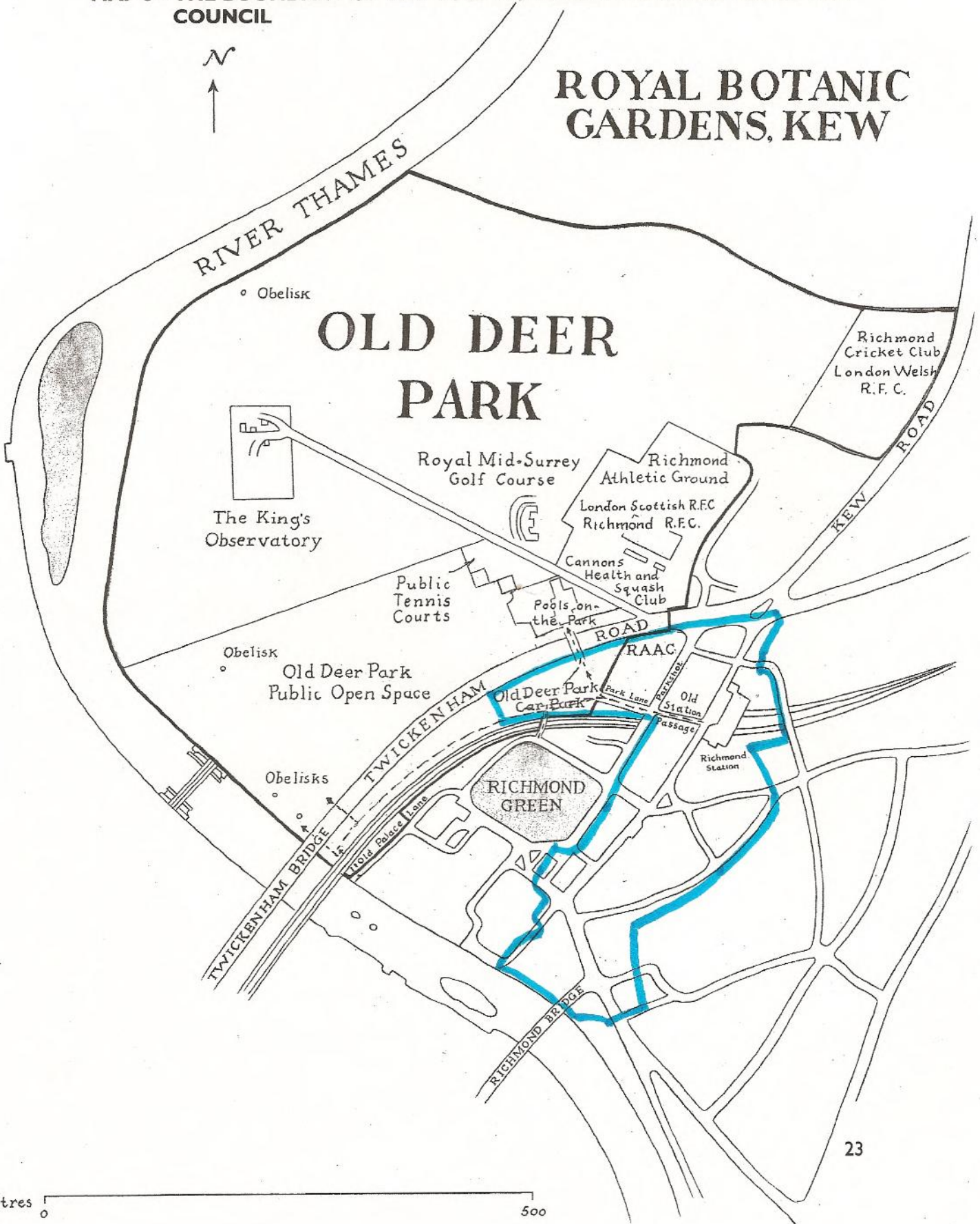
ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW



MAP 6 - THE BOUNDARY OF THE TOWN CENTRE AS DESIGNATED BY THE COUNCIL



ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW



Metres 0 500



PAUL VELLUET, RIBA, IHBC, CHARTERED ARCHITECT
9, BRIDGE ROAD, ST. MARGARETS, TWICKENHAM, T.W.I. I.R.E.
e-mail: paul.velluet@velluet.com