

TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

IN SUPPORT OF A PLANNING APPLICATION FOR
DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF
28 NO. AFFORDABLE RETIREMENT APARTMENTS AND
ASSOCIATED WORKS

ON BEHALF OF HOUSING 21

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

Prepared by: Alison Smith CMLI/ Radek Chanas CMLI

Pegasus Group

Pegasus House | Querns Business Centre | Whitworth Road | Cirencester | Gloucestershire | GL7 1RT

T 01285 641717 | F 01285 642348 | W www.pegasusgroup.co.uk

Birmingham | Bracknell | Bristol | Cambridge | Cirencester | East Midlands | Leeds | Liverpool | London | Manchester | Newcastle | Peterborough

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) (non-EIA development) has been prepared on behalf of Housing 21 by Pegasus Group. The TVIA has been prepared in support of a planning application for a redevelopment of land at Howson Terrace, Richmond Hill, Richmond upon Thames (hereinafter referred to as “the site”). The site falls within London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (“the LB Richmond”) planning authority area.

1.2 The proposed development would comprise demolition of three existing 2-storey residential buildings, and redevelopment to provide a predominantly 5 to 4-storey, reducing to 2 storey, retirement apartment building. The proposed accommodation safeguards existing mature trees within and outside of the site and introduces ornamental landscape planting and structural vegetation as a setting to the building, which is described in detail within the Design and Access Statement (DAS) that is submitted in support of the application.

1.3 This TVIA sets out details of the site and the proposals, analyses the relevant planning policies, and explains why, in townscape character and visual terms, the proposed development is acceptable.

1.4 The location of the proposed development is shown on the Site Location Plan (Figure 1). The assessment has been prepared by a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute and considers the potential effect of the proposed development upon:

- Townscape character.
- Townscape and landscape elements.
- Visual amenity.

1.5 The main objectives of the TVIA are:

- To identify, evaluate and describe the current townscape character of the site and its surroundings and any notable individual townscape and landscape elements within the site.
- To determine the sensitivity of the townscape to the type of development proposed.
- To identify potential visual receptors (i.e. people who would be able to see the development) and evaluate their sensitivity to the type of changes proposed.
- To identify and describe any effects of the development in so far as they affect the townscape and wider landscape and/or views of it, and to evaluate the magnitude of change due to these effects.

- 1.6 Developments of the type proposed tend to give rise to effects within the townscape by virtue of a number of attributes specific to both their individual form and to the location, and mass of the built form. These attributes include:
- Geometric form, particularly visible in the form of elevations and roofline.
 - Relationship to the scale and nature of the existing elements and components / features present within the local townscape.
- 1.7 Attributes of the proposed development may affect different components of the townscape in different ways or may combine to result in an effect. The assessment concentrates on the change that the proposal will bring to the different attributes of the townscape or view on the basis of the magnitude of that change and the sensitivity of the receptor.

Consultation

- 1.8 The LB Richmond Pre-Application Response, dated 2nd November 2017, (Appendix 1) sets out a range of landscape/townscape and visual considerations for the proposed redevelopment:
- Protected view lines.
 - Views from Terrace Gardens.
 - Views from Petersham Road.
 - Views from Richmond Bridge.
 - Views from the western side of the River Thames.
 - Effect on skylines.
 - Impact on mature trees.
 - Height and scale.
- 1.9 An initial site visit was carried out in January 2018 to ascertain the extent of general views towards the site from the surrounding area and to specifically review the locations raised by LB Richmond in their Pre-application Response. The subsequently written Landscape Technical Notes (January 2018 and October 2018) included a number of annotated viewpoints and Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs), which informed further work.
- 1.10 Subsequently, communications with officers at LB Richmond resulted in agreement of six viewpoint locations from which AVRs would be prepared to show the extent of the proposed development within the existing view. One of those viewpoints, located at Richmond Hill overlooking Terrace Field, was subsequently excluded from further assessment due to lack of any inter-visibility.

- 1.11 Photography for the AVRs was originally carried out in August 2018; the site work was repeated in March 2021 to provide 'winter' photography with deciduous trees devoid of leaf cover. Additional views were photographed in March 2021 to represent receptors' experience of sequential views toward the site from nearby public routes.
- 1.12 A series of AVRs have been prepared and used to inform the commentary on the effect of the proposed development on the specific views requested by LB Richmond and the sequential views. The viewpoints selection is considered to be appropriate and proportionate. The baseline site photos and AVRs are discussed further in Sections 8 and 9 of this TVIA.
- 1.13 Consultation with the LB Richmond has continued, leading to a further pre-application advice meeting on 4th May 2020 relating to a revised proposal presenting a curvilinear / crescent footprint, with a written response dated 30th June 2020. This further advice included comments related to design, private terraces versus green roofs, and impact on heritage assets including form, height, scale and massing. The LB Richmond's advice also noted that the long views toward the site demonstrated that there is very little change in terms of visual impact of the revised proposal but of most concern was the impact within Terrace Gardens and from Richmond Hill that may detract from the special landscape qualities of that location. Further, it was noted that photographic views presented were taken during summer months when deciduous trees were in leaf; accordingly, 'winter' views have been captured with bare tree canopies and are presented in this TVIA.

2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 Landscape (both rural and urban) is defined in the European Landscape Convention "...as an area perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors". Visual considerations relate specifically to the views afforded to people. These separate but related issues form the basis of this TVIA.
- 2.2 This TVIA would be prepared with regard to the current best practice documentation including:
- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (3rd Edition, 2013) - Landscape Institute / Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment;
 - GLVIA3 Statements of Clarification;
 - *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment* (2014) - Natural England;
 - *An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management*, June 2019; and
 - *Advice Note 4: Tall Buildings* (2015) Historic England.
- 2.3 The Landscape Institute adopted its current guidance on photography and visualisation: the *Visual Representation of Development Proposals*, Technical Guidance Note 06/19, 17 September 2019. This TVIA follows the guidance with all viewpoints illustrated as the so-called Type 1 photographic evidence. A selection of viewpoints, those considered to be the most informative, is presented as Type 4 AVR in the form of wiremodels superimposed on baseline photography.
- 2.4 Detailed assessment methodology has been included in Appendix 2 to this TVIA.
- 2.5 The guidance provided in the policy documents and guidance discussed later in this TVIA has also been used to inform the assessment of the proposed development.

