



Land Adjacent to 2 Mount Ararat Road, Richmond TW10 6PA Townscape Visual Impact Assessment

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of

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The subject site is a plot of undeveloped land consisting of a section of the garden to the rear of no. 1 Spring Terrace (Grade II listed) and a section which was formerly part of the rear garden to no. 2 Spring Terrace (Grade II listed) on Paradise Road, Richmond-upon-Thames, TW9 1LW. The subject site is adjacent to no. 2 Mount Ararat Road, Richmond-upon-Thames, TW10 6PA, and west of the back garden of no. 3 Spring Terrace.
- 1.2. This Townscape Visual Impact Assessment (“TVIA”) has been produced to assess the visual impact of the proposals on the townscape surrounding the subject site, and in particular three principal views of the area. It should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Statement (also authored by Heritage Information Ltd. and dated December 2019). The proposals for the application involve the following:
 - Construction of a single-storey (with basement) residential dwelling to the rear of no.s 1 and 2 Spring Terrace and adjacent to no. 2 Mount Ararat Road (incorporating crossover for vehicular access from Mount Ararat Road); and
 - Tree planting and landscaping of site to the rear of the garden at no. 1 Spring Terrace.
- 1.3. This assessment complies with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, February 2019) and the online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in respect of Heritage issues. It also considers the National Guidance on Good Design (drafted by the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government) [Appendix 3]. This report should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Statement (September 2019) which is part of this application.
- 1.4. The proposals may have an impact on the character and appearance of the Sheen Road Conservation Area (“Sheen Road CA”), and on the settings of the St Matthias Conservation Area (“St Matthias CA”) and the Central Richmond Conservation Area (“Central Richmond CA”) (all within the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames). These three Conservation Areas comprise 19th and early to mid-20th century residential and retail areas, enhanced by a generous number of trees and green spaces. The statutorily listed buildings within the Sheen Road CA tend to date to the 18th century; and those within the St Matthias CA to the 19th century. The statutorily listed buildings within the Central Richmond CA mostly date to the late-19th to early-20th centuries, albeit along a street pattern which derives from the town’s 14th century origins.
- 1.5. The setting of a heritage asset is defined as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Elements of a setting may make a positive, neutral or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral (NPPF glossary).
- 1.6. Historic England’s *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3* (December 2017) [Appendix 2] observes that the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset (paragraph 10). The document states that the protection and enhancement of setting is intimately linked to townscape and urban design considerations. Setting often relates to townscape attributes such as enclosure, definition of streets and spaces and spatial qualities as well as lighting, trees, and verges, or the treatments of boundaries or street surfaces. The document also recommends that where complex issues involving views

come into play in the assessment of setting – whether for the purposes of providing a baseline for plan-making or for development management – a formal views analysis may be merited.

- 1.7. The subject site consists of a rear part of the garden to no. 1 Spring Terrace (Grade II listed) and a former part of the rear garden to no. 2 Spring Terrace (Grade II listed), on Paradise Road. The subject site is accessed via Mount Ararat Road, and it is located adjacent to no. 2 Mount Ararat Road (locally listed) and opposite to some other locally listed buildings. The subject site is located within the Sheen Road CA, which was designated by the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames in 1977. The Conservation Area is characterised by its residential dwellings, small commercial premises, trees and gardens; and most of its statutorily listed buildings date to the 18th century. The subject site is also within the settings of the St Matthias CA (designated in 1977) and the Central Richmond CA (designated in 1969 and then extended five times between 1977 and 2005).

1.7. Authorship

- **Dorian A T A Crone** BA BArch DipTP RIBA MRTPI IHBC - Heritage and Design Consultant. Dorian has been a Chartered Architect and Chartered Town Planner for over 30 years. He has also been a member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation for 25 years. Dorian is a committee member of The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (“SPAB”), the International Committee on Monuments and Sites (“ICOMOS”), ICOMOS UK and Institute of Historic Building Conservation. He has been a court member with the Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects and a trustee of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust. He is currently a trustee of both the Dance and Drake Trusts and a scholar of SPAB.

Dorian has worked for over 30 years as Historic Buildings and Areas Inspector with English Heritage, responsible for providing advice to all the London Boroughs and both the City Councils. Dorian has also worked as a consultant and expert witness for over 20 years advising a wide variety of clients on heritage and design matters involving development work, alterations, extensions and new build projects associated with listed buildings and conservation areas in design and heritage sensitive locations. He is a panel member of the John Betjeman Design Award and the City of London Heritage Award. He is also a Design Review Panel member of the South-West region; as well as the London Boroughs of Islington, Lewisham, Wandsworth and Richmond-upon-Thames and of the Design Council (“CABE”). In addition, Dorian has also been involved with the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition Architectural Awards and the Philip Webb Award along with a number other public sector and commercial design awards.

