

TWICKENHAM STATION

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT VOLUME II
TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PREPARED FOR: SOLUM REGENERATION LIMITED
APRIL 2011

029 2072 9000
WYG.COM
21 PARK PLACE CARDIFF CF10 3DQ



CONTENTS				
1	Introduction	3	4.1 Introduction	26
1.1	Scope of the assessment	3	Cumulative effects	26
	Study areas	3	4.2 Townscape effects	26
	Consultation	3	4.3 Visual effects	27
	The assessment	3	4.4 Conclusion	27
	Data sources	3	5 Summary and conclusions	28
1.2	Policies and designations	4	5.1 Summary of townscape impacts	28
	The local development plan	4	5.2 Summary of impacts on visual amenity	28
	Designations	5	5.3 Policy consideration	29
	Public access	6	5.4 Conclusion	29
1.3	Assessment methodology	6	6 References	30
	Photography and photomontages	6		
	Assessment and mitigation	6	TABLES	
	Sensitivity, or ability to accommodate change	7	Table 1 Landscape sensitivity	7
	Assessment criteria	7	Table 2 Visual sensitivity	7
	Weather	8	Table 3 Magnitude of change	7
2	Baseline conditions	9	Table 4 Significance of impacts, applied to the assessment of effects on the townscape of the site and its context	8
2.1	Townscape context appraisal	9	Table 5 Significance of visual impacts	8
	London Road, Arragon Road to Whitton Road	9	Table 6 Sensitivity of townscape elements	12
	Cole Park Road and River Crane	10	Table 7 Viewpoint data	13
	Mary's Terrace – Cheltenham Avenue	10	Table 8 Existing view description and analysis	13
	West of London Road bridge	10	Table 9 Townscape impacts during operation	18
2.2	The site	11	Table 10 Short term townscape impacts during construction	19
	The station buildings and frontage onto London Road	11	Table 11 View with development and assessment, in operation	21
	The platforms and rail lines	11		
	The car park and boundary with the River Crane	11		
	The strip of land between the River Crane and the railway to the north-east	12		
	The character of the site	12		
2.3	Sensitivity or ability to accommodate change	12		
2.4	Visual amenity	12		
3	Impact Assessment	16		
3.1	The proposed development	16		
3.2	Impacts on site and context study area	16		
3.3	Impacts on views and visual amenity	21		
4	Cumulative Impact Assessment	26		
			Table 12 View with development and assessment, during construction	24
			FIGURES	
			L01 Policies and designations	
			L02 Features of the site and context	
			L03.1-2 Site & context photographs	
			L04 Viewpoint locations	
			L05 Townscape context	
			L06-L16 Viewpoint photographs & photomontages of the proposed development	
			L17-L22 Photomontages of the proposed development with Regal House extension	
			L23 Photomontage of the proposed development from Cole Park Road in winter	

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of the assessment

1.1.1 The proposal considered in this report is for an urban development set with the urban landscape context of Twickenham town centre and, in turn, within that of the wider built up area of the Royal Borough of Richmond upon Thames. The term “townscape” has been used in this report as shorthand for “urban landscape”, and the title of the assessment thus becomes “Townscape & Visual Impact Assessment”.

1.1.2 This report considers the effects of the proposed development at Twickenham Railway Station on the townscape of the site and its environs and the effects of those changes on visual amenity. The townscape and visual impact assessments were carried out by Mary O’Connor, Chartered Landscape Architect and Associate Director in WYG Planning & Design. The visualisations were prepared by Tim Phillips, Senior Landscape Assistant and GIS Manager at WYG Planning & Design.

Study areas

1.1.3 For the purposes of townscape and visual impact assessment of this proposal, study areas have been defined:

- The “site” study area is shown on Figure L02. It includes the application site boundary and extends to the railway boundary wall along Mary’s Terrace and to the footbridge linking Mary’s Terrace with Cole Park Road
- The “townscape context” is the immediately adjacent area within which the site is located, which may be regarded as within the “zone of influence” of the site, extending to the area represented on Figure L02
- The study area for the visual impact assessment includes places identified as likely to provide views of the proposed development, where the visual impact is an important consideration. The locations of the viewpoints studied are on Figure L04 and the extents of the townscape context of the viewpoints on Figure L05.

Consultation

1.1.4 The extent of the zone of visual influence was agreed with the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Council (LBRuT) through the scoping process for the environmental impact assessment.

1.1.5 For the initial studies to inform the design process (October 2009), seven viewpoints were agreed with the Council:

1. Junction of Arragon Road and London Road.
2. Junction of Whitton Road and London Road.
3. Junction of Beauchamp Road and Marys Terrace.
4. Richmond Hill (long distance).
5. Crane Valley – playing fields off Craneford Way
6. Marsh Farm Road – Pedestrian link over the railway line
7. St Margarets – view from railway bridge, St Margarets Road.

1.1.6 The council issued their Scoping Opinion on 10 June 2010 and, in regard to townscape and visual impact, sought:

The visual impact of the development upon some of the long distance views of the site should be analysed, in particular the view from the Richmond Hill and nearby conservation areas. Other key views should be agreed with Council officers. The proposals map to the UDP: First Review should be consulted when considering which views to include in the visual assessment.

Site topography and survey of levels of surrounding streets, river and other adjacent sites need to form part of the baseline study of townscape/landscape character and visual quality of the site/surroundings.

The scope of the visual and townscape assessment proposed in the report appears to be largely satisfactory. The historical analysis of the site and surroundings should include the grade II listed Heatham House, locally listed buildings (Buildings of Townscape Merit) and the identified conservation areas.

An urban context analysis and landscape strategy are required as part of EIA process.

1.1.7 Subsequent consultation with Council Officers led to the inclusion of four further viewpoints for study and assessment:

8. Cole Park Road
9. Corner of Cheltenham Avenue, St Mary’s School
10. In front of The Albany public house
11. Moor Mead Park.

The assessment

1.1.8 The objectives of the assessment are to:

- Describe and evaluate the townscape of the site and surrounding context, which might be affected by the proposed development
- Identify and describe the extent of the zone of visual influence of the proposed development and viewpoints representative of the views available
- Examine the development proposals and analyse the potential effects on the townscape and visual amenity associated with the scheme’s design, construction and operation
- Set out mitigation measures incorporated in the design or which could be implemented in order to avoid, reduce or remedy adverse effects
- Provide an assessment of the significance of the townscape and visual effects of the proposed development.

1.1.9 The LVIA chapter of the ES is illustrated by plans and photographs as follows:

Figure	Title
L01	Policies and designations
L02	Features of the site and context
L03.1-2	Site & context photographs
L04	Viewpoint locations
L05	Townscape context
L06-L16	Viewpoint photographs & photomontages of the proposed development
L17-L22	Photomontages of the proposed development with Regal House extension

Data sources

1.1.10 The data upon which this assessment is based were obtained from the scheme designers and contributors to the environmental statement, principally:

- Maddox Associates, Planning Consultants
- Rolfe Judd Limited, Architects
- Whitelaw Turkington, Landscape Architects
- Wardell Armstrong LLP, Ecologists.

1.1.11 Other information about the site and its context, policies and designations applicable to the proposed development, other relevant studies, etc. were obtained from published sources, as noted at the end of the document.

1.2 Policies and designations

1.2.1 The main policies and designations relevant to the townscape context are shown on Figure L01.

The local development plan

1.2.2 The statutory development plan for the site area comprises the LBRuT Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy (adopted April 2009)ⁱ, the saved Unitary Development Plan Review (2005)ⁱⁱ and the London Plan, consolidated with alterations since 2004 (2008)ⁱⁱⁱ.

London Plan - consolidated with Alterations since 2004 (February 2008)

1.2.3 The London Plan is the strategic plan setting out an integrated social, economic and environmental framework for the future development of the 32 London Boroughs and the City of London, looking forward 15–20 years.

1.2.4 Objective 1 of the London Plan is to “accommodate London’s growth within its boundaries without encroaching on open spaces”. This includes protecting and improving the green belt, Metropolitan Open Land and other designated open spaces.

1.2.5 Objective 6 is to “make London an exemplary world city in mitigating and adapting to climate change and a more attractive, well-designed and green city”. This includes protecting and enhancing the quality of the townscape and green open spaces.

1.2.6 Policy 3D.8 promotes the value of open space and green infrastructure and states that “all developments will be expected to incorporate appropriate elements of open space that make a positive contribution to and are integrated with the wider network”, while policy 3D.10 deals with the designation of Metropolitan Open Land. Policy 3D.15 states that trees and woodland should be protected in support of the London Tree and Woodland Framework.

1.2.7 Policy 4B.9 concerns the location of tall buildings to be promoted “where they create attractive landmarks enhancing London’s character” and “where they are also acceptable in terms of design and impact on their surroundings”. Policy 4B.10 states that all large-scale buildings should be “suited to their wider context and in terms of their relationship to other buildings, streets, public and private open spaces, the waterways or other townscape elements”. Further, they should be “attractive city elements as viewed from all angles and, where appropriate, contribute to an interesting skyline, consolidating clusters within that skyline or providing key foci within views”.

1.2.8 Policy 4B.16 concerns the London View Management Framework; a designated view is included from King Henry’s Mound, Richmond to St Paul’s Cathedral but this is not in the direction of the site.