3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 A Planning Statement, prepared by Pegasus Group and submitted as part of the planning application, considers the proposed development in the context of the relevant planning policies. The following paragraphs discuss planning policies and guidelines that are specifically relevant from the townscape and visual assessment point of view.

National

National Planning Policy Framework

3.2 The revised *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)* was published in July 2021 and sets out the governments planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

3.3 The *NPPF* promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, defined as, "...as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs..." (paragraph 7, page 5) providing it is in accordance with the relevant up-to-date local plan and policies set out in the *NPPF*, including those identifying restrictions with regard to designated areas.

3.4 The social objective of the *NPPF* (paragraph 8, page 5) aims: "... to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being..."

3.5 The *NPPF* identifies a number of aspects, which should be considered in developing local plans and reviewing planning applications. Those with regard to townscape and visual issues are considered in Section 12 'Achieving well-designed places'.

3.6 Section 12 'Achieving well-designed places' provides guidance on ensuring the delivery of good design (paragraph 126, page 38): "The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design

is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”.

- 3.7 Although the revised *NPPF* places great weight on design codes, paragraph 130 (pages 38 – 39) requires development to be sympathetic to local character and be visually attractive, whilst not discouraging innovation, change, or more effective land use:

“ 130. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) Design: Process and tools (October 2019)

- 3.8 The *PPG Design: Process and tools*, which supports the *NPPF*, provides advice to Local Planning Authorities with regard to the weight attached to design and sustainability in decision making process (paragraph 001, Revision date: 01 10 2019):

“...permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design

standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development."

- 3.9 The PPG goes on to identify ten characteristics, which form part of the National Design Guide, and include: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources, and lifespan. It also reinforces the role local design guides and masterplans can play in the decision making process.

Regional

The London Plan (2021)

- 3.10 The London Plan was adopted in March 2021 with a number of policies relevant to townscape character and visual issues. These include: Policy D1 London's form, character and capacity for growth, Policy D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach, Policy D4 Delivering good design, Policy D5 Inclusive design, Policy D8 Public realm, Policy HC3 Strategic and Local Views, Policy G1 Green infrastructure, Policy G5 Urban greening, Policy G6 Biodiversity and access to nature, Policy G7 Trees and woodlands. The above mentioned policies have been reviewed to inform this TVIA.
- 3.11 Policy HC3 specifically mentioned, in relation to strategic views identified in the London View Management Framework, that: "New development can make a positive contribution to the views and this should be encouraged, but where development is likely to compromise the setting or visibility of a key landmark it should be resisted."

Local

- 3.12 The Development Plan for LB Richmond in relation to the application site comprises:
- *London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local Plan* (adopted July 2018 and (following a legal challenge) March 2020).
 - Richmond Hill and Richmond Hill Village Plan (2016).

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local Plan (2018/2020)

- 3.13 The Strategic Vision of the Local Plan is to protect local character, including its villages and historic environment: "The borough's villages and their special

and distinctive characters will have been protected, with each being unique, recognisable and important to the community and to the character of the borough as a whole. They will continue to maintain and enhance their distinctiveness in terms of the community, facilities and local character. Heritage assets including listed buildings and Conservation Areas, historic parks (...), which contribute so significantly to the character of this borough, will have been protected and enhanced."

3.14 The above quoted Strategic Vision is reinforced by the Strategic Objective - Protecting Local Character, which refers to:

- The borough's unique, distinctive and recognisable local characters, which will be maintained and enhanced.
- Heritage assets, their character and appearance of established residential areas, protected views, and ensure new development and public spaces are of high quality design.
- The protection and enhancement of the borough's biodiversity, including trees and landscape.

3.15 The LB Richmond's Policies Map have not yet been updated to reflect the Local Plan adopted in July 2018 and March 2020. The available online Proposals Map (adopted in July 2015) has been reviewed to inform this TVIA, but it has to be noted that it may not reflect the LB Richmond's most up to date policies.

3.16 According to the Proposals Map the site falls within a Conservation Area and the Historic Park & Garden, and in proximity to D13 London Loop Outer Orbital Walking Route, Metropolitan Open Land, Public Open Space, Thames Policy Area, with a number of vistas / landmarks, and protected views located in the local townscape.

3.17 With regard to the Local Plan (2018/2020) and local character, Policy LP1 Local Character and Design Quality is the most relevant and states:

"A. The Council will require all development to be of high architectural and urban design quality. The high quality character and heritage of the borough and its villages will need to be maintained and enhanced where opportunities arise. Development proposals will have to

demonstrate a thorough understanding of the site and how it relates to its existing context, including character and appearance, and take opportunities to improve the quality and character of buildings, spaces and the local area.

To ensure development respects, contributes to and enhances the local environment and character, the following will be considered when assessing proposals:

1. compatibility with local character including the relationship to existing townscape, development patterns, views, local grain and frontages as well as scale, height, massing, density, landscaping, proportions, form, materials and detailing; (...)
3. layout, siting and access, including making best use of land;
4. space between buildings, relationship of heights to widths and relationship to the public realm, heritage assets and natural features;
5. inclusive design, connectivity, permeability (as such gated developments will not be permitted), natural surveillance and orientation..."

3.18 The supporting text to Policy LP1 refers to various Village Planning Guidance SPDs, and the relevant SPD for Richmond and Richmond Hill Village is discussed later in this section. With regard to the design quality and character, the Local Plan makes it clear in its paragraph 4.1.4: "Given the built up nature of the borough it is anticipated that most new buildings will be as a result of redevelopment where compatibility with the existing urban fabric is a key consideration. The purpose is to maintain, reinforce and where possible enhance the local character and features that give the area its distinctive and clear identity. Opportunities should be taken to improve the general level of design of an area where appropriate. New development should respect existing street and development patterns."