- **Dr Daniel Cummins** MA (Oxon) MSc PhD – Historic Environment Consultant. Daniel is an historian with a BA and Master’s in History from Oxford University and a doctorate from the University of Reading, where he specialised in ecclesiastical buildings and estates and had his work published in leading academic history journals.

Daniel has a Master’s in the Conservation of the Historic Environment and provides independent professional heritage advice and guidance to leading architectural practices and planning consultancies, as well as for private clients. He undertakes detailed historical research, significance statements, character appraisals, impact assessments and expert witness statements for new development projects, as well as for alterations and extensions which affect the fabric and settings of Listed Buildings and

Locally Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, the outstanding universal value of World Heritage Sites, and all other types of heritage assets.

- **Melisa Thomas** BA PGDipLaw LPC – Heritage Consultant. Melisa studied English and History at university. She then pursued a career in the law for some years, while also working as a specialist guide, researcher and lecturer at Strawberry Hill House, Richmond-upon-Thames. She is shortly to complete a Master's degree in the Conservation of the Historic Environment. Melisa has focused on the historic environment for a number of years on various heritage-sensitive and complex cases. Her specialist subjects are country houses, buildings from the Georgian period, vernacular architecture and urban townscapes. Due to her background in the law, she keenly follows developments in the regulation of the historic environment through legislation, policies and case law.

2.0. METHODOLOGY AND CRITERIA

2.1. A site visit was carried out on 26th June 2019, during which three key viewpoints were selected within the public realm from which the townscape character of the subject site may best be appreciated and understood [Figure 1]. These specific points have been chosen where the proposals might impact on townscape, landscape, scale, height, massing within the Sheen Road CA (and the settings of the St Matthias CA and the Central Richmond CA, in the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames; and the settings of any other identified heritage assets. Consideration was given to the historical development of the area, its physical fabric (i.e. building types and materials), and key views to any notable historic buildings or other landmark structures.

- **Viewpoint 1:** From Mount Ararat Road, looking North
- **Viewpoint 2:** From Mount Ararat Road, looking South
- **Viewpoint 3:** From the rear of no. 1 Spring Terrace, looking South



Figure 1: The location of the subject site (outlined in red); and Verified Views labelled 1, 2 and 3; the location of the subject site (outlined in red); nearby statutorily listed buildings (marked with blue triangles); locally listed buildings (marked with green dots); and boundaries of Conservation Areas (“CA”s) (outlined in yellow).

- 2.2. This Townscape Visual Impact Assessment (“TVIA”) takes into account the good practice guidance outlined in ‘*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*’, Landscape Institute (“LI”) and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), 3rd Edition, 2013: (“GLVIA3”). This guidance pertains to urban townscape as much as landscape. The guidance does not provide a detailed universal methodology, but it recognises that much of the assessment must rely on professional judgment.
- 2.3. This TVIA considers Historic England’s *Setting of Heritage Assets* (as set out in **Appendix 1**), which observes that the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset (paragraph 10). The document also recommends that where complex issues involving views come into play in the assessment of setting – whether for the purposes of providing a baseline for plan-making or for development management – a formal views analysis may be merited.
- 2.4. The analysis carries out a review of the proposals in the spirit of Paragraph 129 of the NPPF using the accepted and established criteria of most Design Review Panels and in particular used by the Design Council/CABE. (Dorian Crone is a Design Review Panel Member of the South-West Region, the London Boroughs of Richmond-upon-Thames, Islington and Wandsworth, and the Design Council/CABE.)
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- 2.6. This TVIA has also evaluated the proposals according to the eight principles of the *Building in Context Toolkit* (2001) which was formulated by English Heritage and CABE to stimulate a high standard of design for development taking place in historically sensitive contexts. The founding and enduring principle is that all successful design solutions depend on allowing time for a thorough site analysis and character appraisal to fully understand context; the principles are listed in **Appendix 2**. The application of the principles of good design is considered to reduce or remove potential harm and provide enhancement. This assessment therefore also takes into account the online guidance relating to good design published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, a summary of which can be found in **Appendix 3**.
- 2.7. In accordance with **Steps 1 and 2** of the Historic England criteria [*Appendix 1*], the TVIA will firstly establish a baseline for each view against which to judge the impact of proposals upon the local townscape. The townscape in each view is described in terms of its constituent elements and character, including development patterns and scale (including use of materials, massing, density and enclosure), any heritage assets, green and open spaces, transport routes and uses; the way in which the townscape is experienced and by whom also forms part of the assessment. The extent to which proposals have an impact on the existing townscape character is often related to the sensitivity of the townscape to change. Criteria for assessing townscape sensitivity have been based on a variety of factors and attributes which are generally agreed to influence the existing character and value of the townscape:

