

4. Placemaking

Understanding
The Vision

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Statement of Intent

- The collaborative planning process for the Site revealed a clear need to boost the image and identity of Twickenham and its town centre. Over the Community Planning Weekend in March 2012 and subsequent events, the project team has met with and listened to the people who live, work and play in Twickenham to gather an understanding of the issues and aspirations for the area, as well as consider solutions that can reinvigorate a local sense of place.
- Sitting at the gateway to Twickenham town centre, in the area identified as the northern approach, the scheme looks to embrace this prominent location by helping to connect this part of the town with the wider centre to the south.
- The proposed Community Building, as part of the Site's Mixed Use Quarter, sits at the front of the Site providing a high quality entrance for a rejuvenated gateway to the town centre as sought in the Twickenham Area Action Plan (TAAP).
- This strategy intends to: build on peoples desires and aspirations for the local area; alleviate the disjointed centre of Twickenham; and serve as a catalyst for improvements for the rest of the local area.

Image Boost

- In recent years Twickenham has lost more leisure facilities than gained. Over the Community Planning Weekend, cinemas, a skating rink, a swimming pool (baths), and music/performance venues, were all cited as lost facilities.
- This sense of loss has contributed to a weakened sense of identity for Twickenham itself; further reinforced by a town centre which feels disjointed, particularly when large events are held at Twickenham Rugby Stadium where movement through the town can be restricted. A transport study of Twickenham is being produced by Atkins which will look at potential solutions to alleviate the mobility challenges facing the wider area.
- There is a rich musical legacy that has been pushed aside over time as Twickenham has become almost completely synonymous with rugby. Twickenham and Richmond were at the centre of the British jazz, rock and rhythm and blues in the early 1960s, yet there's little in the area that continues to celebrate this legacy.
- The list of artists who performed at Eel Pie Island from the late 1950s to the late 1960s were a 'who's who' of rock and roll: The Rolling Stones, Rod Stewart (as part of Long John Baldry's Hoochie Coochie Men), Eric Clapton (as part of John Mayall's Bluesbreakers), Jeff Beck (as part of The Tridents), Davie Bowie, Black Sabbath and Genesis. Today, the area continues to produce successful bands such as The Mystery Jets and Noah and the Whale, yet there are few adequate spaces to support local musicians. Heatham House has space but it is only available for under 18's. Bands are travelling to Putney and Wimbledon to find suitable rehearsal space. Furthermore, the area lacks decent performance space to showcase local bands.
- The history of any area is critical in shaping its identity yet there has been little provision to embrace a truly dynamic era from Twickenham's past. Today, the area is not hampered by nostalgia for how things were, but is ready for change and improvement and St James envisages the Site to contribute to these efforts to ensure that locals and visitors alike know the rich and important musical history of Twickenham.

What is Needed?

- Although local musicians feel they lack appropriate facilities, on the whole Twickenham is far from devoid of culture and leisure facilities. The area is home to a number of well-used and loved facilities; however, this offer can be expanded and the Site can contribute. As part of these efforts to understand Twickenham and what the Site could offer to help improve the area, the project team conducted a cultural audit of Twickenham to understand the facilities that were close to the Site and amenities that can be found further away. With the intention to deliver indoor and outdoor spaces that will be used and loved by the people of Twickenham and Richmond, the project team felt that the audit offered an important insight into the local area.



IMAGE CREDITS (LEFT TO RIGHT): Eel Pie Island Plaque, © Jim Linwood; Rugby crowds outside Twickenham Rail Station © JTP; Red Lion Pub, now a Tesco © Jim Linwood; Twickenham Baths 1986, © Stephen Williams

Placemaking

Understanding

Cultural Audit

- The audit revealed a good mix of cultural offers to the south of the Site, including the area's local farmers market, Twickenham library, the Mary Wallace Theatre, the Twickenham Museum, Orleans House and The Cabbage Patch.
- Twickenham has been identified as the largest of the four district centres of the LBRuT, whilst Richmond is classified as the "Major Centre" in the Twickenham Area Action Plan. The audit revealed a higher concentration and variety of cultural sites in Richmond, which is home to multiple cinemas, theatres, and galleries, when compared to Twickenham.
- The audit did not take account of spaces like the Clifden Centre which are important because they offer a place for people to be creative and make art, rather than somewhere to see art.
- The audit, coupled with the collaborative planning process, has shown that Twickenham is capable and eager to offer more to its residents. The northern approach to Twickenham lacks a cultural offer that the entire community can enjoy. It is clear from the audit's findings that the Site can provide the space to boost the offer and sense of identity for the people of Twickenham.