3.19 Policy LP2 Building Heights is particularly informative to the proposed development and this TVIA, as it lists a number of townscape criteria:

"The Council will require new buildings, including extensions and redevelopment of existing buildings, to respect and strengthen the setting of the borough's valued townscapes and landscapes, through appropriate building heights, by the following means:

1. require buildings to make a positive contribution towards the local character, townscape and skyline, generally reflecting the prevailing building heights within the vicinity; proposals that are taller than the

surrounding townscape have to be of high architectural design quality and standards, deliver public realm benefits and have a wholly positive impact on the character and quality of the area;

2. preserve and enhance the borough's heritage assets, their significance and their setting;

3. respect the local context, and where possible enhance the character of an area, through appropriate:

a. scale b. height c. mass d. urban pattern e. development grain f. materials g. streetscape h. Roofscape and i. wider townscape and landscape;

4. take account of climatic effects, including overshadowing, diversion of wind speeds, heat island and glare;

5. refrain from using height to express and create local landmarks (...)"

3.20 Other policies of relevance to this TVIA are Policy LP 3 Designated Heritage Asset, which links to the issue of townscape character and views; Policy LP 4 Non-Designated Heritage Assets; Policy LP 13 Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Local Green Space and Policy LP 14 Other Open Land of Townscape Importance, with regard to possible visual impacts on the character and openness of the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land; Policy LP 15 Biodiversity; Policy LP 16 Trees, Woodlands and Landscape; Policy LP 17 Green roofs and walls; Policy LP 18 River corridors;

3.21 Policy LP 5 Views and Vistas is also informative stating:

"The Council will protect the quality of the views, vistas, gaps and the skyline, all of which contribute significantly to the character, distinctiveness and quality of the local and wider area, by the following means:

1. protect the quality of the views and vistas as identified on the Policies Map, and demonstrate such through computer-generated imagery (CGI) and visual impact assessments;

2. resist development which interrupts, disrupts or detracts from strategic and local vistas, views, gaps and the skyline;

3. require developments whose visual impacts extend beyond that of the immediate street to demonstrate how views are protected or enhanced;

4. require development to respect the setting of a landmark, taking care not to create intrusive elements in its foreground, middle ground or background;

5. seek improvements to views, vistas, gaps and the skyline, particularly where views or vistas have been obscured;

6. seek improvements to views within Conservation Areas, which:

a. are identified in Conservation Area Statements and Studies and Village Plans;

b. are within, into, and out of Conservation Areas;

c. are affected by development on sites within the setting of, or adjacent to, Conservation Areas and listed buildings."

Richmond Hill and Richmond Hill Village Planning Guidance (2016)

3.22 The Richmond and Richmond Hill Village Planning Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in 2016. The SPD sets out the spatial and planning policy context of the area and the vision and objectives for Richmond:

"By identifying key features of the village, the SPD clarifies the most important aspects and features that contribute to local character to guide those seeking to make changes to their properties or to develop new properties in the area, as well as being a material consideration in determining planning applications."

3.23 The Vision for Richmond is summarised at Section 4 of the SPD and states:

"The vision for Richmond and Richmond Hill is to retain and enhance its unique character and create a cultural centre in and around the Old Town Hall and Riverside."

3.24 And concludes:

"The many historic buildings in the area and attractive streets, open areas and riverside will continue to be protected, enhanced and enjoyed by local people and visitors."

3.25 The Objectives of the SPD (Section 5) correspond with the LB Richmond's Design Quality SPD (February 2006),¹ and include:

- Identify local character.
- Promote high standards of design.
- Development management.
- Implementation of schemes.
- Design review.

¹ Design Quality SPD, https://www.richmond.gov.uk/media/7624/spd_design_quality_doc_lowres-2.pdf [accessed 22 September 2021].

- Local policy context.

3.26 Of particular relevance to this TVIA is the identification of local character, landmarks, public open space, particularly that judged to be of townscape importance, and listed buildings and building of townscape merit.² This aspect of the SPD is reviewed and discussed as part of the townscape character analysis later in this TVIA.

Urban Design Study 2021

3.27 The LB Richmond has commissioned a borough wide Urban Design Study to inform the emerging Local Plan. This high level study will provide a borough-wide townscape assessment, alongside considering the borough's capacity for change. The Urban Design Study has been reviewed to inform this TVIA, but due to its scope it provides very little information specific to the proposed development.

Neighbourhood Plan

3.28 According to the LB Richmond's website the site and its environs do not fall within any designated Neighbourhood Areas.³

² Richmond Hill and Richmond Hill Village Planning Guidance (2016), 'Green Infrastructure in Richmond' and 'Historic Assets in Richmond', pp. 12-13.

³ London Borough of Richmond,
https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/planning/planning_policy/local_plan/neighbourhood_plans [accessed 21 September 2021].

4. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The proposed development would comprise demolition of three freestanding 2-storey residential buildings / pavilions dating from the 1970s and redevelopment to provide a single articulated retirement apartment building of up to 4 storeys based on a curved footprint; this responds to the unique crescent shape of the site and its relationship to neighbouring properties and Terrace Gardens, mature off-site trees, and westerly aspect toward the River Thames (see Design and Access Statement for further information regarding the evolution of the design).

4.2 The TVIA has been prepared with reference to the following application drawings prepared by landscape architects at Pegasus Group (included as appendices to this TVIA) and the project architects, Hunters & Partners Ltd. (“Hunters”) (Appendix 3):

- Lower Ground Floor Plan (drawing number: M8764 ASK 006 rev E).
- Ground Floor Plan (drawing number: M8764 ASK 007 rev D).
- First Floor Plan (drawing number: M8764 ASK 008 rev C).
- Second Floor Plan (drawing number: M8764 ASK 009 rev C).
- Third Floor Plan (drawing number: M8764 ASK 010 rev D).
- Roof Plan (drawing number: M8764 ASK 011 rev C).
- Site Plan (drawing number: M8764 ASK 012 rev B).
- West Elevation (drawing number: M8764 ASK 013).
- East Elevation (drawing number: M8764 ASK 014).
- South Elevation (drawing number: M8764 ASK 015).
- North Elevation (drawing number: M8764 ASK 016).