Sensitivity	Criteria
Very High	Strong townscape structure and a distinctive intact character exhibiting unity, richness and harmony, and a strong sense of place. Internationally or nationally recognised townscape, e.g. a World Heritage Site or Grade I listed building, extremely susceptible to minor levels of change.
High	Strong townscape structure, distinctive features and a strong sense of place with some detracting features. Nationally or regionally recognised townscape or high quality and distinctive character, e.g. a Grade II* listed building or a conservation area containing a high proportion of listed buildings, susceptible to change.
Medium	Recognisable (perhaps locally recognised) townscape structure with some distinctive characteristics e.g. a Grade II listed building, a group of locally listed buildings or a conservation area, and in a reasonable condition. May be capable of low levels of change without affecting key characteristics.
Low	Undesignated townscape of local value with few distinctive characteristics. May contain elements in a poor state of repair. Capable of moderate levels of change/enhancement.
Negligible	Weak or disjointed townscape structure, capable of high levels of change/enhancement.

Source: Based on GLVIA3 (2013).

- 2.8. Using the baseline, the impact of the proposals on the views will be assessed by considering how the townscape may be changed or affected by reason of the latter's location or design. Aspects of townscape and design such as scale, height, mass, orientation, palette of materials and landscaping are particularly relevant. The assessment will illustrate how the proposals might affect the elements that make up the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the townscape and its distinctive character, and how observers may be affected by any changes in the content and character of the views. The potential impacts have been categorised as:

Magnitude of Impact	Criteria
Negligible	Impacts considered to cause no material change to the visual quality of the view.
Minimal	Impacts considered to make a limited impact on a townscape where there is some sensitivity to change. Where the proposed change would form a minor component of the wider scene that may affect slightly the character and quality of the townscape in the view or the setting of a heritage asset.
Moderate	Impacts considered to make an appreciable difference or change the quality of the townscape where there is some sensitivity to change. Where the proposed change would form a recognisable new element within the scene that would noticeably have an impact on the quality and character of the townscape in the view or the setting of a heritage asset.
Substantial	Impacts considered to cause a fundamental change in the appreciation of the townscape where there is a high sensitivity to change. Where the proposed change would affect the quality and character of a valued view, the character and quality of a highly sensitive townscape, or the setting of a highly significant heritage asset.

Source: Based on GLVIA3 (2013).

- 2.9. Impacts are therefore assessed in terms of the sensitivity of the townscape affected and the magnitude of the impact or change, and whether the impact is considered to be positive, negative or neutral. If the proposals will enhance the character and quality of the townscape, then the impact will be deemed **positive**; however, if they fail to sustain the quality of the townscape in the view by the removal of characterising elements or add new intrusive or discordant features then the impact will be deemed **negative**. If the proposals preserve the quality of the townscape in the view, or where positive and negative impacts are finely balanced then the impact will be deemed **neutral**.

3.0. TOWNSCAPE VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

3.1. Viewpoint 1 – View from Mount Ararat Road, looking North

3.1.1. Baseline View 1



Figure 2: Baseline View 1 (looking North along Mount Ararat Road).

This View is taken from the west side of Mount Ararat Road to the south-west of the subject site within the public realm, experienced by motorists and pedestrians. It shows (from an oblique angle) the west elevation of the boundary wall between the subject site and Mount Ararat Road. As the view is from the west side of the road, it is within the St Matthias CA, looking into the Sheen Road CA. The purpose of this view is to show a view of the subject site from the other side of Mount Ararat Road within the St Matthias Conservation Area, looking north; and the effect the subject site has on the townscape, the character and appearance of the Sheen Road CA and the setting of the St Matthias CA and the Central Richmond CA. To the left (east) is the tree in the front garden of no. 1 Spring Terrace. The rear elevations of the Grade II listed houses at no.s 1 and 2 Spring Terrace can be glimpsed in the background in the centre of View 1, although they are not easily noticeable. (Therefore the heritage significance of these buildings cannot be well appreciated in View 1.) The boundary wall to no. 1 Spring Terrace along Mount Ararat Road (of London Stock brickwork) is a prominent feature and a positive contributor to the character and appearance of the CA. However, being plain in appearance, the boundary wall does not draw attention to itself. The gap in the wall through which the existing unsightly car park is accessed, is visually uncomfortable and unresolved. To the right (west) is the locally listed building at no. 2 Mount Ararat Road. It is a typical Victorian semi-detached residential dwelling of London stock brickwork, its white rendered bay standing out as the principal architectural feature in View 1.

View 1 has **low to medium sensitivity**, featuring the front elevation of a typical Edwardian semi-detached suburban house, some plain London stock brickwork and the tarmac surface of the road. View 1 is therefore unremarkable and non-descript, even though it includes both the St Matthias Conservation Area and the Sheen Road Conservation Area. The open green space behind the boundary wall (i.e. between no.s 1 and 2 Spring Terrace and no. 2 Mount Ararat Road) is perceptible, along with the tops of trees and bushes.