KEY

■ Site Location

■ Theatres

1. Mary Wallace Theatre
2. Richmond Theatre
3. Orange Tree Theatre
4. Hampton Hill Playhouse
5. Normansfield Theatre
6. Puppet Theatre Barge

■ Cinemas

7. Odeon Richmond
8. Curzon Richmond
9. Richmond Odeon Studio

■ Gallery/Museum

10. Orleans House Gallery & The Stable House Gallery
11. Richmond Gallery
12. The Twickenham Museum
13. The Richmond Museum
14. World Rugby Museum
15. Strawberry Hill House
16. Kew Bridge Steam Museum

■ Arts Centres

17. The Old Sorting Office
18. Landmark Arts Club
19. Dickinson House

■ Cultural Historical Significance

20. Twickenham Film Studio
21. Eel Pie Island
22. Kew Gardens
23. London Wetland Centre

■ Local Importance

24. Twickenham Farmers' Market
25. Twickenham Library

■ Allotments

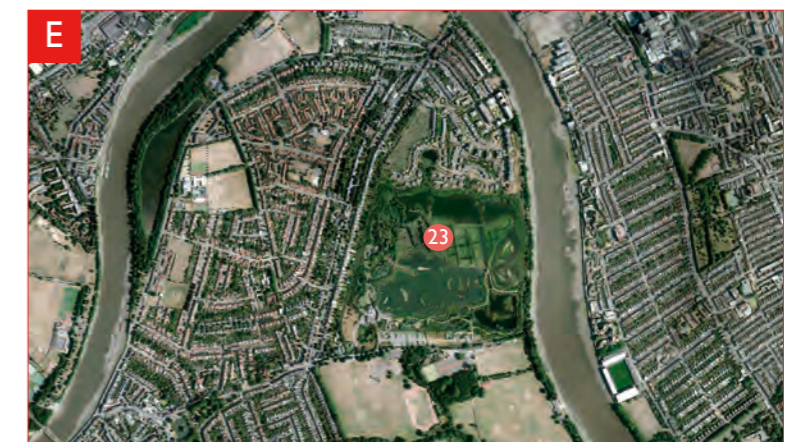
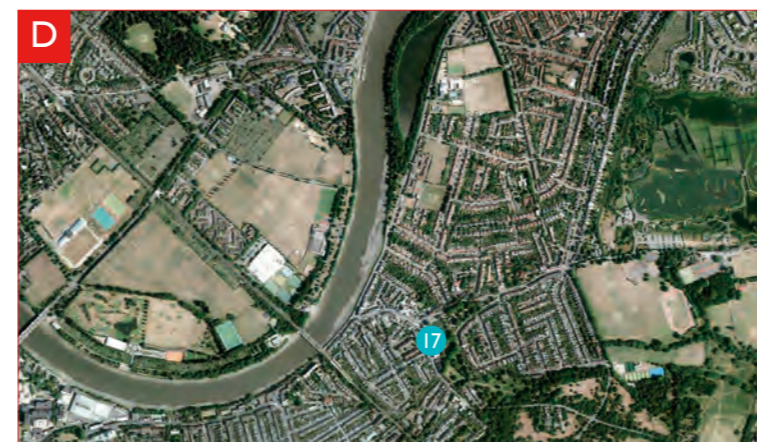
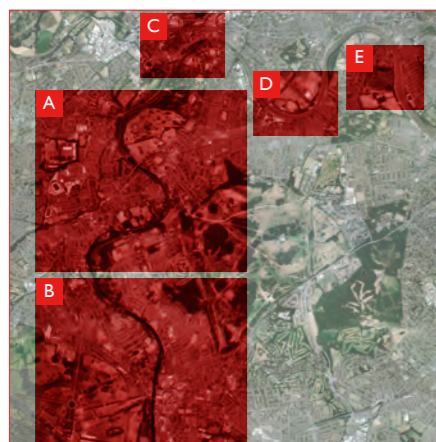
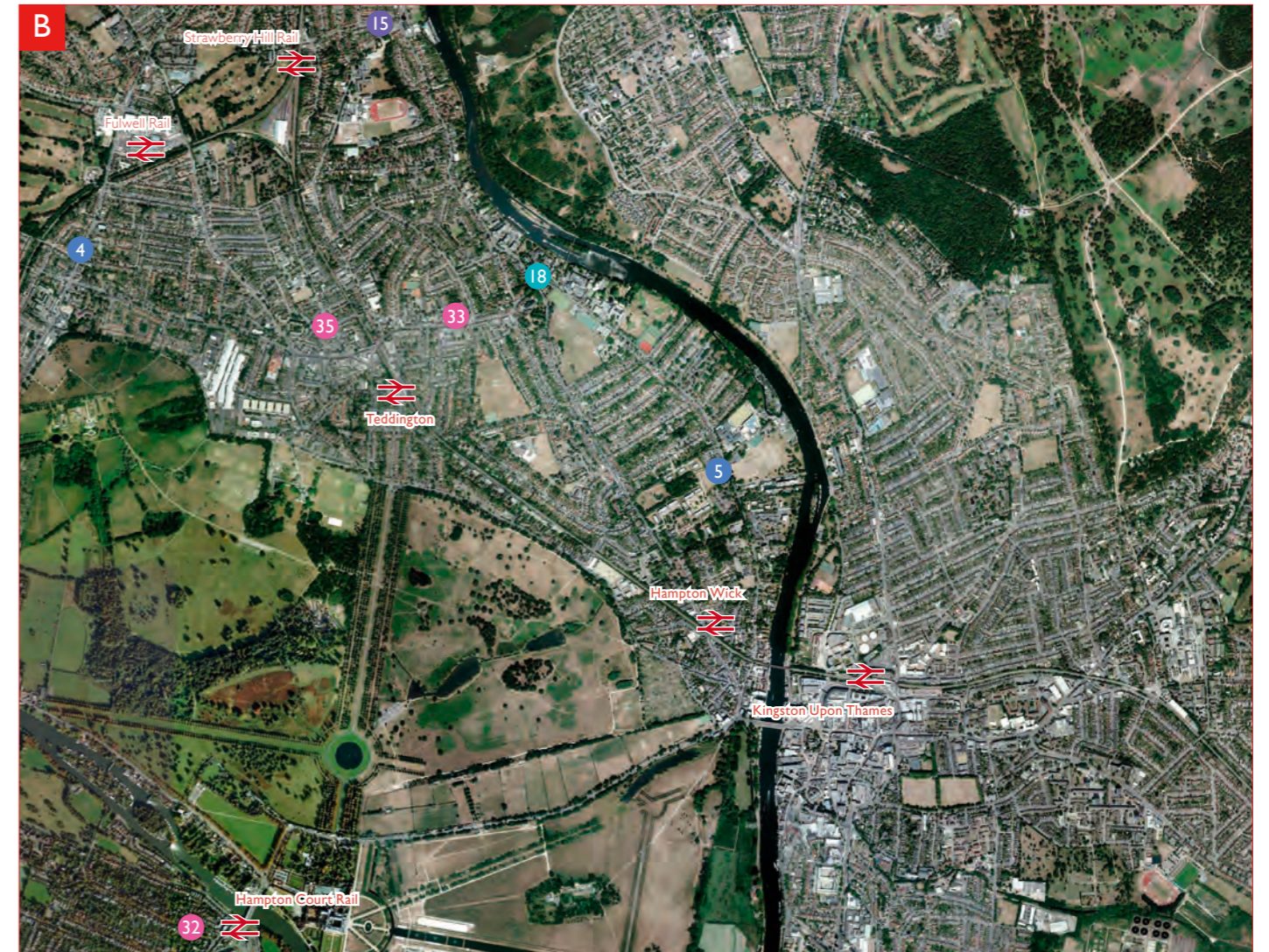
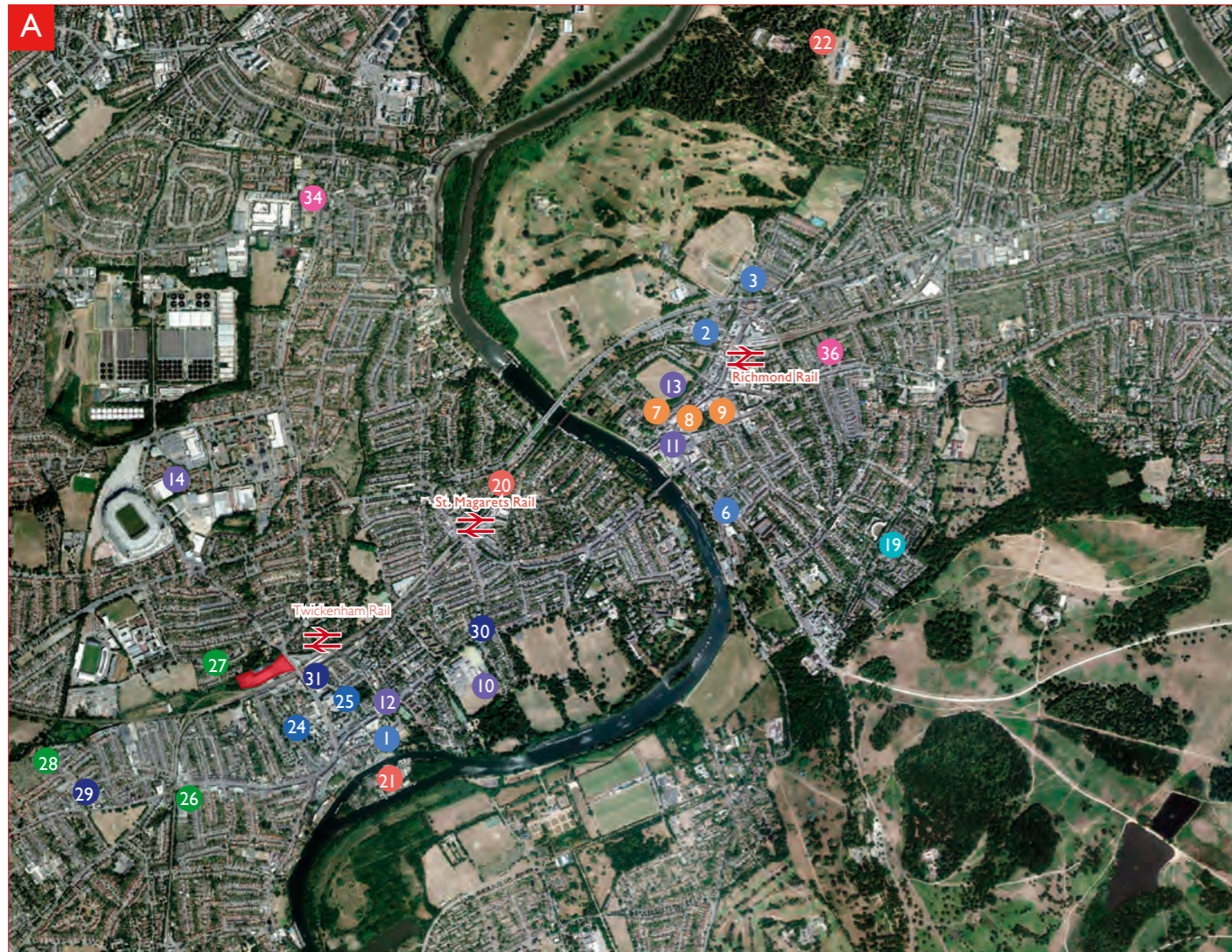
26. Heath Gardens Allotment
27. Marsh Farm Allotment
28. Briar Road Allotment