4.3 The proposed accommodation safeguards existing mature trees outside of the site and provides proposed ornamental landscape planting and structural vegetation as a setting to the building. The Landscape Masterplan, prepared by Pegasus Group is included in this TVIA as Figure 2 (drawing number: P17-2640_05).

Site Clearance and Demolition

4.4 The proposed development would involve demolition of the three existing flat-roofed blocks of flats and partial removal of hardstanding. A Tree Protection Plan

(drawing number: 16303-BT3) has been prepared by Barrell Tree Consultancy, which accompanies the planning application; there are no mature trees within the site.

- 4.5 The Tree Protection Plan shows that all existing mature trees that lie on or outside of the site boundary will be retained and protected throughout site clearance and construction works.
- 4.6 The existing areas of amenity grass and shrub planting within the site would be removed during site clearance but would be replaced by a considered scheme of landscape planting, refer to Landscape Masterplan (Figure 2) and External Spaces and Public Realm subsection below.
- 4.7 It is envisaged that the low perimeter fencing that separates the site from Terrace Gardens would be retained, and planted up with a native hedgerow.

Building Mass, Scale, Form and Appearance

- 4.8 The proposed development responds to the sloping curvilinear site and surrounding mature trees.
- 4.9 Externally, the building is to consist of a simple form, accentuated by balconies with change in brick colour intended to break up its apparent overall massing. The proposed glazed link and its part-subterranean lower ground floor would further help to diminish the scale with the stepping down of the roofline towards the more sensitive southern part of the site. Following the topography and surrounding built form, the building will reduce from four storeys to three from north to south.
- 4.10 Facing materials comprise predominantly yellow multi-stock brick with blue engineering brick detailing interspersed with structural glazing, while exposed south-facing upper wall sections are to be detailed as green walls, with the majority of the flat roof covering to be similarly treated.
- 4.11 The area between the buildings would incorporate pedestrian movement, SUDS and amenity ground for the residents; additional surface water attenuation would be provided by the green roofs.

- 4.12 The elevations are uncomplicated with frequent fenestration reflecting the internal arrangement. The external appearance of the buildings is illustrated on elevation drawings prepared by Hunters (Appendix 3).
- 4.13 Architecturally, the proposed buildings would be of contemporary style whilst using brick finishes appropriate to the Richmond Hill Conservation Area vernacular. The DAS provides further information with regards to the architectural design intent.

External Spaces and Public Realm

- 4.14 The site is physically constrained by the existing buildings and road infrastructure with limited opportunities to provide extensive amenity areas. The footprint of the building, however, has been adjusted to allow for a modest, yet invaluable, buffer to the east, south, and west. The buffer would include modest areas of amenity grassland with a generous wildflower meadow, enclosed by a native hedgerow. The pedestrian path that partly falls within the site, and indirectly connects it with Petersham Road to the southwest, would be enclosed by ornamental planting suitable to retain passive surveillance. The western elevation of the proposed development would be marked by ornamental planting with specimen trees, in order to filter views, break up the massing, and enhance the local townscape character. The tree selection would reflect species referred to in the LB Richmond's published Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Nature Conservation and Development' and 'Trees: Landscape Design, Planting & Care', and would address the Local Plan policies with regard to biodiversity.
- 4.15 With regard to the apartments located on the lower ground floor, semi private small patios would provide direct access to the external open space to the east. A communal walkway along the western elevation would connect with the remaining part of the building. Apartments on the upper levels would have individual small balconies along the western elevation. Semi private patios, forming walkways, would be located along the eastern elevation. Green roofs and green walls would provide further biodiversity enhancement, but would not be accessible to the residents or general public.

Pedestrian Access and Movement

- 4.16 Access to the site would be from the north with new access point formed near the site's northern corner. An external car park area would be located on the northern

edge of the site. Public access and movement would be limited to the existing footway with the remaining part of the site open to residents only.

5. BASELINE CONDITIONS

The Site

- 5.1 The site is located on an irregular, crescent-shaped parcel of sloping land that is separated from Richmond Hill to the east / northeast by Terrace Gardens, which wrap around its eastern and southern boundary. The western boundary is formed by Robins Court estate which separates the site from Petersham Road, and in turn the River Thames at the toe of the hillside. To the north of the site is the five-storey Bromwich House (see Figure 3: Townscape Context Plan).
- 5.2 The site is occupied by three separate 2-storey blocks of flats that were constructed in 1971; many of the units are now vacant and boarded-up. The blocks are largely square in footprint and are best described as being oriented north-south. Externally the blocks are clad in dark brown / brindle brick with grey concrete accent 'strings' marking the first floor and roof level slabs. The buildings have flat roofs and are equal in height, but floor and roof levels differ to reflect the falling levels of the site (see Figure 4: Site Context Views).
- 5.3 Vehicular and principal pedestrian access comprises a sinuous driveway extending south from Richmond Hill to the east of Bromwich House, with which it is shared. A limited number of car parking spaces are provided in the open space between Howson Terrace / Bromwich House and Robins Court. A secondary pedestrian access links to Robins Court and then onto Petersham Road. The driveway, car parking and pedestrian paths through and around the buildings are surfaced with tarmacadam; handrails line one side of the paths.
- 5.4 Concrete retaining walls separate Howson Terrace from Robins Court with stepped access.
- 5.5 Soft landscape comprises closely mown amenity grass within the site. Tall, mature trees line the site boundaries, but fall outside of it, and their canopies (and root zones) extend into the site (refer to Tree Protection Plan drawing number: 16303-BT3 by Barrell Tree Consultancy). The recorded tree species are native or naturalised species and include Birch, Sycamore, Hornbeam, Yew, Holm oak, Norway maple, Swamp cypress, Lombardy poplar, Poplar, Willow, Elm, ornamental Cherry, Horse chestnut, and Bay. According to the Tree Protection Plan none of the trees have been identified as being Category A. Out of 24 no of record trees / tree groups only 11 no. have been assessed as being Category B,

with the remaining structural vegetation being either Category C or U (unsuitable for retention).