1.2.9 The Blue Ribbon Network includes the Thames, its tributaries, canals, rivers, streams and areas of open water. Policy 4C.11 seeks to protect and improve access to the network and for development proposals to include extensions to walking and cycling routes alongside the network.

LBRuT Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy

1.2.10 The LDF Core Strategy was adopted on 21st April 2009 and is the strategic policy document for determining the future planning policy for the Borough. The Core Strategy has three inter-related themes: ‘A Sustainable Future’, ‘Protecting Local Character’ and ‘Meeting People’s Needs’.

1.2.11 Policy CP7 seeks to maintain and improve the local environment. “Existing buildings and areas in the Borough of recognised high quality and historic interest will be protected from inappropriate development” and “all new development should recognise distinctive local character and contribute to creating places of a high architectural and urban design quality that are well used and valued”. It is noted that “large parts of the Borough are sensitive to the impact of taller buildings by virtue of the high environmental quality that currently exists”, and that the report by Turley Associates^{iv}, which identified areas most suitable for taller buildings, will be used as local guidance in determining planning applications.

1.2.12 Policy CP9 seeks to revitalise Twickenham town centre, in particular, “improving pedestrian and cycle links to and from the centre, and along the Crane Valley”.

1.2.13 Policy CP10 concerns the protection and enhancement of open land and parks. “Metropolitan open land and other open land of townscape importance, land on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, green chains and green corridors will be safeguarded and improved for biodiversity, sport and recreation and heritage, and for visual reasons”.

1.2.14 Policy CP12 seeks to improve the River Crane Corridor to provide open attractive space and for nature conservation and that “developments in and adjacent to the River Crane Corridor will be expected to contribute to improving the environment and access, in line with planning guidance”.

Unitary Development Plan Review (2005)

1.2.15 The Core Strategy supersedes some of the UDP policies. However the following policies have been saved beyond 11 March 2008.

1.2.16 “Metropolitan open land is open land or water which is of significance to London as a whole or a part of London, either publicly or privately owned, and with or without public access”. Land designated as metropolitan open land can contribute to the physical structure of London, provide attractive breaks in development, create a significant visual open experience, contain features worthy of protection, include open air facilities for recreation or “form part of a green chain of related open spaces and linking footpaths, bridleways, riverside and canal walks, and towpaths”. The River Crane corridor adjacent to the site is designated as metropolitan open land as is Moor Mead Park to the north. Policy ENV1 seeks to protect and conserve metropolitan open land and “in considering development on sites adjoining metropolitan open land the Council will take into account any possible visual impact on the character of the open land”.

1.2.17 Policy ENV 3 is concerned with other open land of townscape importance which “acts as pockets of greenery of local rather than London-wide significance”. The Council will consider any possible visual impact on the character of the open land from adjoining developments.

1.2.18 Policy ENV 5 of the UDP Review is concerned with the protection of views and vistas and seeks “to protect the quality of views especially those indicated on the proposals map” and seeks “opportunities to create attractive new views and vistas and, where appropriate, improve any that have been obscured”. These views and vistas are shown on Figure L01. In particular, the view from Richmond Hill is protected by the Richmond, Petersham and Ham Open Spaces Act 1902.

- 1.2.19 Policy ENV 6 seeks to preserve, enhance and extend the network of interconnected greenspace within the borough and with adjacent boroughs. “Priority will be given to proposals that will provide missing links, and enhance the value of green chains for informal recreation (particularly walking) and nature conservation”, while “proposals which would breach the green chains with built development will not be permitted”. It is proposed to create a green chain along the River Crane from Kneller Park to Craneford Way playing fields, across to London Road and on to Moormead Park.
- 1.2.20 Policy ENV 9 concerns trees and in particular the council will “protect trees and make tree preservation orders (TPOs) where appropriate” and “encourage tree planting where appropriate, giving priority to native trees where these are suitable”.
- 1.2.21 Policy ENV 10 seeks to “protect and enhance the parks and gardens of special historic interest included in the Register compiled by English Heritage and other historic parks, gardens and landscapes where appropriate”. Development proposals “which have an adverse effect on the settings, views, and vistas to and from historic parks and gardens, will not be permitted”.
- 1.2.22 Policy ENV 18 seeks to protect sites of nature conservation interest including Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) from development proposals which may have an adverse effect. “Developers may be required to show that their proposals will not affect these areas by way of built form, landscaping, and other factors”.
- 1.2.23 Green corridors are defined as “relatively continuous areas of open space leading through the built environment and which may link sites together and to the Green Belt”. Policy ENV 20 seeks to protect and enhance green corridors for nature conservation, and development proposals which threaten the integrity of these corridors will not be permitted. On the proposals map a green corridor is shown along the railway, westwards from the London Road bridge.
- 1.2.24 The protection and enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas is the aim of Policy BLT 2 by “allowing development (including redevelopment) which would contribute positively to the character or appearance of the conservation area or leave it unharmed”.

- 1.2.25 Policy BLT 3 is concerned with the preservation of listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments and in “considering proposals for development near to ancient monuments and listed buildings special attention will be paid to the need to preserve their setting”.
- 1.2.26 Policy BLT 4 concerns the preservation and enhancement of buildings of townscape merit. These are buildings older than 1840, that, “due to their historical associations, architectural style and visual interest , as well as possibly their siting within an area, are of significance to the history and character of the environment”, while not being of sufficient interest to merit listing. The “council will use its powers where possible to protect their character and setting”.
- 1.2.27 UDP Policy BLT 14 concerns landscape proposals for developments and in particular the requirement to retain existing trees and other landscape features where practicable. “Where trees are removed replacement planting will normally be required” and “there will be a presumption against schemes that result in an unacceptable loss of trees”.
- 1.2.28 Policy T17 Twickenham Railway Station relates directly to the development of the site. In particular, pedestrian and cyclist access is to be improved and “any proposal must allow for the provision of a riverside walk as part of the River Crane Walk” and “a link to the proposed pedestrian walkway to the rugby stadia”.
- 1.2.29 Policies T3 and T23 relate to the development of the Sorting Office and Station Yard sites respectively. Any proposal for the Sorting Office site must include an extension to the River Crane Walk and a link along the railway to the rugby stadia.

Designations

Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest

- 1.2.30 There are a number of sites included the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest within the LBRuT, although they lie beyond the study areas for this assessment. These include:
- York House (Grade II), 380m south-east of the site, an “early 20th century garden with 19th century elements, forming the setting for a 17th century town mansion, now used as a town hall”.
 - Marble Hill (Grade II*), 650m east of the site, an area of 27 hectares of parkland dating from the 1720s surrounding a Palladian villa with views over the Thames. The site has been a public park since 1903.
 - Pope’s Garden (Grade II), 850m south of the site, of which only the grotto and connecting tunnel survive of the original garden.
 - Ham House (Grade II*), 980m south-east of the site, the “remains of a 17th-century estate and gardens of around 12 hectares”, restored to late 17th century style in the 1970s.
 - Strawberry Hill (Grade II*), 1.2km south of the site, “the remains of an 18th-century landscape garden, originally designed for Horace Walpole as a setting for his 'Gothic Castle' ”.
 - Richmond Terrace Walk (Grade II*), 1.6km east of the site, a “public walk laid out in about 1700, used as a promenade and viewpoint and much celebrated in literature and art from the 17th century onwards”.
 - Terrace Gardens & Buccleugh Gardens (Grade II), 1.75km to the east of the site, a “public park laid out in the mid to late-19th century, incorporating ornamental elements of a private estate laid out in the 18th century”.
 - Richmond Park, (Grade I), 2km to the east of the site, a royal deer park and public open space.

Conservation Area

- 1.2.31 There are two conservation areas within 200m of the site:
- Queen’s Road, 130m to the south-west, a residential area of mostly semi-detached houses dating from the late 19th and early 20th century, which includes The Albany public house at its extreme northern end. It is considered to be an area of “strong character and visual cohesiveness with architectural continuity”.
 - Amyand Road, 150m to the south-east (60m from the proposed footpath extension), an area of mostly late Victorian and Edwardian buildings consisting largely of terraces and semi-detached cottages, and includes Oak Lane Cemetery. The area is considered to have strong character with many buildings of architectural merit.

Listed Buildings

1.2.32 There are five listed buildings (all Grade II) within 200m of the site:

- Heatham House, listed together with its walls, entrance gates and piers, lies 70m to the north-west. Dating from the mid 18th century, Heatham House was originally set within a 3.5 acre park, but is now closely surrounded by urban buildings and busy streets. It has been in use as a Youth Activities Centre since the 1950's, its front garden area turned over to car parking.
- Neville House on London Road, 120m to the north, a three storey building constructed in the mid 18th century.
- Three properties along Amyand Park Road, between 150m and 170m to the south-east: No. 60, No. 52 (Grove Cottage), and Devoncroft on the corner of Amyand Park Road and Oak Lane.