3.1.2. Proposed View 1



Figure 3: Proposed View 1 (looking North along Mount Ararat Road).

The View following the development of the subject site can be seen in Figure 3. It shows some timber gates across the gap in the boundary wall between the subject site and Mount Ararat Road, the design of which is appropriate within the historic townscape. An increased number of trees and plants can be glimpsed within the subject site. As expressed in the Appraisals for the Sheen Road CA and the St Matthias CA, trees and open green spaces are regarded by the local planning authority as important. The addition of trees and plants within the subject site in the Proposed View is thus an enhancement to the character, appearance and settings of both Conservation Areas.

The proposed alterations will cause no material change to the visual qualities of View 1, other than enhancing it with some greenery through the additional tree-planting within the site and to the rear of no. 1 Spring Terrace. Accordingly, the magnitude of impact of the proposals on View 1 is considered to be **negligible and neutral to positive**.

3.2. Viewpoint 2 – View from Mount Ararat Road, looking South

3.2.1. Baseline View 2



Figure 4: Baseline View 2 looking South along Hampstead Lane.

This View is taken from the west side of Mount Ararat Road to the north-west of the subject site within the public realm, experienced by motorists and pedestrians. It shows (from an oblique angle) the west elevation of the boundary wall between the subject site and Mount Ararat Road. As the view is from the west side of the road, it is within the Central Richmond CA, looking into the Sheen Road CA and the St Matthias CA. Framing View 2 on the left (east) is no. 1 Spring Terrace, and on the right (west) is a row of locally listed buildings (i.e. Roseneath, Homefield, Briarfield, Fourth House, Ivydene, etc.). These are built in a distinctive Arts and Crafts style which helps define the character of the west side of the road, in contrast to the more formal architectural style of the semi-detached houses on the east side of Mount Ararat Road. (The buildings on both sides of the road are three-storeys high, at a scale typical of suburban houses in Greater London.) In the background of View 2 are the locally listed houses at no.s 2 to 16 (even) Mount Ararat Road. In addition, the spire of the Grade II listed St Matthias Church can be glimpsed in the far distance, providing an attractive focal point within the residential townscape setting. The subject site is in the middle-ground between the road and the houses at no.s 2 to 16 (even). The boundary wall of plain London stock brickwork can be seen, and behind the wall is an open green space with the tops of trees and bushes (i.e. the garden of no. 1 Spring Terrace). Both the boundary wall and the open green space (with plants) contribute positively to the townscape and the setting of surrounding heritage assets.

View 2 has **medium sensitivity**. It represents a relatively quiet residential street in the Sheen Road CA and the St Matthias CA with some locally listed buildings (only visible from an oblique angle) and an open green space enclosed behind a wall. There is moderate capacity for change and enhancement. The subject site is considered to make a positive contribution to the townscape and setting in View 2,

given that it provides it with a “breathing space” and some greenery. As such it contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Sheen Road CA and the settings of the St Matthias CA and the Central Richmond CA.

3.2.2. Proposed View 2



Figure 5: Proposed View 2 (looking South along Mount Ararat Road).

View 2 following the proposed development of the subject site can be seen in Figure 5. Given the fact the opening to the subject site is not very prominent, the addition of the timber gate makes very little (if any) difference to View 2. The proposed single-storey building is not visible, being the approximate height of the boundary wall (and gate), thereby integrating within the existing townscape the settings of nearby heritage assets. In fact, the townscape and settings of nearby heritage assets will be enhanced by the addition of trees and plants; and the existing “breathing space” provided by the subject site has been retained.

The proposals cause very little (if any) visual impact/material change to the visual qualities of the View. Accordingly, the magnitude of impact of the proposals on View 2 is considered to be **negligible and neutral to positive**.

3.3. Viewpoint 3 – View from the rear of no. 1 Spring Terrace, looking South

3.3.1. Baseline View 3



Figure 6: Baseline View 3 (looking South from no. 1 Spring Terrace).

View 3 is taken from the the private realm, within the garden to the rear of no. 1 Spring Terrace – looking south towards the subject site. The purpose of View 3 is to show the existing rear garden setting of the Grade II listed house at no. 1 Spring Terrace and the car park occupying the area in which the proposals relate, with glimpses of surrounded locally listed buildings within both Conservation Areas. The purpose of the view is also to show the effect the subject site has on the townscape, the statutorily listed buildings at no.s 1 and 2 Spring Terrace, the character and appearance of the Sheen Road CA and the settings of nearby locally listed buildings. Within the centre of View 3 is the north elevation of the boundary fence between the subject site and no. 1 Spring Terrace, and the side (north) elevation of the house at no. 2 Mount Ararat Road. As such, the heritage significance of the locally listed house at no. 2 Mount Ararat Road cannot be fully appreciated. The view is from within the Sheen Road CA. Framing View 3 to the left (east) is the wall between the rear gardens of no.s 1 and 2 Spring Terrace; and to the right (west) are some bushes, the boundary wall between the garden of no. 1 Spring Terrace and Mount Ararat Road, and glimpsed views of the locally listed buildings on the west side of the road.