- 5.6 Iron park railings separate Howson Terrace from Terrace Gardens to the east and south.
- 5.7 Views into, across and out of the site are controlled by landform, built form and mature tree cover.

Wider Context

- 5.8 The site lies within Richmond Hill Conservation Area, which encompasses properties lining the eastern edge of Richmond Hill, Terrace and Buccleuch Gardens to the south of the site, the River Thames to the west and properties along its western bank, and Richmond Bridge to the northwest of the site. In turn, Richmond Hill Conservation Area is contiguous with other Conservation Areas including St Matthias to the east, Richmond Park to the southeast, and Petersham, Ham House and Twickenham Riverside to the south / southwest (see Figure 3: Townscape Context Plan).
- 5.9 A number of listed buildings and other buildings identified by the LB Richmond as being 'Buildings of Townscape Merit' occur within the vicinity of the site. However, the Heritage Statement, prepared by Pegasus Group that accompanies the planning application, concludes that due to distance and limited intervisibility these may be assessed as part of the wider Richmond Hill Conservation Area, rather than individually.
- 5.10 Terrace Gardens is located to the northeast, east and south of the site. The Terrace and Buccleuch Gardens are a Grade II* Registered Park and Garden (RPAG), included on the Historic England 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England'. The designation encompasses the site's two storey buildings, but not the access road or car park.
- 5.11 Landform in the vicinity of the site is moulded by the River Thames which forms an 'S-shaped' meander extending from Syon Park / Isleworth in the north to Twickenham in the south. The A316 Twickenham Road and railway line bridges bisect this 'S' at its midpoint, along the northern edge of Richmond; Richmond Bridge lies parallel to and southeast of the A316 / railway bridges. Petersham Road, approximately 17m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at Hill Rise falling to

approximately 9m at Petersham Meadows; and Hill Rise / Richmond Hill, 14m AOD at Richmond Bridge, rising to 43m AOD at Petersham Meadows, lie on rising land to the east of the River Thames. Land to the west of the River is lower lying, approximately 6m AOD at Cambridge Park/Vivienne Close (refer to Figure 5: Topography Plan).

- 5.12 The EA LiDAR plan (Figure 6: Building Heights) shows, by means of colour gradation, the relative heights of existing buildings across the study area in metres above Ordnance Datum, with the tallest buildings in dark browns and reds and the lower buildings coloured yellow and green. The Building Heights plan shows that the prevailing context within the St. Matthias Conservation Area is relatively low rise ranging 5 - 10m. Built form within the Richmond Hill Conservation Area is more varied and includes for example the single storey Rosemont School, approximately 20m high 5 storey Bromwich House, 6 storey Richmond Hill Court in the immediate vicinity of the site, and the 5 storey Richmond Bridge Estate on the opposite bank of the River.
- 5.13 One taller structure, Priors Lodge at 8 storeys and approximately 25m tall, lies opposite the site access on Richmond Hill. The 5 storey The Royal Star and Garter Home marks the transition between Richmond Park and townscape of Richmond Hill. Overall, with regard to the streetscene along Richmond Hill road there is a clear tendency for the building heights to reduce from south east to north west, as one follows the sloping landform.
- 5.14 As previously noted, the site falls within Richmond Hill Conservation Area and in part, Terrace and Buccleuch Gardens RPAG. The site and surrounding land are not subject to any other landscape or townscape designations.
- 5.15 As noted in section 3 of this TVIA the Local Plan includes Policy LP 5 Views and Vistas, which identifies a number of viewing corridors across the local townscape. These are discussed in detail layer in this TVIA.

Richmond Hill Conservation Area

- 5.16 The Richmond Hill Conservation Area is described in the LB Richmond's published statement as: "Richmond Hill conservation area is a distinctive and well defined area containing a variety of building types and mix of uses such as residential, commercial, educational, institutional and important public open space. The conservation area can be divided into a number of

distinct character areas, although the whole conservation area is unified by its relationship to Richmond Hill".⁴ The site appears to fall within the 'Riverside and Rural Richmond' character area; although the map associated with the published statement does not differentiate between various character areas.

5.17 The 'Riverside and Rural Richmond' character area is described as: "The historic open landscape encompassing both banks and the river Thames south of Richmond Bridge, Terrace Gardens, Petersham Common and Richmond Park provides a distinctive rural setting to the important 18th and 19th century townscape of Richmond Hill. This townscape is subservient to this landscape, trees and the topography of the hill. Along Petersham Road fine groups and individual houses from the 18th to 19th centuries address the Thames, affording gap views to the river from the road. There is a general transition from more isolated buildings in the south to the more cohesive development along the road into town. The natural curve of the river allows unfolding views along the towpath and exceptional views to and from Richmond Hill and the town. The view from the hill, west towards Ham House, presents a dramatic panorama of rural riverside landscape. Within these strategic views key landmarks are: Richmond Bridge, Petersham Hotel, Star and Garter Home and St Matthias Church spire on the hill. The Twickenham bank is an open landscape of large gardens, trees and spaces, reinforcing the rural character of the wider area and offering a transition between Richmond town and Marble Hill Park." (Underlining is the Author's emphasis).

5.18 In terms of 'Problems and Pressures' the published statement identifies: "Development pressure which may harm the balance of the river and landscape-dominated setting, and the obstruction or spoiling of views, skylines and landmarks." The study also identifies opportunities for enhancement: "Improvement and protection of river and landscape setting; Preservation, enhancement and reinstatement of architectural quality and unity."

5.19 With regard to the neighbouring 'Richmond Hill' character area, the published study states: "The Richmond Hill area is characterised by the exceptional

⁴ https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/planning/conservation_areas/conservation_area_statements and https://www.richmond.gov.uk/media/13288/conarea5_a3_rgb.pdf [accessed 22 September 2021].

quality of its 18th century architecture, and its distinctive groups of fine later Regency and Victorian housing, historically overlooking the river landscape from the hillside above. These buildings form a varied and distinctive landmark skyline in views from the river. The townscape is unified by the general use of face brickwork in a limited palette of colours. The repetition of similar architectural features, fenestration and materials, and their scale and proportions, further draws the character of these buildings together. Traditional narrow colourful shopfronts characterise Hill Rise. Key buildings also include the lodges of Richmond Gate to Richmond Park." (Underlining is the Author's emphasis).