■ Music

29. Richmond Music Trust
30. Richmond and Twickenham Jazz Club
31. The Cabbage Patch

■ Small Gallery

32. Fountain Gallery
33. Mackenzie Gallery
34. Redlees Studios
35. The Architect's Gallery
36. The Bowman Gallery

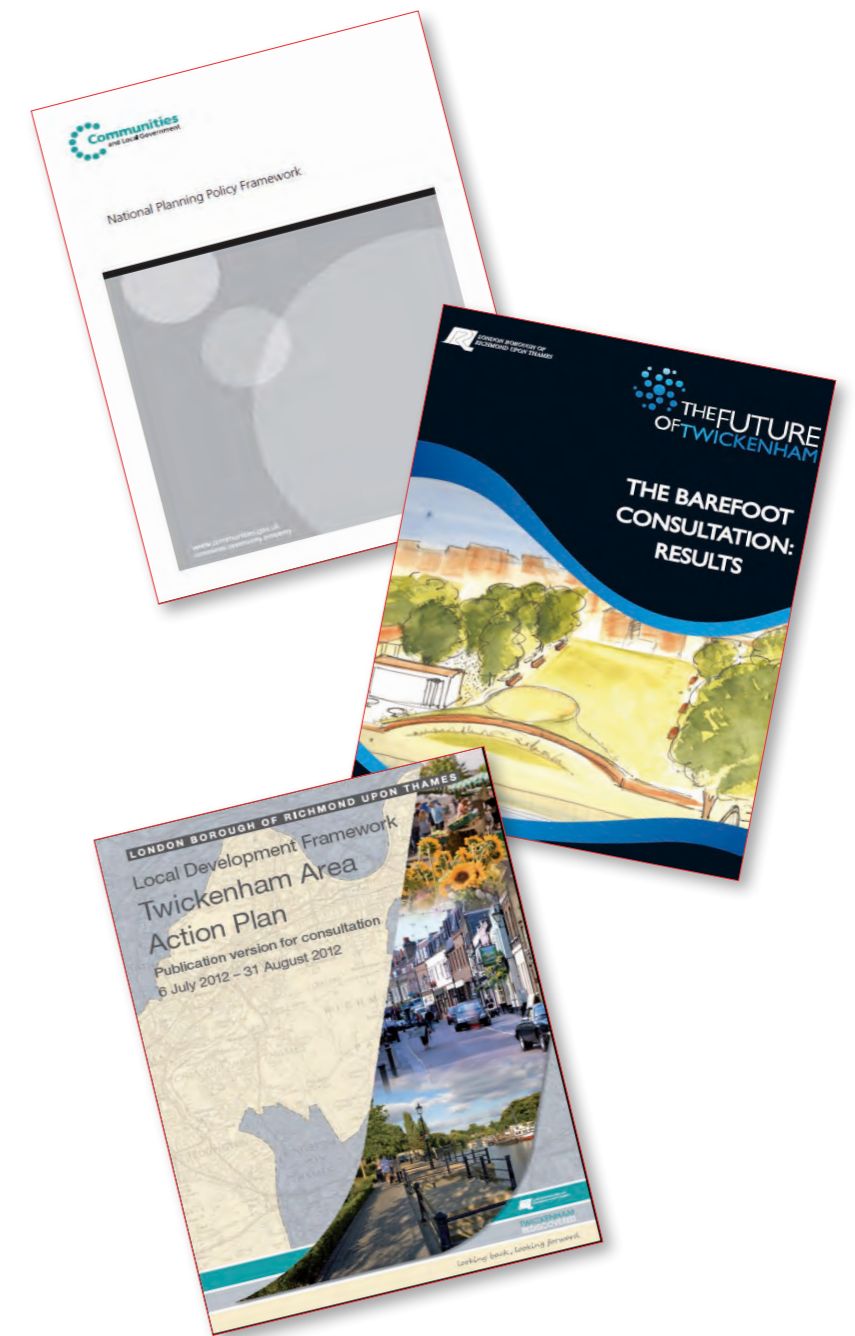


Placemaking

The Vision

Understanding the Planning Context

- This strategy is not only shaped by the findings of the audit and the project team's on-going dialogue with the people of Twickenham but it is also guided by national government policy and takes account of other consultation work.
- The first line of The National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF) Ministerial forward calls for planning "to achieve sustainable development", which the framework sees as "change for the better, and not only in our built environment". The NPPF also believes that planning should "enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives".
- Local consultation, such as the Barefoot Consultation, calls for new development to "reflect the needs of the local community" whilst The Twickenham Village Plan asks for Twickenham to be "made into a place to be proud of".
- The Twickenham Area Action Plan calls for a focus that will "... improve Twickenham as a retail centre but it also provides for a wider range of community, leisure and entertainment facilities which would attract more people to the town centre and a higher level of expenditure and retailer representation."
- The strategy intends to create a new place with public spaces and buildings that will enhance local peoples' lives. Yes, there will be improvement to the built environment, but more importantly the Site looks to provide "change for the better". By addressing economic, environmental and social sustainability, the Site will deliver new homes, and as a mixed use scheme, it will also look to make a positive contribution that will boost the area's image and sense of identity.
- Based on the findings from the collaborative planning process, along with results from the LBRuT's Barefoot Consultation (2010), the new development seeks to contribute and link up with the rest of Twickenham by delivering a mixed-use development that is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.
- Economically, as a mixed use scheme jobs will be created both during the construction process and in the long term, while the new Community Building will have space to accommodate small flexible work spaces where new businesses and enterprises can flourish. Environmentally, land previously off-limits will become accessible to the public. Socially, a new Community Building will deliver a facility much needed and desired in the local area.
- The new Community Building, which is part of a wider Mixed Use Quarter, will animate the Site throughout the week as well as provide an appealing and attractive front door for locals and the thousands of annual visitors who come to Twickenham to attend a rugby match. As a whole the Site will improve public access and connectivity through Twickenham, integrate with the town centre and offer community opportunities.