View 3 has **low sensitivity**. Although it is within the rear garden to the Grade II listed no. 1 Spring Terrace and in the Sheen Road CA, its heritage significance has already been somewhat compromised by the shortening of the length of the garden and the addition of an unsightly car park (albeit hidden behind a fence) in the late-1990s. Given the modest size of the space visible within View 3, there is minimal capacity for change and enhancement. The subject site is considered to make a negligible neutral contribution to the townscapes of Mount Ararat Road and Paradise Road (being hidden from both); and a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the Sheen Road CA.

3.3.2. Proposed View 3



Figure 7: Proposed View 3 (looking South from no. 1 Spring Terrace).

View 3 following the proposed development of the subject site can be seen in Figure 7. The timber fence has been replaced by a wall of London stock brickwork, which is more historically appropriate; and from behind the wall some additional plants and trees can be glimpsed. Both of these alterations enhance the garden setting of the Grade II listed building at no. 1 Spring Terrace. The proposed single storey building is not visible within this view. The positive contribution made to the setting by surrounding locally listed buildings will not be affected. In the foreground there is some proposed landscaping of the garden to the rear of no. 1 Spring Terrace.

As stated in the Heritage Statement (also authored by Heritage Information Ltd., December 2019), the garden to the rear of the house at no. 1 Spring Terrace has historically comprised an open lawn with a section of “wilderness” at the end. It is effectively this end portion which has been fenced off since the 1990s and converted into a car park. The appearance of the brick wall impacts upon the landscape to the extent that it provides a more definitive divide between the lawn and the land which is the subject of the proposals. It is considered that the proposed alterations are considered to make a limited impact on the landscape in View 3, and on the townscapes of Mount Ararat Road and Paradise Road. Accordingly, the magnitude of impact of the proposals on View 3 is considered to be **minimal and neutral**.

4.0. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

4.1. This TVIA has also evaluated the proposals according to the eight principles of the *Building in Context Toolkit* (2001) which was formulated by English Heritage and CABI to stimulate a high standard of design for development taking place in historically sensitive contexts [Appendix 2]. It is considered that the proposals have taken full account of the eight principles, as follows:

- Principle 1: The subject site comprises a car park and a small area of overgrown vegetation, both of which possess little (if any) heritage significance. It is considered that the only value in retaining what is there would be to maintain a sense of space between the existing buildings. However, the proposed single-storey building has been designed in order to maintain the existing sense of space, while the proposed sedum roof and new trees enhance any natural green credentials which the site has.
- Principles 2 & 3: The Heritage Statement which accompanies this report (also by Heritage Information and dated September 2019) assesses the history of the local area, and the significance of the subject site within the Sheen Road Conservation Area. The proposed development has thus been informed by an understanding of the history, character and identity of the subject site, the streetscape, and the surrounding area. It has been designed in order to be as discreet as possible, and to act as a foil for nearby statutorily and locally listed buildings.
- Principle 4: The subject site is located on Mount Ararat Road, which is a quiet residential street, but also a popular thoroughfare between Richmond's town centre and Richmond Park. It has been designed as a discreet and humble single-storey house (with a basement) which will have minimal impact upon the townscape; and therefore it is considered to sit happily in the pattern of existing development and the routes through and around it. Furthermore, the proposed building is behind a wall and hidden from the public realm.
- Principles 5, 6 & 8: This report has identified three key views of the existing site, and assessed the impact which the proposed changes are likely to have on the subject site itself, on its surrounding streetscape, on the settings of neighbouring heritage assets, and on the character, appearance and settings of the three Conservation Areas. The proposals are likely to have a minimal neutral to positive impact on these.
- Principle 7: The proposed development comprises London stock brickwork, in common with adjacent statutorily and locally listed buildings and boundary walls, unseen from the public realm. The appointed architects are committed to designing and constructing a building which is of high quality, while also remaining modest.