Richmond and Richmond Hill Village Planning Guidance

- 5.20 The Richmond and Richmond Hill Village Planning Guidance – Supplementary Planning Document (the 'SPD') was adopted by the LB Richmond in June 2016. Page 4 of the SPD states:

"By identifying key features of the village, the SPD clarifies the most important aspects and features that contribute to local character to guide those seeking to make changes to their properties or to develop new properties in the area, as well as being a material consideration in determining planning applications."

- 5.21 The SPD presents Character Area Assessments for 18 Conservation Areas / Character Areas identified within the Borough, of which the site, Richmond Bridge, Richmond Hill road, Petersham Road and Terrace Gardens fall within Conservation Area 12: Richmond Hill (Richmond side). The extent of Conservation Area 12 and Character Areas that abut it are shown on the SPD Character Area Plan (see Appendix 4: Richmond Hill and Richmond Hill Village Planning Guidance (2016) – Extracts).
- 5.22 Considering prevailing topography, existing built form and mature tree cover in relationship to the site it is considered that the effects upon the character of the host Conservation Area 12: Richmond Hill (Richmond side) should only be considered. The remaining Character Areas would not be subject to any direct physical or indirect visual effects arising from the proposed development. However, for completeness, and to help guide the townscape assessment in the vicinity of the site, the description of the closest Character Area, Conservation Area 11: St Matthias, located to the east of Richmond Hill road is included below.

Conservation Area 12: Richmond Hill (Richmond side)

5.23 Page 44 of the SPD introduces Conservation Area 12 thus:

“Richmond Hill Conservation Area spans the river to include the open landscape on both banks of the Thames south of Richmond centre, and rises up to include the townscape along Richmond Hill, overlooking the river as far as Richmond Gate, which leads into Richmond Park. The Conservation Area is almost entirely surrounded by other Conservation Areas towards Richmond, Petersham and Twickenham.

The Conservation Area is a distinctive and well defined area containing a variety of building types and mix of uses such as residential, commercial, educational, institutional and public open space. The Conservation Area can be divided into a number of distinct character areas, although the whole Conservation Area is unified by its relationship to Richmond Hill and its views and connections.

The riverside and accompanying landscape provide a distinct rural setting to the eighteenth and nineteenth century townscape of Richmond Hill...”

5.24 The physical and visual relationship of Richmond Hill and the River Thames is described thus:

“The natural curve of the river offers exceptional views to and from Richmond Hill and central Richmond. The Richmond, Petersham and Ham Open Spaces Act (1902) prevents development of the land on and below Richmond Hill in order to protect the unique and distinctive views that it provides to the west and south...”

5.25 This inter-relationship and architectural styles in the immediate vicinity of the site is described at SPD page 44:

“Richmond Hill is characterised by the exceptional quality of its eighteenth century architecture, and its distinctive groups of fine later Regency and Victorian housing, historically overlooking the river landscape from the hillside above with traditional narrow colourful shop fronts that characterise Hill Rise. Along Petersham Road fine groups and individual houses from the eighteenth and nineteenth century address the Thames, affording views to the river from the road. Petersham Road also hosts a local landmark in the very distinct Royal British Legion Poppy Factory building, set back behind the existing Richmond Brewery facade that has been retained.”

5.26 Page 44 of the SPD notes prevailing building materials and character across Conservation Area 12:

"The townscape is unified by the general use of face brickwork in a limited palette of colours. The repetition of similar architectural features, windows and materials, and their scale and proportions, further draws the character of these buildings together."

5.27 Stated dominant materials and features are:

"Characteristic materials and features include: Eighteenth century buildings Downe House, Ancaster House, Wick House and The Wick on the Hill, protected view from the Terrace on Richmond Hill, modern Queen's Road estate, decorative iron railings for front boundaries or tall boundary walls closer to the top of the hill, eighteenth and nineteenth century dwellings along Petersham Road, views to key surrounding landmarks."

5.28 Stated 'threats from development' and opportunities relating to Conservation Area 12 of relevance to the site and proposed development cited at page 46 as:

"Threats form development

- Development pressure which may harm the balance of the river and landscape-dominated setting, and the obstruction or spoiling of views...
- Loss of green spaces and vistas...

Opportunities

- Improvement and protection of river and landscape setting.
- Preservation and enhancement of the architectural style
- Retain and enhance front boundaries
- Coordination of colour and materials.
- Improvement of highways conditions and pedestrian convenience, and rationalisation of existing signage and street furniture..."

5.29 In conclusion, whilst the SPD for Conservation Area 12 may be used as a guide for the assessment of the proposed development, it does have limitations insofar as much of it relates to the preservation of historic buildings and features of the 18th and 19th centuries.

5.30 Some reference to new development is provided at Chapter 7 Features and Materials of the SPD which also aids understanding of the prevailing townscape

character. This also assists in evolution of the proposed development (see Design and Access Statement that accompanies the planning application).

5.31 Page 68 of the SPD describes materials selection, including for new development:

“...Using the correct materials (such as stock and red brick, clay tiles, slate and timber) is important for any repairs, alterations or extensions to existing buildings but also should be a consideration for any new development if it is to respect the context and character of the area...”

5.32 The features of differing architectural periods and styles are discussed, at page 70 the SPD notes:

“Contemporary: There is a variety of more modern development across the area, including some infill and some more substantial estates. Recent development less rigorously conforms to a particular style or ethos. Higher density developments are more common as the pressure on land is greater...”

A very modern development can be found in the old gas works area along Orchard Road, with a simple stock brick, larger angular windows and flat roof.”

5.33 The assessments presented below consider the potential direct and indirect effects of the proposed development on the Conservation Area 12 Richmond Hill (Richmond side).