Character Area – Mixed Use Quarter

- The eastern edge of the Site, facing London Road, will provide a dynamic Mixed Use Quarter, which will include a new public space for Twickenham, a Riverside Piazza.
- The space will have both fixed uses, namely two restaurant units, as well as have the capacity for more flexible uses that can be enjoyed by all age groups. Mixed uses will line the ground floor and encourage a café culture throughout the week.

Public Access and Integration with Town Centre

- The Mixed Use Quarter and its Riverside Piazza will offer Twickenham town centre and local area residents an outdoor space overlooking the River Crane, the Riverside Piazza provides a natural, attractive and active entrance to the Site. Positioned in such a prominent location on the Site, the piazza and quarter will serve as the 'shop front window' for not only the development but also for Twickenham, sitting just opposite the Rail Station.
- The Barefoot Consultation identified a market/town square as the local facility most commonly mentioned as a top three priority area for Twickenham. The piazza addresses and meets this demand.

Community Opportunities

- Whilst the piazza and quarter will have fixed design features and hard landscaping, the space will also be flexible and available for the public to programme and curate. The long-term programming of this space could be delivered by the LBRuT and local community groups. St James will work closely with these groups in the early days to ensure the space will have the capacity to deliver programming the community desires from Day 1.

- The hard landscaping has the potential to support a variety of outdoor uses and performances. The space can also serve as a backdrop/host site for a variety of local activities that are already taking place in the local area, as well as supplying a new offer for the local community (farmers market, breakout festival space). Most importantly, the space will be regularly animated and can provide an outdoor hub for families and young people to enjoy throughout the year with the capacity to accommodate moveable play equipment, table tennis, table football and a giant chess board to name just a few uses.
- Ultimately, this is a space for the people of Twickenham and should be enjoyed by the entire community.

Precedents

- Inspiration for the Mixed Use Quarter and Riverside Piazza is drawn from a number of public spaces found across London and the UK.
- In London, the design and variety of free programming put on at The Scoop, next to More London provides a rich and free offer that the Mixed Use Quarter and Riverside Piazza hopes to emulate.
- Gillett Square in Dalston is a multi-purpose community space that works because it has brought together voluntary organisations, social and art enterprises and public authorities to help revitalise a local town centre. Its programming has included hosting an annual dance festival that coincided with the passing of the Olympic Torch (One Hackney Festival), offering free play equipment on Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons, as well as hosting a Ping London ping-pong table – an effort that has seen 100 tables installed across London. This mix of one-off festivities, as well as regular on-going programming, is how the Site's Mixed Use Quarter will come to life.



IMAGE CREDITS (Top): More London © S Pakhrin, (Bottom) Gillett Square © Gillett Square

Placemaking

The Vision

- In Brighton, Jubilee Square, an outdoor space, sits in the heart of Brighton and offers the local community a blank canvas for events. It is equipped with a dedicated electricity point, as well as a water supply. It has hosted a wide range of events including: performance, food and arts markets, street theatre, exhibitions, screenings, music, and community focused events that are free for all. Twickenham already presents a diverse and full calendar of events and the goal is for the Mixed Use Quarter and Riverside Piazza to support these efforts.
- A major cultural facility that has been identified as missing in Twickenham is a cinema. A community-led 'pop-up' cinema is an option that could work well in both the quarter's indoor and outdoor spaces, depending on the time of year and the nature of programming.
- Inspiration can be drawn from the efforts at Bermondsey Square which have included a 55-seat community cinema, a community-run gallery and a required community fund. All occupiers contribute to the fund which offers small grants to support local community organisations to put on events, activities that make a positive contribution towards the wider neighbourhood and community of Bermondsey. A similar enriching programme for Twickenham should be considered.



