

## **Design and Access Statement**

### **Design concepts and issues**

The memorial would take the form of a menhir or “standing stone”, approx. 1.75 m high and 0.60 m wide (**see Fig. 1, p.2**). Exact measurements cannot yet be given because they would depend on the dimensions of the natural stone used). The ground area at the base would be approx. 0.3 sq m.

The design of the monument draws upon the concept of the archaic standing stones found both in Britain and Belgium: these denote both shared history and timelessness. Artistic advice has been sought to determine height and width, both absolute and relative to each other. These are large enough for the monument to make its statement but not so large as to intimidate the human spirit or over-dominate the immediate locality. The concept of using the stone in its natural shape itself determines that the surface of the stone should be left relatively untreated. The design also applies stonecutters’ advice about minimising maintenance. The use of large decorative lettering has been adopted because there is a strong tradition of artistic work of this kind in Belgium. This aspect of the design itself expresses the connection with Belgium, which will be even greater if a Belgian stonecutter is used. This is a strong possibility, though the final decision cannot be confirmed until the East Twickenham is in a position to commission the memorial with Planning Permission in place.

The use of the three different languages on the memorial symbolises the respect for difference required for two or more communities to live together in peace and harmony. The spiralling of the messages, if this proves possible, expresses the separateness and connectedness of different communities which exist together.

The involvement of school-children in helping to devise the poetic message expresses the importance of passing our heritage on to younger generations. We realise though that children are unlikely to produce a message unaided, and therefore their contribution be professionally facilitated through the Arts Education Service at Orleans House.

The overall location of the proposed monument at Warren Gardens site has been chosen because it is just outside the former Belgian munitions factory, the Pelabon Works, which brought the massive Twickenham-Richmond Belgian community together. The location of the monument within Warren Gardens is determined by the physical layout of the gardens themselves. The site was un-landscaped in 1914-18, but the current landscaping is 1930s. Its style is formal yet semi-rustic, and not inappropriately period in feel. The formal layout actively invites the location of the monument at the centre of the three open paved areas.

### **Maintenance**

The prospective stonecutter advises that future maintenance of the monument would be minimal.

There is a possibility of algae deposit, but inserting a copper rod or plate at the top would prevent this. The inscription will fade gradually over the years. The stone too will gradually age but the stonecutter advises this should be accepted. There is a

# Fig. 1. PROPOSED MEMORIAL TO THE FIRST WORLD WAR BELGIAN COMMUNITY

The approximate shape of the memorial

Height: approx 1.7.5 m (5½ ft)  
Width / Depth: approx 60 cm (2 ft)



An example decorative font which could be used for the inscription on the memorial

Message in three languages (English, French and Dutch) to be inscribed on / spiralled around the memorial

Message written by school children, facilitated by Richmond Arts Education Service at Orleans House)

A mock-up in plaster by the prospective stonecutter, showing how the text could spiral around the monument. (Not the exact final shape)



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possibility of graffiti, just as in any other public place; we understand the Council has measures to deal with this already. We have raised the possibility of vandalism with the stone-carvers and have avoided designs which would be more vulnerable to this. Since the memorial is made of stone and not metal, there is presumably no real likelihood of theft.

Memorial maintenance as such should amount to no more than an occasional light clean. David Allister (Head of Parks, Documents and Delivery) has recommended that, if the memorial is approved, it should be placed on Richmond Council's asset list. If so, the occasional light maintenance would be undertaken by the Council.

### **Access**

The memorial site would be accessible on foot via short paths from the ends of Clevedon and Denton Roads. It would also be accessible from the Warren Footpath (towpath), for pedestrians and cyclists from both the Twickenham and the Richmond Bridge ends. Parking in the area is not easy, but the Controlled Parking Zone makes provision for visitor parking. Warren Gardens is freely open to the public at all times.

The normal access points from Clevedon Road allows good disability access. There is easy disability access from the Denton Road entry point, using a specially created ramp and taking a slightly different path into the gardens. There is disability access from the Warren Footpath (towpath), using a ramp up into the park at the Richmond Bridge (NE) end of the park.

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