Buildings of Townscape Merit

1.2.33 Buildings of Townscape Merit within the townscape context of the site include the following:

- Nos. 1 to 16 Mary's Terrace
- Nos. 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 Cole Park Road
- The Albany public house, Queens Road
- Nos. 2 to 8 (even) and nos. 3-7 (odd), Queens Road
- The Cabbage Patch public house, London Road
- St. Mary's School, Amyand Park Road
- No. 22 and nos. 51-57 (odd) Amyand Park Road
- Nos. 57-63 (odd) Arragon Road
- No. 3 March Road.

Other designations

1.2.34 The River Crane Corridor Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. The SINC boundary also includes the railway lines to the west of the bridge on London Road and the area south of the Royal Mail sorting office. Other sites designated for nature conservation interest include the Ham Lands Local Nature Reserve, 700m south of the site.

Public access

1.2.35 The area is accessed by public streets, but also by public footpaths and national and local cycleways. From the railway station, large numbers of people access Twickenham Stadium and Harlequins' Stoop Stadium on match days, while more regularly, more moderate numbers move between the station and the Colleges to the west.

1.2.36 A public footpath connects Beauchamp Road with Cole Park Road via a footbridge over the railway lines and another footbridge over the River Crane. To the east, a public footpath connects Cole Park Road to Moor Mead Park via a footbridge over the River Crane. Strategic paths include the River Crane Walk which is a 5-mile route between Feltham and Richmond Lock following the River Crane for much of its length although not the section adjacent to the site. The Thames Path is designated as a National Trail and follows both banks of the Thames 500m south of the site.

1.2.37 The Twickenham to Hampton Wick Cycle Route heads north from the station along Whitton Road then along Court Way towards Richmond upon Thames College. London Cycle Network (LCN) route 175 follows the Thames from Teddington Lock to the junction with the A305 from where it continues along London Road, passing the site, to the junction with Whitton Road, and from there following Cole Park Road northwards. LCN route 174 follows Station Road to the underpass below London Road and along Mary's Terrace and Beauchamp Road before continuing eastwards along Amyand Park Road. A section of National Cycle Network Route 4 is proposed along the Thames from Ham House north towards Richmond Bridge, which will link to the existing network of local cycle routes.

1.3 Assessment methodology

1.3.1 The methodology used for assessing the townscape and visual effects is based on the recommendations in *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*^v (GLVIA). The assessment process comprised a combination of desk studies and field surveys, with subsequent analysis, and involved:

- A survey of the site and its context and inspection of views of the site from publicly accessible viewpoints, including a photographic survey. The field surveys for this proposed development were carried in October 2009 and August 2010.
- A review of designations relevant to and planning policies for the landscape and for the townscape context of the site
- A review of the character assessments included in the Supplementary Planning Document on Design Quality (2006) and the Turley Associates Borough-Wide Sustainable Urban Development Study (2008).
- Analysis of the features and elements of the site and surrounding area and their contribution to the character, context and setting, based on these studies
- Identification of what might be affected by the proposed development i.e. receptors of change, assessment of the sensitivity of the townscape

and visual amenity, and ability to accommodate the changes likely to arise from the development

- Identification of the extent of visibility of the development and potentially sensitive viewers, views or view locations, i.e. visual receptors, and a viewpoint analysis
- Consideration of potential landscape/townscape and visual effects of the proposed development, their likely significance, and the mitigation and enhancement measures to avoid, reduce or remedy potentially significant adverse effects
- Assessment of magnitude and significance of the residual effects on the townscape or on views, with the mitigation proposals in place.

Photography and photomontages

1.3.2 Photographs have been included to assist in describing townscape character and key views, taken using Canon EOS 400D and Nikon D80 digital cameras, with lens of focal length equivalent to 50mm for a conventional camera. Series of photographs overlapping by at least 50% were spliced together digitally to provide the panoramas, approximating to the field of view in the landscape context. The print size used for the viewpoint photographs is appropriate for a reading distance of 26cm.

1.3.3 The architects' 3D model of the proposed development, created using Google SketchUp software, was combined with a 3D model of the topography of the surrounding area created using Autodesk 3ds Max software. Views of the proposed development were computer-generated, to correspond to the viewpoint locations and photographic panoramas. The photomontages were prepared by combining the computer-generated views with the photographic image, using Adobe Photoshop graphics software to create the final image.

1.3.4 The LVIA report is illustrated by plans intended to be printed on A3 sheets. The viewpoint photographs and photomontages on Figures L06 and L07 are intended to be printed at A3 size, to give a viewing distance of 26cm in order to be comparable with the view "in the field".

Assessment and mitigation

1.3.5 The effects of the development, whether beneficial or adverse, will vary in nature and degree through its construction and operational phases, and mitigation measures are proposed in the design of the development or by management of the construction and operational processes. The purpose of mitigation measures is first, to avoid the potentially adverse impacts identified, and if that is not possible, to reduce the potential adverse effect. Where large adverse effects are unavoidable, the purpose is to remedy or compensate for the effect.

Sensitivity, or ability to accommodate change

1.3.6 The sensitivity of townscape and visual receptors is dependent on their ability to accommodate the changes that would be brought about by the proposed development.

Landscape/townscape sensitivity

1.3.7 The following categories of landscape sensitivity to change are used and applied to the assessment of the townscape of the site and its context:

Table 1 Landscape sensitivity

Category	Indicative criteria
Very high sensitivity	A landscape or components: of international importance particularly vulnerable to disturbance, such as residential areas No or little potential for substitution or replacement
High sensitivity	A landscape or components of national importance Many landscape elements vulnerable to disturbance Limited potential for substitution or replacement
Medium sensitivity	A landscape or components of regional importance Some features or aspects vulnerable to disturbance Potential for substitution or replacement
Low sensitivity	A landscape or components of local importance Few features or aspects vulnerable to disturbance Good potential for substitution or replacement

Visual sensitivity

1.3.8 The sensitivity of viewers, view locations, and views, is affected by factors such as the distance to the viewer, whether few or many viewers are affected, and the importance of the study area or proposed scheme in the overall view. The context of the viewpoint may contribute to the ability to accommodate change, for example, a view from residential properties or from a valued landscape is regarded as less able to accommodate change, than a view from an industrial context. Particular views may have importance, as “classic” views depicted in art or reported in literature, or as part of the experience of a landscape of importance. The following categories of visual sensitivity are used:

Table 2 Visual sensitivity

Category	Indicative criteria
Very high sensitivity	A view from residential or community properties or experienced by many viewers Daily, prolonged or sustained views available over a long period, or where the view of the landscape is an important attractant A view from a valued landscape, a “classic” view, or from a nationally important recreation facility
High sensitivity	A view from community properties or experienced by moderate numbers of viewers Frequent open views available, or where the view of the landscape is an attractant A view from a valued landscape, or a regionally important recreation facility
Medium sensitivity	A view experienced by small numbers of viewers Occasional open views or passing views available; viewers are pursuing activities such as sports or outdoor work A view from a landscape of moderate importance, or a locally important recreation facility
Low sensitivity	A view of low importance, or where the view of the landscape is not the reason for visiting Glimpsed views; passing views available to travellers in vehicles A view available to few viewers

Assessment criteria

1.3.9 The degree of the likely townscape and visual effects of the proposed development is determined by relating the sensitivity of the receptors, or ability of the townscape to accommodate the changes arising from the development proposals, and the changes in the townscape or view to which they will be subjected. The scale of magnitude of the changes is graded as set out in Table 3 and the degree of effect, whether adverse or beneficial, is graded from major to negligible, according to the indicative criteria in Table 4 for townscape effects and Table 5 for visual effects:

Table 3 Magnitude of change

Magnitude	Indicative criteria
Very large	Great change, sufficient to alter perceptions of the townscape character or visual amenity
Considerable	Change that would affect perception of the townscape character or visual amenity to a great degree
Medium or discernible	A moderate degree of change, but not sufficient to alter perceptions of the overall townscape character or visual amenity
Localised or small	A noticeable degree of change, but perceptions of the townscape character or visual amenity not changed
Negligible or None	Little or no change or the change is difficult to discern

Table 4 Significance of impacts, applied to the assessment of effects on the townscape of the site and its context

Degree of impact	Indicative criteria
Extreme	Very large change in a highly sensitive townscape Very highly sensitive townscape degraded Little or no scope for mitigation Great improvement, sufficient to upgrade overall townscape character
Major	Considerable adverse change to the features, elements or character of a high or medium sensitivity townscape Limited scope for mitigation Improvement to the townscape over a wide area sufficient to alter perceptions
Moderate	Medium change to townscape character, features, or elements of medium-high sensitivity townscape or lesser change in very highly sensitive townscape Scope for mitigation Discernible improvements to townscape character
Minor	Localised or limited change to the existing townscape character Considerable scope for mitigation Localised improvement to the existing townscape
Negligible or None	Little or no perceived change to the existing townscape character The change is difficult to discern

Table 5 Significance of visual impacts

Visual impact	Indicative criteria
Extreme	Major visual intrusion experienced from highly or very highly sensitive viewpoints The development would cause a great deterioration in the existing view Little or no scope for mitigation Great improvement in the view, sufficient to upgrade overall visual amenity
Major	Considerable visual intrusion experienced from highly sensitive public viewpoints (or a lesser degree of intrusion in very highly sensitive views) The development would cause considerable deterioration in the existing view Limited scope for mitigation Appreciable improvement in the existing view
Moderate	Visual intrusion on settlements or numbers of properties and/or from public viewpoints The development would cause a noticeable deterioration in the existing view Scope for mitigation Noticeable reduction in visual intrusion, or improvement in the view
Minor	Localised visual intrusion in the existing view Good scope for mitigation Localised reduction in visual intrusion, or improvement in the view
Negligible	The change in the view is imperceptible or difficult to discern

1.3.10 In addition to these criteria, in some instances the effect may be discernible or greater, but offset by other considerations, for example, through mitigation proposals, and the resulting effect is neither beneficial nor adverse. In such cases, the effect is assessed as neutral.