Conservation Area 11: St Matthias

5.34 Page 40 of the SPD introduces Conservation Area 11 thus:

“St Matthias Conservation Area lies on the plateau and northern scarp of Richmond Hill. It lies to the south of Sheen Road, and bounded to the east by Queen’s Road. It adjoins Richmond Hill... to the west and Sheen Road... Conservation Areas to the north.”

5.35 Prevailing land use is residential land with no significant public open spaces; The Vineyard School at the southernmost edge of this Character Area is the only notable departure in land use. Development largely dates from early the 19th century interspersed with earlier 18th century development. Street patterns are organic, reflecting underlying landform and incremental developments and the prominence of St Matthias Church. Brick is the prevailing building material.

5.36 Regarding growth and enclosure, SPD page 40 states:

"The area was largely fields with a few large eighteenth century dwellings until the mid-nineteenth century. The arrival of the London and South Western Railway led to substantial development in the form of new streets and high class villas. This included a mix of mid and late Victorian building styles, helping to maintain the high quality townscape. The building styles are noticeably different, ranging, for example, from the three-storey grandeur of the villas to the interesting brick detailing and symmetry of terrace cottages. Dwellings are mostly set back from the road and many have retained their front gardens which form an important feature throughout the Conservation Area."

- 5.37 Discreet sub-areas occur within St Matthias, of which Friars Stile Road is most relevant being closest to Richmond Hill road and the site. It is described at SPD page 42 thus:

"Friar(s) Stile Road has a mix of residential and commercial uses. The road has retained its village atmosphere and intimacy, which is in contrast to the grand vistas from Richmond Hill to the south west. The small shopping parade is centred between Rosemont Road and Marlborough Road junctions and the area contains several interesting shopfronts. The rear gardens of Cardigan and Montague Road make a contribution to the street scene and provide greenery..."

- 5.38 Dominant materials and features described at page 42 include:

"Characteristic materials and features include: ornate Edwardian and Victorian townhouses, dutch gables, gable ended parade of shops, turrets, rendered balustrades, set back properties with retained front gardens, dwarf walls with iron railings and hedging."

- 5.39 Stated 'threats from development' and opportunities relate to the internal fabric, features and character of this sub-area of St Matthias, with only one 'threat' being of relevance to the site and proposed development cited as:

"Development pressure which results in potential obstruction and spoiling of views to key landmarks and impacts on the skylines."

- 5.40 The Thames Landscape Strategy also comments on this particular area stating:
"...the drama of the spire of St. Matthias' Church comes from its position

on the crest of the Richmond Hill, soaring above the surrounding trees and buildings.”⁵

Terrace and Buccleuch Gardens RPAG

- 5.41 The Terrace Gardens and Buccleuch Gardens, collectively known as Terrace and Buccleuch Gardens, are a Grade II historic park and garden listed on the Historic England 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England'. The Gardens are located on the west facing valley slope of the River Thames, stretching between the elevated Richmond Hill road and banks of the River Thames. Petersham Road splits this public park with Buccleuch Gardens located south of the road. Views are partly inward looking, where the level of enclosure is stronger, but the prevailing characteristic of the Gardens is the visual relationship with the topography, the River Thames, and surrounding townscape.
- 5.42 The northern most part of the Gardens enclose the site to the east and separate it from Richmond Hill road. Views towards the site are restricted and filtered, and limited to the very edge of the Gardens near the site, where the site's perimeter fencing and existing two storey built form is visible through the vegetation.
- 5.43 Views from within the Gardens include the strongly uniform townscape of late Regency and Victorian terraces that line Richmond Hill road, and the meandering River Thames. There is a strong sense of openness perceived across much of the Gardens.
- 5.44 The entry on the Historic England 'Register' states: "Views: The views within the Terrace Gardens are many and varied, and several are remarkably similar to those described in 1887. They are predominantly internal views, with the panoramic vistas over the Thames being reserved only for the uppermost parts of the gardens. From the uppermost terrace along the top of Richmond Hill, above the former site of Landsdowne House, there are panoramic views downhill across the curve of the Thames to Marble Hill and Twickenham and Surrey in the distance. Further north along this terrace, near Friar's Stile Gate, there is a view of the River Thames, framed by mature trees. The river can be glimpsed through trees from the terrace above the rock garden, but historically

⁵ Thames Landscape Strategy, p. 72, <http://thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/5character-2014.pdf>, [accessed 30 September 2021].

this view was an internal vista, framed by mature vegetation. Further vistas within the grounds can be found from the steps to Grotto Gate looking up through the gardens towards the top of Richmond Hill, from across the lawn looking north towards the Conservatory and from the lawn north of the tea house looking up towards the wooden shelter. In Buccleuch Gardens, there are good vistas both up and down river, framed by specimen trees.”⁶ (Underlining is the Author’s emphasis).

Immediate Townscape

- 5.45 During the site visit a number of routes and places in the immediate vicinity of the site were visited to establish the existing character of the local townscape, analyse the movement pattern, and identify landmarks and sequential views. These routes and places have been considered in relation to the Richmond and Richmond Hill Village Plan Character Areas discussed above. A number of viewpoints have been selected, based on the Pre-Application Response from LB Richmond, consequent liaison and site visits. Their locations are shown on Figure 7: Viewpoint Location Plan.
- 5.46 The following paragraphs summarise the character of the townscape as perceived from these places or from travelling along these routes, and are supported by photographic evidence. Photographs illustrating the changes in the townscape character and recent developments around the site, provide evidence base used in the assessment of townscape character and visual effects. This is presented as Figure 8: Context Baseline Views.
- 5.47 Inevitably, there will be places and routes within the locality that have not been visited or described in this TVIA. However, such locations would not necessarily have high levels of inter-visibility with the proposed development.
- 5.48 Built form in the vicinity of the site which is referenced within this report and accompanying Figure 8: Context Baseline Views includes:
- The five storey Bromwich House adjacent to the north-west of the site, accessed from Richmond Hill.
 - The two to five storey buildings which comprise Robins Court adjacent to the west and south-west of the Site, with vehicular access from Petersham Road.
 - Eight storey Priors Lodge off Richmond Hill, opposite the site access.