5.0. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. This Townscape Visual Impact Assessment, in accordance with the latest Historic England guidance on setting and townscape [Appendix 1], has undertaken the recommended four-step approach in establishing the visual impact of the proposal on the local townscape, the character and appearance of the Sheen Road Conservation Area and the St Matthias Conservation Area (London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames) in the three views. The heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposal have been identified (Step 1), the contribution of setting to the significance of these heritage assets has been assessed (Step 2), the impact of the proposals on the settings and significance of these heritage assets has been assessed (Step 3), and the design has sought to minimise harm and to maximise enhancement to the significance and settings of these heritage assets (Step 4).
- 5.2. Taking into account national guidance on good design [Appendix 3], the proposed development is in London stock brickwork, thereby complementing its local context and character. Every effort has been made to ensure the proposals have as minimal a visual impact as possible. The building has been specifically designed as a single storey building at the approximate height of surrounding brick walls (notably the one fronting Mount Ararat Road), in order to sit comfortably within the existing space and to draw as little attention to itself as possible (partially “hidden” by trees and plants). It is considered to successfully integrate within the locally distinctive character, acting as a foil to nearby statutorily and locally listed buildings. The proposed building will be virtually imperceptible from the public realm, with a negligible impact on the settings of the Grade II listed buildings at Spring Terrace and any other heritage assets. The proposed boundary treatments (i.e. the appropriately designed timber gates fronting the street and the brick boundary wall to rear of the gardens of nos 1 and 2 Spring Terrace) and the additional planting are considered to be well-considered responses to the sensitivity of the local context. The townscape will therefore be enhanced, as will the appreciation of the heritage significance of the Grade II listed houses along Spring Terrace.
- 5.3. This TVIA has also evaluated the proposals according to the eight principles of the *Building in Context Toolkit* (2001) in Chapter 4.
- 5.4. **The proposals overall will have a minimal and neutral visual impact** on the local townscape character and the setting, character and appearance of the three Conservation Areas. The design of the proposed work has been based on a thorough understanding of the history and development of the subject site, and also of the historic and existing townscape of the three Conservation Areas within the three assessed Views.

APPENDIX 1: HISTORIC ENGLAND'S PLANNING NOTE 3: "THE SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS", DEC 2017

This note gives assistance concerning the assessment of the setting of heritage assets. Historic England recommends the following broad approach to assessment, undertaken as a series of steps that apply proportionately to the complexity of the case, from straightforward to complex:

Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected.

The setting of a heritage asset is 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced'. Where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way) then the proposed development can be said to affect the setting of that asset. The starting point of the analysis is to identify those heritage assets likely to be affected by the development proposal.

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated.

This assessment of the contribution to significance made by setting will provide the baseline for establishing the effects of a proposed development on significance. We recommend that this assessment should first address the key attributes of the heritage asset itself and then consider:

- the physical surroundings of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets
- the asset's intangible associations with its surroundings, and patterns of use
- the contribution made by noises, smells, etc to significance, and
- the way views allow the significance of the asset to be appreciated

Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it.

The wide range of circumstances in which setting may be affected and the range of heritage assets that may be involved precludes a single approach for assessing effects. Different approaches will be required for different circumstances. In general, however, the assessment should address the attributes of the proposed development in terms of its:

- location and siting
- form and appearance
- wider effects
- permanence

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.

Enhancement may be achieved by actions including:

- removing or re-modelling an intrusive building or feature
- replacement of a detrimental feature by a new and more harmonious one
- restoring or revealing a lost historic feature or view
- introducing a wholly new feature that adds to the public appreciation of the asset
- introducing new views (including glimpses or better framed views) that add to the public experience of the asset, or
- improving public access to, or interpretation of, the asset including its setting

Options for reducing the harm arising from development may include the repositioning of a development or its elements, changes to its design, the creation of effective long-term visual or acoustic screening, or management measures secured by planning conditions or legal agreements. For some developments affecting setting, the design of a development may not be capable of sufficient adjustment to avoid or significantly reduce the harm, for example where impacts are caused by fundamental issues such as the proximity, location, scale, prominence or noisiness of a development. In other cases, good design may reduce or remove the harm, or provide enhancement. Here the design quality may be an important consideration in determining the balance of harm and benefit.

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

It is good practice to document each stage of the decision-making process in a non-technical and proportionate way, accessible to non-specialists. This should set out clearly how the setting of each heritage asset affected contributes to its significance or to the appreciation of its significance, as well as what the anticipated effect of the development will be, including of any mitigation proposals.

Assessment Step 2 Checklist

The starting point for this stage of the assessment is to consider the significance of the heritage asset itself and then establish the contribution made by its setting. The following is a (non-exhaustive) check-list of potential attributes of a setting that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance. It may be the case that only a limited selection of the attributes listed is likely to be particularly important in terms of any single asset.