Weather

1.3.11 The weather is a factor affecting the assessment of, especially, visual impacts. The Met Office^{vi} publish average statistics for weather patterns for the region, monthly and annual, for maximum and minimum temperatures, days of air frost, hours of sunshine, amount of rainfall - both generally and the number of days when rainfall is above 1mm. Rainfall above 1mm per day, which limits visibility, occurs on an average of 110.2 days in the year. There are on average 47.4 days when air frost occurs, with potentially hazy conditions for visibility. This is a relatively sunny part of the United Kingdom, with an average of 1534.7 hours of sunshine per annum and relatively dry with an average of 647.1 mm rainfall per annum.

2 BASELINE CONDITIONS

2.1 Townscape context appraisal

- 2.1.1 In February 2006 the LBRuT published a Supplementary Planning Document on Design Quality^{vii} which divided the Borough into twelve distinctive character areas. The Borough is described as a “group of urbanised areas, connecting former villages, divided by the Thames, interspersed with open space, linked by roads and interwoven by railways”.
- 2.1.2 Twickenham railway station is included within the Twickenham and St. Margaret’s character area with Twickenham described as a long established settlement and an important commercial centre based around Heath Road, King Street, York Street and London Road with continuous rows of Victorian and twentieth century mixed use parades. The south east of the area is more village-like in character with a semi-rural edge and large villas along the Thames, whilst St. Margaret’s and East Twickenham “form a picturesque and leafy landscape containing many fine Victorian and Edwardian villas and interwar homes”. The Whitton and Heathfield character area lies immediately to the north of the station and the River Crane. This is an area consisting of “large residential estates built between the wars in geometrical and sinuously curving streets” with a mix of terrace and semi-detached houses with hedgerows and a few street trees. The area includes Twickenham Rugby Stadium. Other character areas within the visual impact assessment study area are:
- Central Richmond
 - West Twickenham and Fulwell
 - Strawberry Hill and Teddington East
 - Ham, Petersham and Richmond Park
- 2.1.3 Twickenham railway station is located in an area of relatively flat topography about 0.5 km north of the River Thames, with its tributary, the River Crane, following the northern site boundary. The combined bridges over the railway and River Crane provide a local undulation in topography and open up views over the lower level land uses and activities.
- 2.1.4 The station is located centrally in Twickenham, the railway line dividing the settlement north-south. The busy commercial centre of the town is mainly to the south of the railway along London Road, which is generally on a north-south alignment. Off London Road to east and west are mainly residential streets, their scale and character varying with their historical development.

- 2.1.5 The Turley Associates Study (2008) classified the residential areas into six character areas:
- Villas
 - Mansion terraces
 - Suburban family homes
 - Courts and parklands
 - Tight knit houses
 - Terraced cottages
- 2.1.6 The residential area to the south of the station which includes Mary’s Terrace, Beauchamp Road, Cheltenham Avenue and the western half of Amyand Park Road, is classified as tight knit houses, with the residential area to the east being terraced cottages. The properties along Cole Park Road are classified as suburban family homes with the area either side of Whitton Road consisting of tight knit houses. To the west of London Road, the residential area which includes Queens Road, Grosvenor Road and Station Yard is classified as terraced cottages.
- 2.1.7 The study recommended an area including the Twickenham station, Regal House and Royal Mail sites as suitable for developments of tall buildings and provided guidance on their design. It identifies the two tall buildings currently within the area that are eight and nine storeys respectively and the opportunity “to create a cluster around the station area which would create a landmark and aid the legibility within the local area. Any future tall buildings should not exceed generally nine storeys in height in order not to break the horizon as viewed from the Arcadian view on Richmond Hill. Also a range of heights should be pursued to ensure more interesting and varied skyline”.
- 2.1.8 For this assessment, the townscape context of the station is divided into the following areas of different character and relationship to the station (see plan on Figure L02 and photographs on Figure L03-1 & L03-2):
- London Road, Arragon Road to Whitton Road, the main road through Twickenham on which the station is located
 - Cole Park Road and River Crane, a predominantly residential area to the north of the station
 - Mary’s Terrace – Cheltenham Avenue, a predominantly residential area to the south of the station
 - West of London Road bridge, largely occupied by the Royal Mail Sorting Office.

London Road, Arragon Road to Whitton Road

- 2.1.9 South of the bridge, the land uses are predominantly commercial, retail, offices and pubs along London Road, with residential in the side streets. The settlement pattern is linear along London Road and the street is relatively wide in relation to the heights of buildings. Near the bridge, Regal House with its pale blue colour and 10-storey height is the most distinctive element. Further to the south, the shopping street is largely 19th century terraces with modern infill. Here, there is a strong “high street” townscape pattern, with generally 3-4 storey large or medium footprint buildings, and tight urban fabric with little or no space between buildings and where buildings generally give onto the footways with no space in front. Regal House is an exception at 10-storey height, separated from the street by the ramp rising to the bridge, and with car parking under and around it at the lower level. Across from Regal House on the west side of the bridge, is Bridge House, a 4-storey modern building faced in a warm coloured brick with large panels of glazing, contrasting in colour and style with Regal House. The station itself appears as a low, single storey building at bridge level, set well back from the street.
- 2.1.10 To the north of the bridge, overlooking the junction with Whitton Road is a curved row of 3-storey terraced buildings, with Dutch gable facades, accommodating cafes and a small Polish supermarket. Across Whitton Road from these is Heatham House, a Grade II listed building, the listing including the house and the boundary wall with entrance gates and piers along the western street edge. The streetscape is defined by the boundary walls or the buildings giving onto the footway. Street furniture is largely traffic lights and signs, standard highway lighting, and traffic islands guarded by reproduction Victorian rails.
- 2.1.11 The station (and site) is to the east of the bridge and the Royal Mail Sorting Office to the west.
- 2.1.12 Building materials vary with the type and age of building, as do window and doorway pattern. Building materials are generally brick and/or render on the older buildings with pitched slated roofs and modern materials on the modern buildings, which are generally flat-roofed. The roof of Regal House accommodates a collection of communications equipment, a landmark in many views. The railway station building itself is in brick, with a modern canopy, suspended from feature brackets fixed to the roof. Generally, carriageway paving is tarmac and footways are concrete slabs, although the forecourt to the station entrance has been upgraded with stone slab and sett paving and new street furniture. Street junctions are dominated by the busy traffic and traffic related street furniture and traffic lights.

2.1.13 South of the bridge, views are framed, near or confined and unexceptional, directed along the street and, north of the bridge, the skyline is defined by trees along the River Crane and in gardens. The skyline at the bridge and in views to the south is “blocky” with larger buildings, Regal House an important feature and, with Bridge House, defining the transition between the openness of the area around the bridge and the enclosed streets to the south. The bridge is also a distinctive feature, especially as, from the lower level of the street to north and south, the bridge screens what is beyond and the view over the bridge opens to a wide extent of sky.

2.1.14 Aesthetics: The sense of balance and unity is strong to the south, but Regal House and the bridge dominate the immediate context to the south of the station, while to the north, the townscape is balanced locally, in that its elements are in the same scale, although diverse, but the busy roads cause a degree of discordance. Scale is medium to the south, generally, and small to the north. Form is linear generally, becoming curved at the Whitton Road-Cole Park Road junction. There is a sense of enclosure along the street and strong sense of openness at the bridge. The area is colourful and diverse in the different styles of building, with their variety of materials, signs, etc. It is moderately pleasant, but disturbed by traffic, visual jumble, and occasion airplanes (Heathrow is not far away), so that tranquillity is low. Building types, scale and styles to the south contrast with those to the north; the urban character changes dramatically at the bridge.

Cole Park Road and River Crane

2.1.15 On Cole Park Road and the northern continuation of London Road, land use is residential, the houses on Cole Park Road having gardens onto the River Crane to the south, with views towards the railway station. It is a built up area, but with good tree cover in gardens, along the stream bank and as street trees, giving the area a pleasant “leafy” character. The residential area is a mixture of 2-storey villas, detached and semi-detached houses of different ages, mainly “arts and crafts” in style – some houses having plaques on their gables with the date 1903. Property boundaries are mainly defined by walls of different heights, and some by railings, and gardens are generally well vegetated. The settlement pattern is related to the course of the River Crane, the street laid out in a sinuous curve. The street is narrow in relation to the heights of the houses. The curving alignment, garden and street vegetation and the vegetation along the river, provide a strong sense of enclosure, views are generally confined with only narrow views available through gaps between houses.