IMAGE CREDITS (Top): Jubilee Square @ Los Flowers, (Bottom) Bermondsey Square © Rachel H

Character area – Community Building

- The Community Building provides the opportunity to deliver an iconic landmark building directly opposite the Twickenham Rail Station. Sitting at the gateway to Twickenham town centre, this building must resonant with residents and offer them a contemporary building that they are proud of and will develop affection for in the longer term.
- In short, this building must be readily recognised and well integrated within the Twickenham community. The Community Building will serve as a key catalyst for the Twickenham town centre improvements and should set a bar for community aspirations.

Community Opportunities

- The community planning process revealed Twickenham lacking in space for community activities. The piazza will provide a new outdoor gathering space, whilst the Community Building will fill a local void in indoor accommodation. As a community resource for Twickenham, the internal design is flexible with spaces that can cater for a wide range of groups, needs and differing activities.
- The Community Building will be a place for both leisure and work. As a multi-purpose centre, the building will accommodate everything from a café for people to meet in socially, to spaces where clubs can come together and local societies can hold regular meetings, as well as having suitable capacity for music and cultural activities.
- The new building looks to become a hub for Twickenham, as a place for local cultural activities to thrive and place for local communities groups to feel like they have a base. The building will be an asset for the people of Twickenham and the LBRuT, and has been designed to maximise its potential and flexibility.
- In terms of design, the external façade of the Community Building could incorporate artwork or imagery within the cladding treatment that draws upon references to the Site's location, historic past and local culture. As a community space, there is also the opportunity for local artists to animate the building and public realm with temporary installations, or even a month-long residence within the building.



IMAGE CREDIT (Top): Coin Street © John Thompson & Partners, (Bottom) Dartington © Beanmunster, (Right) Idea Store Whitechapel © John Thompson & Partners

Public Access

- The building looks to encourage social integration across a full spectrum of users, who will all be able to book and use a variety of spaces within the building, as well as a cafe facility that can animate the public areas of the building throughout the day, especially outside typical meeting and rehearsal time slots.
- Although the under-18 community is able to enjoy neighbouring Heatham House, the Community Building proposed will look to support and supplement Heatham House's offer for this age group, as well as the over 18s. The Community Planning Weekend revealed a need for facilities and support for the latter and the intention of the building is to be completely inclusive such that entire Twickenham community has somewhere to go in the local area.

Precedents

- There are a number of examples of Community Buildings in London and across the UK that are inspiring for programming, investment and support for the local community.
- The social enterprise model set-up by the Coin Street Community Builders (CSCB) is exemplar. Although CSCB is a larger operation, it is worth acknowledging the thriving mixed-use area on London's South Bank and its neighbourhood centre, which offers childcare, learning activities, enterprise support and leisure opportunities for the local Coin Street community. While the Community Building proposed will be more modest in comparison, it is worth acknowledging the success of CSCB.
- Another lively community endeavour is the Dartington Hall Trust which focuses on supporting local arts, social justice and sustainability. The site, which operates as a charity, in South Devon offers the local area beautiful grounds, a café, the Barn Cinema, a pub as well as a number of shops, in addition to a creative enterprise centre.
- The Salisbury Arts Centre seeks "to surprise, challenge and include the people of Salisbury Wiltshire and the wider region in innovation, high quality, diverse and stimulating creative experience". The creative and diverse offer in Salisbury, which includes free and ticketed programming, also sets a benchmark for the Twickenham community.

- Inspiration can also be found at LB Tower Hamlet's Idea Store. Each location offers a hub for the local community that is not only home to a local library but also adult courses, activities and an events programme. The Community Building should fill a similar role for the local Twickenham area by having the capacity to offer programmes across the week for all age groups.
- Without a dynamic facility, like Coin Street or an Idea Store, to support the local community, the efforts to reinvigorate the Twickenham identity will struggle. Furthermore, the buzz and creativity coming out of places like Dartington and Salisbury, that is by the people and for the people of the local area, is an energy that can be replicated on a smaller scale in the Community Building and across the Mixed Use Quarter.





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Wheelchair Adaptability	100

Access

Access to Public Transport

South West Train Map



Mainline Rail Services

The Site benefits from good access to local public transport services with Twickenham Rail Station and bus services surrounding the access point of the site which faces onto London Road.

The site's PTAL accessibility rating is 5 at the front of the Site, reducing to 4 to the western section of the Site. The score of 5 indicates a very high level of public transport accessibility, comparable with parts of central London.

Frequent trains connect into London Waterloo as well as to Richmond and Windsor.