The asset's physical surroundings

- Topography
- Aspect
- Other heritage assets (including buildings, structures, landscapes, areas or archaeological remains)
- Definition, scale and "grain" of surrounding streetscape, landscape and spaces
- Formal design (eg. hierarchy, layout)
- Orientation and aspect
- Historic materials and surfaces
- Green space, trees and vegetation
- Openness, enclosure and boundaries
- Functional relationships and communications
- History and degree of change over time

Experience of the asset

- Surrounding landscape or townscape character
- Views from, towards, through, across and including the asset
- Intentional intervisibility with other historic and natural features
- Visual dominance, prominence or role as focal point
- Noise, vibration and other nuisances
- Tranquillity, remoteness, "wildness"
- Busyness, bustle, movement and activity
- Scents and smells
- Diurnal changes
- Sense of enclosure, seclusion, intimacy or privacy
- Land use
- Accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement
- Degree of interpretation or promotion to the public
- Rarity of comparable survivals of setting
- Cultural associations
- Celebrated artistic representations
- Traditions

Assessment Step 3 Checklist

The following is a (non-exhaustive) check-list of the potential attributes of a development affecting setting that may help to elucidate its implications for the significance of the heritage asset. It may be that only a limited selection of these is likely to be particularly important in terms of any particular development.

Location and siting of development

- Proximity to asset
- Position in relation to relative topography and watercourses
- Position in relation to key views to, from and across
- Orientation
- Degree to which location will physically or visually isolate asset

Form and appearance of development

- Prominence, dominance, or conspicuousness
- Competition with or distraction from the asset
- Dimensions, scale and massing
- Proportions
- Visual permeability (i.e. extent to which it can be seen through), reflectivity
- Materials (texture, colour, reflectiveness, etc)
- Architectural and landscape style and/or design
- Introduction of movement or activity
- Diurnal or seasonal change

Wider effects of the development

- Change to built surroundings and spaces
- Change to skyline, silhouette
- Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc.
- Lighting effects and “light spill”
- Change to general character (eg. urbanising or industrialising)
- Changes to public access use or amenity
- Changes to land use, land cover, tree cover
- Changes to communications/ accessibility/ permeability, including traffic, road junctions and car-parking, etc
- Changes to ownership arrangements (fragmentation/ permitted development/ etc)
- Economic viability

Permanence of the development

- Anticipated lifetime/ temporariness
- Recurrence
- Reversibility

APPENDIX 2: THE BUILDING IN CONTEXT TOOLKIT

The Building in Context Toolkit grew out of the publication **Building in Context** published by English Heritage and CABI in 2001. The purpose of that publication was to stimulate a high standard of design for development taking place in historically sensitive contexts. The founding and enduring principle is that all successful design solutions depend on allowing time for a thorough site analysis and character appraisal to fully understand context.

The eight Building in Context principles are:

Principle 1

A successful project will start with an assessment of the value of retaining what is there.

Principle 2

A successful project will relate to the geography and history of the place and lie of the land.

Principle 3

A successful project will be informed by its own significance so that its character and identity will be appropriate to its use and context.

Principle 4

A successful project will sit happily in the pattern of existing development and the routes through and around it.

Principle 5

A successful project will respect important views.

Principle 6

A successful project will respect the scale of neighbouring buildings.

Principle 7

A successful project will use materials and building methods which are as high quality as those used in existing buildings.

Principle 8

A successful project will create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting.

APPENDIX 3: SUMMARY OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE ON GOOD DESIGN (DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT)

Why does good design matter?

Good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises that design quality matters and that planning should drive up standards across all forms of development. As a core planning principle, plan-makers and decision takers should always seek to secure high quality design.

Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations. Good design responds in a practical and creative way to both the function and identity of a place. It puts land, water, drainage, energy, community, economic, infrastructure and other such resources to the best possible use – over the long as well as the short term.

Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 26-001-20140306

Planning should promote local character (including landscape setting)

Development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, local man-made and natural heritage and culture, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

The successful integration of all forms of new development with their surrounding context is an important design objective, irrespective of whether a site lies on the urban fringe or at the heart of a town centre.

When thinking about new development the site's land form should be taken into account. Natural features and local heritage resources can help give shape to a development and integrate it into the wider area, reinforce and sustain local distinctiveness, reduce its impact on nature and contribute to a sense of place. Views into and out of larger sites should also be carefully considered from the start of the design process.

Local building forms and details contribute to the distinctive qualities of a place. These can be successfully interpreted in new development without necessarily restricting the scope of the designer. Standard solutions rarely create a distinctive identity or make best use of a particular site. The use of local materials, building methods and details can be an important factor in enhancing local distinctiveness when used in evolutionary local design, and can also be used in more contemporary design. However, innovative design should not be discouraged.

The opportunity for high quality hard and soft landscape design that helps to successfully integrate development into the wider environment should be carefully considered from the outset, to ensure it complements the architecture of the proposals and improves the overall quality of townscape or landscape. Good landscape design can help the natural surveillance of an area, creatively help differentiate public and private space and, where appropriate, enhance security.

Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 26-007-20140306

A well designed space has a distinctive character

Distinctiveness is what often makes a place special and valued. It relies on physical aspects such as:

- the local pattern of street blocks and plots;
- building forms;
- details and materials;
- style and vernacular;
- landform and gardens, parks, trees and plants; and
- wildlife habitats and micro-climates.

Distinctiveness is not solely about the built environment – it also reflects an area's function, history, culture and its potential need for change.

Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 26-020-20140306

A well designed space is attractive

The way a place looks, sounds, feels, and even smells, affects its attractiveness and long term success. Streetscapes, landscapes, buildings and elements within them all have an influence. So too can more transient elements – such as the way sunshine and shadows move across an area or the way it is maintained and cleaned. Composition of elements and the relationship between colours, textures, shapes and patterns are all important, as is the depth of views, particularly across roofscapes or between buildings.

Paragraph: 021 Reference ID: 26-021-20140306

Consider layout

This is how buildings, street blocks, routes and open spaces are positioned in an area and how they relate to each other. This provides the basic plan for development. Developments that endure have flexible layouts and design.

New development should look to respond appropriately to the existing layout of buildings, streets and spaces to ensure that adjacent buildings relate to each other, streets are connected, and spaces complement one another.

The layout of areas, whether existing or new, should be considered in relation to adjoining buildings, streets and spaces; the topography; the general pattern of building heights in the area; and views, vistas and landmarks into and out of the development site.

There may be an existing prevailing layout that development should respond to and potentially improve. Designs should ensure that new and existing buildings relate well to each other, that streets are connected, and spaces complement one another. This could involve following existing building lines, creating new links between existing streets or providing new public spaces.

In general urban block layouts provide an efficient template with building fronts and entrances to public spaces and their more private backs to private spaces. Such layouts minimise the creation of unsupervised and unsafe public

spaces and unsafe access routes. However building frontages do not have to be continuous or flat. Breaks and features particularly where they emphasise entrances, can be successfully incorporated.

There should be a clear definition between public and private space. A buffer zone, such as a front garden, can successfully be used between public outdoor space and private internal space to support privacy and security.

Paragraph: 024 Reference ID: 26-024-20140306

Consider form

Buildings can be formed in many ways, for example tall towers, individual stand alone units, long and low blocks, terraces. They can all be successful, or unsuccessful, depending on where they are placed, how they relate to their surroundings, their use and their architectural and design quality.

Similarly streets can take different forms. From wide motorways with few entrances and exits to narrow lanes with many buildings accessed directly from them. Care should be taken to design the right form for the right place.

Some forms pose specific design challenges, for example how taller buildings meet the ground and how they affect local wind and sunlight patterns should be carefully considered. The length of some lower blocks can mean they disrupt local access and movement routes. Stand alone buildings can create ill defined spaces around them and terraces can appear monotonous and soulless if poorly designed.

Paragraph: 025 Reference ID: 26-025-20140306

Consider scale

This relates both to the overall size and mass of individual buildings and spaces in relation to their surroundings, and to the scale of their parts.

Decisions on building size and mass, and the scale of open spaces around and between them, will influence the character, functioning and efficiency of an area. In general terms too much building mass compared with open space may feel overly cramped and oppressive, with access and amenity spaces being asked to do more than they feasibly can. Too little and neither land as a resource or monetary investment will be put to best use.

The size of individual buildings and their elements should be carefully considered, as their design will affect the: overshadowing and overlooking of others; local character; skylines; and vistas and views. The scale of building elements should be both attractive and functional when viewed and used from neighbouring streets, gardens and parks.

The massing of development should contribute to creating distinctive skylines in cities, towns and villages, or to respecting existing skylines. Consideration needs to be given to roof space design within the wider context, with any adverse visual impact of rooftop servicing minimised.

Account should be taken of local climatic conditions, including daylight and sunlight, wind, temperature and frost pockets.

Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 26-026-20140306

Consider details

The quality of new development can be spoilt by poor attention to detail. Careful consideration should be given to items such as doors, windows, porches, lighting, flues and ventilation, gutters, pipes and other rain water details, ironmongery and decorative features. It is vital not only to view these (and other) elements in isolation, but also to consider how they come together to form the whole and to examine carefully the 'joins' between the elements.

Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 26-027-20140306

Consider materials

Materials should be practical, durable, affordable and attractive. Choosing the right materials can greatly help new development to fit harmoniously with its surroundings. They may not have to match, but colour, texture, grain and reflectivity can all support harmony.

There are a wide range of building and open space materials available and more products developed all the time. Innovative construction materials and techniques can help to achieve well designed homes and other buildings. This could include offsite construction and manufacturing which can help to deliver energy efficient and durable buildings more quickly. Although materials and building techniques may not be specified before planning permission is granted, the functions they will be expected to perform should be clear early on.

Paragraph: 028 Reference ID: 26-028-20140306