2.1.16 The townscape pattern is informal, a mosaic, evolved rather than planned. The flower and shrub garden to the house on the corner of Cole Park Road (no. 2) is a distinctive feature, visible from Cole’s Bridge. Cole Park Road is crossed by a public right of way leading to footbridges over the River Crane and railway, linking the communities either side. To the east, a second pedestrian way leads to another footbridge over the river, linking to Moor Mead Park, which is part of the River Crane Walk.

2.1.17 Aesthetics: there is a sense of harmony and intimate scale, with very strong sense of enclosure. Texture is provided by the architectural style and detailing of the buildings, the variety of materials and vegetation. Colours are generally muted with colour highlights in the building materials and finishes. There is diversity but a sense of belonging to the same unity. It is tranquil to moderately tranquil, with a low level of intrusion from traffic, trains and occasional airplanes.

Mary’s Terrace – Cheltenham Avenue

2.1.18 This is a residential area, with a regular pattern of residential streets, removed from the busy thoroughfares of the town centre, although it is only a short distance away. The railway and low level station buildings provide a major opening in the urban fabric to the north of Mary’s Terrace, although screened by the high wall to the boundary of the railway land. The roads are small scale and narrow with narrow footways. There is a mosaic of building types in the area. The small scale 19th century terrace houses on the south side of Mary’s Terrace (buildings of local townscape merit) have a small “area” in front, usually bounded by a low wall, with occasional shrub planting. On Beauchamp Road and Amyand Park Road (conservation area with some listed buildings and buildings of local townscape merit), there are larger terrace houses on the east side with small gardens in front and post-war semi-detached houses on the west side extending into Cheltenham Avenue, with gardens with more vegetation. The roofscape is low, and varied by the varied nature of the building types.

2.1.19 To the south, large mature trees seen above the roofs give a sense of enclosure to the area as a whole. To the north, the view is confined by the railway and footbridges over it or by the vegetation along the River Crane, with the open sky above. At the western end of Mary’s Terrace the road continues under London Road bridge, to link with Station Road and Queen’s Road. The footbridge to the north-east of Mary’s Terrace provides a route over the railway, with views west to the station and over the platforms and east towards the St Margaret’s area, linking to Cole Park Road to the north. A locally designated cycle route follows Amyand Park Road.

2.1.20 Aesthetics: The character of the residential area contrasts strongly with the large space of the railway station to the north. Scale is small, even intimate. Colours are muted, a subtle range of brick and roof tile colours, with vegetative highlights. There is moderate diversity in building styles, and overall a sense of unity. Form is linear or gridform. It is a pleasant area with an overall sense of tranquillity, although interrupted by the sounds of train movements and airplanes overhead, and the visually intrusive railway boundary wall and footbridges.

West of London Road bridge

2.1.21 The Royal Mail Sorting Office is the principal land use to the west of the bridge, a collection of low buildings of different types with the characteristic colours and logos of the Royal Mail adding colour. The other landuses include residential of different periods, vehicle parking areas, the railway and areas of open rough ground. It is bounded to the east by Bridge House, seen from this area as a 5-storey building due to the lower land level, and the London Road bridge; to the north, by vegetation along the River Crane; to the west by The Albany public house (a building of local townscape merit) and the 3-4-storey houses along Queen’s Road (conservation area), and to the south by a terrace of new houses set back behind street trees with small parking areas in front. The railway boundary is defined by a concrete panel fence which separates the Station Road-Queen’s Road area from the railway and the sorting office area to the north.

2.1.22 The townscape pattern is random and poorly defined, because of the large areas of open ground and the different building styles and land uses. The skyline is defined partly by the tall buildings at London Road and partly by the trees along the River Crane and Queen’s Road, with a wide view of open sky above. Building age and style is very varied, with consequent great diversity of materials, building features and boundary treatments.

2.1.23 The sorting office complex is accessed by a road ramping down from the northern end of London Road bridge, which continues to a short terrace of “railway cottages” on the north side of the railway. To the east of The Albany, Station Road continues under London Road bridge to Mary’s Terrace.

2.1.24 Aesthetics: The randomness of the townscape pattern and diversity of elements results in a chaotic character and the area lacks unity. It is medium in scale, with a strong sense of openness but with enclosing elements. Building materials and vegetation give texture and colour and diversity. Traffic, trains and airplanes, and the urban busy-ness of the area intrude on its tranquillity and pleasantness.

2.2 The site

- 2.2.1 (See plan on Figure L02 and photographs on Figure L03-1)The railway station is located with its main frontage onto the London Road bridge, accessed from the bridge level, with car parking to the rear at the lower platform level. In describing the proposed development, the bridge level is referred to as “Level 0” and the platform level as “Level -1”.
- 2.2.2 The main part of the site is an approximate triangle between London Road to the west, the footbridge linking the station platforms to the east, the River Crane to the north and Mary’s Terrace to the south. The site also includes a strip of land to the north east of the footbridge between the River Crane and the railway, where a footpath link is proposed between the proposed development and Moor Mead Park further to the north-east.
- 2.2.3 Within the main part of the site, the development area is defined by the planning application boundary, but for the purposes of this assessment the adjacent platforms and rail lines have been included up to the boundary wall to the south and the footbridge to the east, as the townscape unit within which the development is to be set.
- 2.2.4 The main elements of the site are described below:

The station buildings and frontage onto London Road

- 2.2.5 The station is on two levels, with access from London Road at the upper (“0”) level, where the ticket hall and a retail kiosk are located and from where access to the lower level, controlled by ticket barriers, is via an elevated covered walkway to covered stairs down to the platforms. At street level, the station appears as a low single storey building. It is set back from London Road with a wide forecourt, where formerly there had been a drop off layby. The station and forecourt have been upgraded in recent times, with a canopy added across the building frontage, fixed by feature brackets to the station roof, and new stone slab and sett paving, a central sculpture, seating around a tree and sundry signs. To the north of the station building, the land slopes down in a grass bank to the lower car park level, with covered bicycle parking along the upper level. To the north of that, a vehicle access ramps down from London Road to the car park at the rear of the station.
- 2.2.6 The new canopy makes the station more prominent visually from the busy London Road approaches, counteracting its small scale and the openness associated with the bridge. Immediately in front of the forecourt is a bus-stop and shelter and to the north, a signal controlled pedestrian crossing. London road here is divided by a traffic island with reproduction Victorian railings, which provides a refuge for the pedestrian crossing.

The platforms and rail lines

- 2.2.7 At the lower (“-1”) level, there are two platforms, accessing three rail lines, busy with frequent arrival and departure of trains and passengers. They are both covered in recently renewed canopies of profiled steel sheeting. On the platforms are small buildings providing station offices and passenger facilities, including a café, seating and the usual train timetabling information and other platform furniture. To the east of the covered platforms is a concrete footbridge with steps up from the platforms, linking the platforms and providing dedicated egress for rugby fans to Twickenham Stadium, via the station car park to the north. Platforms and terminal rail lines to the north of the main platforms are divided from public access by tall metal railings. Within the railed area, a passage links the west end of these platforms to a gated access to the car park, and a large advertising sign separates it from an area at rail line level which is colonised by rough grass, ruderals and scrub. To the west of the covered walkway, scrub and seedling trees are becoming established on the unused ground between the station and the bridge.
- 2.2.8 The boundary wall to Mary’s Terrace to the south is partly concealed from view from the platforms by scrub and ruderal vegetation becoming established along a strip of land between the rail lines and the boundary. Immediately to the south, the wall has been raised in two panels, presumably previously used to display advertisements but now in plain render.
- 2.2.9 The concrete footbridge to the east provides open panoramic views over the station and surrounding area to the east, south and west, with Regal House a prominent feature to the south-west. To the north, views are confined by the vegetation along the River Crane. East of the footbridge, the platforms continue without cover, and the scene within the view changes to the railway corridor enclosed between fences and vegetation, the buildings of the urban area only partly visible.

The car park and boundary with the River Crane

- 2.2.10 Accessed from a ramp down from London Road between the River Crane and the rail bridge proper, a car park has been laid out in a narrow triangle of land. It is lit by conventional street lamps and separated from the rail lines and platforms by a tall security fence of welded mesh panel type and cranked top with barbed wire. It has a light appearance and allows intervisibility between the platform area and the car park. The car park is laid out in two main areas, separated by a mini-roundabout. At the western end near the access ramp is a small brick-built building with flat concrete roof, to the east side of which is a taxi layby and to the west a drop-off layby and bicycle parking areas some under cover. Between the access ramp and station building the ground slopes up to the back of the footway on London Road, with tall metal railings at the top, originally planted with amenity planting but becoming weed infested. A set of steps with bright orange handrails links the car park to the footway.
- 2.2.11 From the car park the station is seen as a 2-storey building, the lower storey in a warm colour brick and the upper in a darker colour brick and flat concrete roof. The covered walkway linking the station building to the stairs to the platforms spans across the rail lines at the upper level, screening the bridge beyond from view. It is clad in a grey profiled sheeting, and like the station building has a regular arrangement of more or less square windows.
- 2.2.12 The boundary with the River Crane is along the northern edge of the car park. It is defined by a number of different fence types and walls: alternating lengths of brick wall and panels of metal railings up to 2.5m high at the western end and welded mesh type fencing towards the eastern end. At the eastern end between the river and station footbridge is a bin store with metal railings and gate. There is a gate to the bottom of the steps to the footbridge also, which is the egress for Twickenham Stadium on event days. Beyond the northern boundary, trees and scrub are established along the embankment to the river, which here is canalised within concrete walls. It is a narrow river, 7-8m wide with tall vegetation on both banks. Immediately to the north of the river are the gardens of the houses along Coles Park Road, partly screened from view by the river bank vegetation.

The strip of land between the River Crane and the railway to the north-east

2.2.13 The site includes an area of trees and scrub confined between the river and the railway boundary. The river is crossed by two footbridges along this length: one on the public footpath which links Cole Park Road over the metal footbridge to the east of the station with Mary’s Terrace. There is no access to the station from this route. The second footbridge links Cole Park Road further to the east with the southern end of Moor Mead Park, at the northern/westernmost end of the site. It provides enclosure to the railway to the west of the site and a semi-rural setting to the houses on Cole Park Road, screening the railway and trains moving on it from view (although they are audible).

The character of the site

2.2.14 The geography of the site is such that it seems to recede from its townscape context, presenting almost a gap in the tighter urban fabric of its context. That impression is created by the large and dominating feature of the London Road bridge which combines Cole’s Bridge over the River Crane with the much larger structure spanning the railway lines. The low buildings of the station, the lack of buildings because of the railway lines and the height provided by the bridge combine to create a large opening in the urban fabric and the view over the bridge opens to a wide extent of sky.

2.2.15 The station itself is characterised by a disparateness of elements, lack of cohesion, and a generally dull appearance except where the “front of house” areas have been upgraded, using modern materials and creating a more enjoyable experience for passengers. But even in the upgraded areas, there is a medley of elements, especially in the London Road forecourt and in boundary treatments, and the site struggles with its geography and topography to present a positive character.

2.3 Sensitivity or ability to accommodate change

2.3.1 The features and aspects of the townscape of the site and its context that are sensitive to the changes likely to arise from the proposed development are set out in the following table:

Table 6 Sensitivity of townscape elements

Townscape element	Reasons	Sensitivity
Listed building: Heatham House, its setting	Nationally designated; the listed features would not be directly affected, but the setting may be	High
Queen’s Road and Amyand Park Road Conservation Areas	National designation	High
Mary’s Terrace, buildings of townscape merit	Local designation	Medium
The character of the residential areas to north and south, their setting and tranquillity	Residential amenity may be affected	High
The amenity and setting of the nearby residences and gardens along the River Crane	Residential amenity may be affected	High
The openness in the vicinity of London Road bridge, and the sense of contrast in the townscape character to north and south	A key characteristic of the townscape character	High
The amenity of passengers and others using the railway station	Temporary experiences, but as a commuter station, likely to be regular or frequent	Medium
The character and setting of the public rights of way crossing the railway	Locally important routes, statutory designation	High
The character and setting of the cycleway LCN 174 along Mary’s Terrace and Amyand Park Road	Locally important route, not part of the national cycle network	Medium
The site	Of low townscape value, with disparate elements and lack of cohesion	Low

2.4 Visual amenity

2.4.1 The extent of areas with visibility of the proposed development is confined to:

- The site’s immediate surroundings, represented by viewpoints 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10
- Locations further away, where open space or elevation (footbridges) provides a view out of the built up area, represented by viewpoints 5, 6, 7, 11
- The distant, elevated western edge of Richmond and its Terrace and Gardens, represented by viewpoint 4.

2.4.2 The viewpoint location data are set out in the following table, Table 7 and shown on Figure L04. A description of the viewpoint context and of the view towards the site, to whom the view is available (receptors) and their sensitivity, is set out in Table 8 and the townscape context of the viewpoints summarised on Figure L05. The views are illustrated on Figures L06-L16, and a winter view from Cole Park Road on Figure L23.

Table 7 Viewpoint data

VP ref	Location	Easting	Northing	Height mAOD ¹	Distance to site	Arc of view (°)	Direction of view (°)
1	Junction of Arragon Road and London Road, by traffic lights on central refuge island	516178	173523	9	130m	90°	120°
2	Junction of London Road and Whitton Road, by traffic light on western side	516009	173738	7.5	40m	90°	340°
3	Junction of Mary's Terrace and Beauchamp Road, on kerb of footway opposite corner building	516259	173717	8.	65m	90°	160°
4	On the western side of Terrace Walk, overlooking Terrace Gardens on Richmond Hill	518202	174191	37.5	1.9km	80°	195°
5	South-west corner of playing fields off Craneford Way	515422	173575	9	640m	90°	5°
6	On the footbridge over the railway, north of Marsh Farm Road, linking with allotments, playing fields and Craneford Road to the north	515560	173436	13.5	560m	90°	15°
7	On the footbridge over the railway, to the west of St. Margaret's Station, linking Amyand Park Road with Winchester Road	516656	174093	10.5	400m	90°	215°
8	On the footway opposite the garages between 2b and 2c Cole Park Road	516094	173755	7.5	35m	90°	280°
9	From entrance of St. Mary's Primary School, Amyand Park Road, opposite Cheltenham Avenue	516286	173600	8.5	140m	90°	160°
10	From the entrance to the Albany public house, Queens Road	516003	173567	8.5	130m	90°	40°
11	From tennis courts, Moor Mead Park	516465	173964	7	165m	90°	210°

¹ Derived from Ordnance Survey mapping and site survey data

Table 8 Existing view description and analysis

VP ref	Townscape context & view towards site	Receptors	Sensitivity
1	<p>The townscape character at the viewpoint is urban, dominated by traffic and office block buildings, and high street shops to the south. The bridge and the low buildings of the station and sorting office to the west provide an opening in the urban fabric and an extensive element of sky in the view to the north towards the railway station.</p> <p>In the foreground the road rises to cross over the bridge, the top of the bridge providing the near horizon. The view is framed on the right by Regal House and by Bridge House and the Eel Pie public house on the left. In the centre of the view the tops of trees on Whitton Road and on London Road to the north are seen in a narrow fringe, above which is a large expanse of sky. The top of a distant tall building can be seen amongst the tree tops to the right of the bridge.</p>	<p>A view available to many people</p> <p>People working in the offices and shops</p> <p>Visitors to both</p> <p>Pedestrians using the street generally</p> <p>Passing traffic</p>	<p>Pedestrians and people working in and using local facilities: High</p> <p>Others: Medium</p> <p>Passing traffic: Low</p>
2	<p>This is a junction of busy thoroughfares, with open views to the station frontage. Views are available in three main directions: along Whitton Road to Twickenham Stadium roof on the skyline, north to the residential areas on London and Cole Park Roads, and south over the bridge to the larger modern buildings. The context of the viewpoint is relatively "leafy", but with a sense of openness in the view towards the station, because of the river and railway and the bridge over them.</p> <p>The station is seen in the middle ground of the view, a low one-storey building, the visual attention drawn to the feature canopy supports on the roof. It is framed between an early 1900's house on the corner of Cole Park Road and mature trees along the road and river on the left and the pale blue modern office block of Regal House to the south of the railway. Above the low station building, the view is dominated by open sky. The foreground is busy with passing traffic and the clutter of traffic lights and road junction street furniture.</p>	<p>Residents of Cole Park Road</p> <p>People using the shops and cafes, etc, views from within and without</p> <p>Pedestrians using the streets generally</p> <p>People using the station</p> <p>Views from the Regal House offices</p> <p>Passing traffic</p>	<p>Residents: Very high</p> <p>Pedestrians and people using local facilities: High</p> <p>Others: Medium</p> <p>Passing traffic: Low</p>
3	<p>The context of the viewpoint is a quiet residential area, in contrast with the busyness of the nearby main roads.</p>	<p>Residents of Mary's Terrace and Beauchamp</p>	<p>Residents: Very high</p>

VP ref	Townscape context & view towards site	Receptors	Sensitivity
	The foreground is occupied and dominated by the railway boundary wall and, on the right, the brick-walled steps rising to a footbridge over the railway lines, which has a red painted steel plate parapet. To the left, in the middle ground, a concrete parapeted footbridge at the station is seen above the boundary wall. Above these is a fringe of the tops of matures trees along the River Crane. In the extreme left, the end of Mary's Terrace is crossed by the bridge on London Road.	Road	
4	In the midst of a continuous built up area, the Terrace Gardens merging into Richmond Park to the south offer great contrasts of public open space and greenery with densely built up areas, of the flat plain and steep hill. The hill in addition affords dramatic views. Unexpectedly, the trees within the built up areas are so frequent that the settlements are almost not apparent within the view, with only occasional buildings emerging from them. The viewpoint is between two large trees on the edge of the Terrace Walk, which frame the view. From here, the land descends steeply into the Gardens and into the flat plain of the River Thames. The foreground is open, but from the middle ground the landscape extends to the horizon in layers of trees with the occasional urban element. In the left of the middle ground the built up area of Richmond is seen set amongst trees, and a curve of the river can be seen to the right. A wide extent of sky rises uninterrupted above the plain. In the back of the middle ground, the distinctive Regal House is seen above the trees and, further right and further in the distance, the roof of Twickenham Stadium and a pair of tower blocks. In the background some low distant hills can be distinguished.	Residents of Richmond Hill People using the Gardens, a landscape of acknowledged importance Visual qualities of the protected view	All: Very high
5	The viewpoint is near the western side of a large flat unarticulated green open space used for playing fields, with a hard surface ball games area, trees all round the perimeter, semi-detached housing to east and north, and a high wall to the west. The fore and near middle ground are occupied and dominated by the extensive level grass and hard surface areas. The houses and	Residents of the area Residents and others using the playing fields and the footpath link People using the allotments	Residents: Very high Others: High

VP ref	Townscape context & view towards site	Receptors	Sensitivity
	vegetation on the boundary in the direction of the view enclose the open space and screen it from its further context. Regal House rises above the fringe of mature trees seen over the roofs of the nearby houses, locating the site in the view.		
6	The high parapet of the footbridge screens the near foreground from view, and the scene is seen above its horizontal line. Through the middle ground, the east-west railway line is enclosed on either side by tall vegetation, and is crossed by the bridge on the line from the south, an open parapeted structure that allows the view through to the background. In the back of the middle ground, the bridge on London Road can be seen, and beyond that, framed by the office blocks near the station, the tan coloured brick built Bridge House and Regal House rising behind on the right and vegetation on the left. The built up area of Richmond can be seen on the hill that closes the view. To the left, beyond the arc of view illustrated, some tower blocks and Twickenham Stadium roof can be seen rising above the nearer vegetation. To the right, some of the semi-detached houses to the east of Marsh Farm Road can be seen, against more distant mature trees.	Residents of the area and others using the footbridge	Residents: Very high
7	The footbridge provides an overview, allowing the residential area to be seen in relation to its town centre context. The railway corridor occupies the central fore and middle ground of the view, contained to either side by the adjacent built up areas. In the back of the middle ground the vegetation bordering the railway merges in the view due to the curve into the station, and with canopies of larger trees to the right. The characteristic Twickenham Stadium roof can be seen to the right, just above the nearer rooftops. Rising above the railway vegetation, the pale blue office building of Regal House is the focal feature on the skyline. The orientation of adjacent buildings is towards the railway, so that only glimpses or oblique views towards the site would be available from them.	Residents of the area and others using the footbridge Pedestrians following the public right of way Views from the train	Residents: Very high Pedestrians: High Views from the train: Low
8	Views are confined within the residential street, by	Residents with near views	Residents: Very high

VP ref	Townscape context & view towards site	Receptors	Sensitivity
	buildings, street trees and garden vegetation, occasional views available through gaps in the houses. The street and the dwellings and their curtilages on the south side of the road, including two small garage buildings, occupy the fore to middle ground of the view, with the vegetation along the River Crane in the back of the middle ground closing most of the view beyond. In summer, Regal House and Bridge House can be discerned through the middle ground canopies, more of the buildings visible, and more clearly, in winter when the trees have shed their leaves. The houses along this part of Cole Park Road face the site directly. Some have less screening garden vegetation and at this part of the river the bankside vegetation is more intermittent.	of the site from primarily used parts of the house and garden, although these may be partially screened Pedestrians using the public rights of way, although their view is from the street and additionally screened by the houses and garden vegetation Views from buildings of townscape merit	Pedestrians: High Buildings of townscape merit: Medium
9	The school is on a quiet, pleasant residential street, close to the main London Road and town centre, but sufficiently removed from their intrusion to be moderately tranquil and numerous trees give a “leafy” character. The fore ground of the view is occupied by the street and junction with Cheltenham Avenue, with the 2-story houses along these streets extending through the middle ground, filtered in the view by garden trees, some of which are considerably taller than the houses. Regal House is in the background in the left of the view, framed between two trees in this view, its pale colour reducing its prominence against the sky. In the background to the right of centre of the view, the tops of tree canopies along the River Crane can be seen above the house roofs on Mary’s Terrace.	Residents of the area School users and staff, passing or temporary views A view from a conservation area The view from buildings of townscape merit	Residents: Very high School users: Medium Conservation area: High Buildings of townscape merit: Medium
10	The Albany pub is on the northern edge of the Queen’s Road conservation area and overlooks an area of open ground and car parking alongside the railway boundary wall. This is a spacious open view, the open area extending through the fore and middle ground. The railway wall is a medium height screening element along the left side of the view, with the canopies along the River Crane beyond the railway above the wall. These merge visually with the solid parapeted London Road	Residents on the northern edge of the Queen’s Road area, oblique intermittent views Users of the Albany, temporary, open views Views from a conservation area	Residents: Very high to high Users of the Albany: Medium Views from a conservation area: High

VP ref	Townscape context & view towards site	Receptors	Sensitivity
	bridge, a dominating feature across the middle ground. Bridge House frames the view on the right and the complex of communications equipment on Regal House can be seen above its roof. In the extreme right of the view are recent 2-story terrace houses, largely screened by street trees in front of them.		
11	The view is from a large public open space, accessed from the surrounding residential areas and public footpaths crossing the River Crane. The viewpoint is by hard surface tennis courts and over an open grassed area which is bounded by trees and hedges. There is a children’s play area to the extreme right, beyond the arc of this view. The level grass area extends through the fore and middle ground of the view, the boundary trees and hedges and scrub beyond forming a near horizon through the back of the middle ground, with a group of purple-leafed Acers a focal point near the boundary of the park. The roof of Regal House and communications equipment on it can be seen above the canopy, a little to the left of the purple-leafed Acers.	Users of the park and public rights of way, temporary and passing views, people engaged in recreation, but a public open space where people come for the landscape amenity	Users of the park and public rights of way: Medium

3 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

3.1 The proposed development

3.1.1 The development proposals are described in Chapter 4 of the Environmental Statement. The following is a summary of the main features and elements of the development relevant to the townscape and visual impact assessment:

- Two main building blocks, one along London Road (Block A), the other (Block B) set back from London road and forming an L-shape with a part of the block (Block C) along the northern edge of the railway, facing the River Crane.
- The height of Block B would step down from its highest at 8 storeys above platform level (7 above street level) nearest Regal House to 4 storeys at Block C facing the River Crane (3 above street level) and of Block A from 7 storeys above platform level (6 above street level) to 2 or 3 at its northern end nearest the River Crane.
- Two large plazas: one facing onto London Road at street level, in front of the redeveloped station on the lower two levels of Block A, and another at platform level between Blocks A and B opening in a triangular shape towards the River Crane. The plazas would be linked by a concourse at street level, with a set of wide steps down to the lower plaza.
- A riverside walk along the River Crane, extending through the tree and scrub area to the north east to link with the two existing footbridges and Moor Mead Park. It would be lit with bollard lights to minimise light spill into the vegetation and river edge.
- The street level and platform level building uses would be retail and cafés and accommodate a new station, except the part of Block B-C facing the river, which would be residential with a townhouse character.
- The buildings are to be clad in a regular pattern of dark and light brick, timber panelling, metal and glass curtain walling, creeper-hung green walling and glazed screens to the station entrance. The various roofs accommodate photo-voltaic panels and sedum covered “green roofs”.
- The residential apartments would have metal balconies with stainless steel rails and the design of the northern façades, facing the rear of the properties on Cole Park Road, would follow the principles of classical design, as exemplified by terraced housing in Richmond Hill.
- Feature elements are proposed to the lower level elevations, such as, vertical glazed louvers which would be indirectly lit at night.
- The plaza at platform level to the north would be the access for people arriving in vehicles, with parking provided at the lowest level under

Block A, and drop off areas and bicycle parking. These areas would be lit at night with low key column lights, feature lighting recessed into paving or risers of steps and indirect lighting under canopies over vehicle drop off areas.

- The northern plaza is designed to be “pedestrian dominated”, relating to the river and riverside walk, with street furniture of seats, bollards, etc. and a play area at its northern end. The station entrance plaza is to provide outdoor seating for cafés, with a sculptural seat, station sign and feature lighting set into the paving and building frontage.
- Street trees are proposed in the footway along London Road and in the two plazas.

3.1.2 Potential adverse environmental effects were considered during development of the design, and measures to mitigate adverse effects incorporated into the design. The design was altered to avoid or reduce such effects, for example, varying the building heights in relation to surrounding buildings and uses, treatment of the northern façade of Block C in the classical style, retaining river bank vegetation used by bats, adjusting lighting proposals to minimise intrusion on nearby residents and wildlife, providing enhanced pedestrian access and public open spaces. Additional planting is proposed along the River Crane, to provide separation and screening of views from Cole Park Road as well as for ecological benefits and to enhance the landscape of the northern aspect of the development. The assessment considers the effects of the development design with these mitigation measures integrated.

3.2 Impacts on site and context study area

- 3.2.1 The following sections describe the nature of the changes due to the development and their magnitude, and assess the effect on the townscape. The long term impacts of the proposed development in operation are considered first, followed by the short term impacts during construction.
- 3.2.2 The most noticeable change due to the development would be that the openness associated with the London Road bridge at present would be closed with a built development, providing a continuation of the built façade to the street, currently interrupted between Regal House and Cole Park Road. Although the building containing the station would be set back further than the current building, it would be a feature in the street, the buildings angled to open up the station plaza to the street, with prominent signage and street furniture to mark its presence. The façade to London Road would be set behind a formal row of street trees that would carry the “leafy” character of the residential streets to the north around into London

Road. The existing platforms, buildings and canopies would remain unchanged, but would be accessed from the new buildings, via new covered stairways.

3.2.3 During the almost 3-year construction period, activities and changes would be apparent in different parts of the site and from different areas around the site. The entire construction area, including the car park to the north, would be enclosed within a 2.4m high hoarding and much of the construction works below that level would not be apparent from without, except where cranes were required. Once the site was established, changes in the townscape and from construction activities would arise from:

- The works would be apparent throughout the construction period from within the station and its approaches and, due to the site hoarding, from London Road
- The site offices and facilities within the current car park, mainly apparent from Cole Park Road
- Installing a temporary station and footbridge from London Road and removing the existing station and footbridge, mainly apparent from Mary’s Terrace and London Road
- Construction of Block C, along the northern side of the station and facing the River Crane, first to commence about half way through the first year of the construction programme and continuing for about 11 months, mainly apparent from Cole Park Road
- When Block C was about 3 months from completion, with fitting out and related external works in progress, construction of Block B, the main block of the development containing the proposed new station, would commence and continue for about 18 months and would be mainly apparent from London Road and Mary’s Terrace
- About 7 months into construction of Block B and 4 months after completion of Block C, construction of Block A would commence and continue for about 12 months, finishing about 1 month after Block B and would be mainly apparent from London Road and the western end of Cole Park Road
- Completion of external works, removal of the temporary station site hoardings and facilities, completion of landscape works to the public plazas and street frontages, apparent from all areas within and near the site.

3.2.4 As well as proceeding from one part of the site to another, the works would become apparent as the vertical elements were introduced, including the cranes for lifting materials and structures into place, which are to be placed in the station car park during construction of Block C and Block A and part of block B, and in Mary’s Terrace for construction of Block B.

3.2.5 The construction period would be a time of almost continuous change and metamorphosis of the townscape of the site and its context to the new character of the completed development.

Table 9 Townscape impacts during operation

Townscape element & sensitivity	Changes due to development and mitigation; magnitude of change	Assessment of significance Long term
Listed building: Heatham House, its setting: High	The new development would be partly screened from the listed building by existing vegetation along the River Crane, and the building façade is oriented away from the site. The change in its setting would represent part of the continuity of urban development in the area and the street trees along London Road would help integrate it with its context. The magnitude of change would be medium, but not adverse.	Moderate, neutral
Queen’s Road Conservation Areas: High	The proposed development would be sufficiently removed from the conservation areas and separated from it by London Road bridge and the intervening open ground. It would have little effect on the conservation area and would represent a small change in the composition of its modern urban setting.	Minor, neutral
Amyand Park Road Conservation Areas: High	The proposed development would be sufficiently removed from the conservation areas and separated from it by Mary’s Terrace-Cheltenham Avenue area. It would have no effect on the conservation area and would represent a negligible change in its setting.	Negligible or none
Mary’s Terrace, buildings of townscape merit: Medium	The development would partly reduce the openness of the townscape context provided by the uninterrupted sky, beyond the high wall to the railway boundary. The way in which the building would step down in height from south to north would merge the building with the surrounding features as perceived from Mary’s Terrace. It would be a medium change in the setting of the terrace, but in scale with its context. As the development matured and the wider townscape benefits were realised, the effect on the setting of Mary’s Terrace is likely to be regarded as neutral.	Moderate neutral
The character of the residential areas to the north, their setting and tranquillity: High	The development would bring the substantial buildings of the central urban area closer to the residential area, where the present outlook is to low level buildings and open areas of car park. The perceived level of activity would be increased by the addition of residential accommodation, which would be lit at night. The nearest parts of the development would rise to 4 storeys above the existing ground level. At ground level, the more substantial parts of the development would be set back with the northern plaza in front. Lighting is designed to focus on where it is needed and to minimise light spill.	Nearest part of Cole Park Road: Moderate generally to major nearest Block A, neutral Reducing rapidly with distance and with time

Townscape element & sensitivity	Changes due to development and mitigation; magnitude of change	Assessment of significance Long term
	There would be no direct effect on the residential areas, but the changes due to the development would be considerable to medium to the setting of the part of Cole Park Road between houses nos. 1 and 7, reducing for those to the east because of distance, orientation and intervening vegetation. The effects may be regarded as adverse initially but would be mitigated by the landscape design, the form of the buildings and classical treatment of the terrace façades, stepping down in height and presenting residential uses in the parts nearest the existing residential area. Additional planting is proposed along the riverbank to east and west and within the northern plaza, which would be effective in the medium term in providing sufficient separation to reduce the effect on the setting of the nearest residences to neutral.	
The character of the residential areas to the south, their setting and tranquillity: High	As noted for Mary’s Terrace above, the development would partly reduce the openness of the townscape context provided by the uninterrupted sky over the railway. That effect would be most noticeable at Mary’s Terrace but would quickly reduce with distance. It would be a medium change in the setting of the terrace and adverse initially, reducing to small or negligible with distance from the development, and neither adverse nor beneficial but neutral. In the longer term, the adverse effect would be neutralised, as noted above.	Moderate for Mary’s Terrace, reducing to minor or negligible with distance, and neutral
The openness in the vicinity of London Road bridge, and the sense of contrast in the townscape character to north and south: High	The proposed development would fill the openness at the bridge, linking the existing tall buildings at the south of the bridge with the domestic buildings to the north. That linking would be strengthened by the design of the buildings to relate the larger more massive southern part of Block B to Regal House and the lower “townhouse” style apartments of Block C to the Cole Park Road context. The development would also provide an appropriate station frontage and plazas to both main approaches, which would improve the qualities of the townscape. The street scene would be enhanced by the introduction of street trees and the new landscape features of the plazas. While the loss of the openness might be an adverse effect, the development would upgrade the townscape sufficiently to alter perceptions beneficially. That would be a large to very large improvement.	Major beneficial

Townscape element & sensitivity	Changes due to development and mitigation; magnitude of change	Assessment of significance Long term
The amenity of passengers and others using the railway station: Medium	The passenger experience is likely to be greatly enhanced through the upgrade of the townscape qualities as described above, as a very large benefit.	Major beneficial
The character and setting of the public rights of way crossing the railway: High	The footbridges provide elevated views, unusual in this generally more or less flat landscape and a contrast with the generally enclosed or confined views from the rest of the routes. Specific effects on visual amenity are described below, but it is the spatial experiences of the routes that would be changed by the development. The development has been designed to relate in height to the features of its context, and is likely to be a small but noticeable addition to the scene, but not enough to alter the sense of space and local openness when crossing the bridge, a localised neutral change. In addition, the proposed footpath route between the northern plaza, along the River Crane and linking with Moor Mead Park would represent a medium benefit in the amenity of the area and opportunity to enjoy the landscape setting.	The built development: Minor to negligible, neutral The footpath link: Moderate, beneficial
The character and setting of the cycleway LCN 174 along Mary's Terrace and Amyand Park Road: Medium	The proposed development would be noticeable for part of the length of the route along Mary's Terrace but, as noted above for the conservation area, the rest of the route would be sufficiently distant and separated from it that it would have no effect on the experience of the route and would represent a negligible change in its setting.	Negligible or none
The site: Low	The proposed development would replace the variety of low buildings and open spaces comprising the existing station, car park and unused areas of the track with buildings that would enclose and define the spaces related to the platforms, while the platform areas themselves would not be changed. The various elements in the car park, the bicycle shelters, the medley of street furniture associated with the open areas of the station would be replaced with landscaped plazas, the provision for parking and cycle storage moved under cover below Block A. As already noted, the development would also provide an appropriate station frontage, the street scene would be enhanced by the introduction of street trees and the new landscape features of the plazas. These changes would be a very large improvement.	Major, beneficial

Table 10 Short term townscape impacts during construction

Townscape element & sensitivity	Changes due to the construction phase; magnitude of change	Assessment of significance Construction
Listed building: Heatham House, its setting: High	The site and construction activities would be partly screened from the listed building by River Crane vegetation and the building orientation away from the site and mainly during the initial works to establish the site and during the latter third of the construction period, during construction of Block A. The magnitude of change would be medium, intermittent and short term, and adverse.	Moderate, adverse, short term
Queen's Road and Amyand Park Road Conservation Areas: High	As noted in describing the proposed development, there would be no effect on the Amyand Park Road area. For the Queen's Road area, the site activities would be apparent in construction of the upper levels especially of Block B, with the presence of cranes in Mary's Terrace, representing small or localised change in the composition of its modern urban setting.	Minor, neutral, short term
Mary's Terrace, buildings of townscape merit: Moderate	Construction effects on the townscape would occur during the initial foundation construction in the course of the first year continuing with building of Block B through the following 18 months, with activities associated with delivery of materials from and positioning of cranes in the part of Mary's Terrace between Regal House and the station. As the nearer higher part of the Block B was constructed, it would begin to interrupt the openness of the sky seen above the station wall, but the further parts of the construction activities and changes would be largely unapparent. There would be relatively short bursts of considerable adverse change initially, and gradual change as the building took shape, in the setting of the terrace.	Major, adverse initially, becoming moderate, short term