⁶ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1001551> [accessed 23 September 2021].

- Park House at the junction of Richmond Hill and Friars Stile Road, approximately 130m to the south-east of the site.
- The Royal British Legion Poppy Factory between Petersham Road and Richmond Road, approximately 70m to the northwest of the site.
- Asgill House adjacent to the eastern bank of the River Thames, at approximately 900m to the northwest of the site, close to Twickenham Bridge.
- Richmond Bridge at approximately 430m from the site.

Richmond Hill

- 5.49 The section of Richmond Hill road nearest to the site is characterised by a relatively coherent three to four storey built form lining its northern edge with Terrace Gardens located to the south. Parapets partially screen the converted attics and dormer windows, and front elevations form the main focus of the streetscene. Views over Terrace Gardens add interest and sense of surprise. Reciprocal views, gained from the lower parts of Terrace Gardens, provide strong contrast between the large open space and elevated terraced houses. Trees along the road and within the Gardens, however, act to partially interrupt this inter-visibility. Views from Richmond Hill road, beyond Terrace Gardens, are largely focused on the streetscene, are short range to medium range along the road corridor, and not solely focused on the surrounding valley landscape.
- 5.50 The nearby strongly unified terrace No. 82 – 88 Park House and No. 90 – 112 are one of the most visible buildings in the key views towards Richmond Hill. Their roofscape is particularly important especially a roof profiles, dormer windows and chimneys. Further east, near the top of the hill, No. 114-142 form an attractive mixture of 18th and 19th century architectural styles.
- 5.51 Areas of car parking along the eastern end of Richmond Hill Road, at the junction with Queens Road, interrupt the grain. The Royal Star and Garter Home, completed in 1924, marks the junction and introduces a strong townscape feature announcing change in the grain and land use with Richmond Park located to the east and southeast (see Figure 9: Urban Grain).
- 5.52 The western section of Richmond Hill Road becomes notably more enclosed with three to four storey terrace housing either side and includes attractive early Victorian houses No. 28 – 40 and No. 18 Cardigan Mansions. Old Vicarage School, Grade II* listed building, remodelled in early 19th century in a Gothic Revival style is a particularly attractive corner feature. On the opposite side of the road is the

red brick Edwardian mansion block with contrasting red brick and white painted bay windows, balustrades, and porches.

- 5.53 Late 20th century infill development disrupts the streetscene, for example the 7 storey high Priors Lodge (No. 56). In addition, the 1930s' Richmond Hill Court and neighbouring Glenmore House introduce high volume and tall built form, up to 6 storeys in height.

Petersham Road

- 5.54 The A307 Petersham Road runs generally parallel to the River Thames, extending southward from Bridge Street / the eastern end of Richmond Bridge junction. The road is flanked by built development from Richmond Bridge for much of its length through to Terrace Gardens, interspersed with pockets of public and private green spaces which allow occasional glimpses of the River. The amenity open space of Terrace Gardens flanks the road to the east and is interrupted only by a cluster of residences at Langholme Lodge. Whilst Terrace Gardens is designated RPAG, the road is excluded from the designated area.
- 5.55 Buildings along Petersham Road vary in architectural period / style, scale, building line / enclosure and use. Along the western side, cluster of Victorian / Edwardian terraced townhouses now used as restaurants and food outlets with flats above at the northern end / junction of Hill Rise give way to Georgian and Victorian residential villas that are interspersed with modern office and apartment blocks, hotels / restaurants, offices and commercial uses.
- 5.56 Development along the eastern side of the road is more varied including lightweight single storey infill structures and a 3.5 storey terrace all in / retail outlet uses in the north, which give way to 3 – 4 storey modern, large footprint office units and the refurbished Richmond Brewery Stores adjacent to the Poppy Factory. A terrace of 2.5 storey houses abuts the Brewery Stores, which in turn has been extended by 3.5 storey houses. A notable change in the building line then occurs with the 3 storey Robins Court housing estate terraces being set back and separated from the road by a retaining wall and car parking court. A block of 5 storey, flat roofed late 20th century apartments forms part of Robins Court opposite Blade House. A terrace of 3 storey Georgian houses is sandwiched between this modern building and early 21st century 3.5 storey residential apartments (142A to 142D Petersham Road) on the edge of Terrace Gardens.

- 5.57 Heights of buildings are therefore generally uniform at between 3 and 4 storeys. Many of the older properties feature attic conversions with dormer windows; modern buildings generally display flat roofs, apart from Blade House which has a distinctive barrel-vaulted roof.

Sensitivity of Local Townscape

- 5.58 The immediate townscape around the site and that west of the River Thames falls within the Conservation Area 12: Richmond Hill (Richmond side). To the north and east lies the Conservation Area 11: St Matthias. On that basis the value and susceptibility of the local townscape is taken as high, resulting in a high sensitivity to the type of development proposed.

Visual Receptors

- 5.59 The following sets out the existing visual context of the site with particular reference to the potential views described by LB Richmond in their November 2017 Pre-application Response: "In relation to views, there is a specific view which cuts through the site, from Richmond Hill towards Asgill House to the north west, providing views of the river and the listed structures of Richmond and Twickenham bridges. The site is also contained within wider views from Richmond Bridge looking east and on the periphery of the wider views from Richmond Hill looking south west and from the west side of the River Thames looking east/northeast towards Richmond Hill and across Petersham Meadows."

Protected View Lines

- 5.60 The London View Management Framework ('LVMF') identifies a series of protected and geometrically defined views from locations around London towards Strategically Important Landmarks in central London. Whilst LVMF Linear View 9: 'King Henry VIII's Mound, Richmond to St Paul's Cathedral' extends from Richmond Park towards the centre of London, the proposed development does not lie within or adjacent to the defined view cone. It is, therefore, not considered further within this LVIA.
- 5.61 The now superseded London Borough of Richmond Proposals Map identifies a series of views which were protected by then Policy DM HD 7 – Views and Vistas within the Adopted Development Management Plan. Although the current LB Richmond's Policies Map have not yet been updated to reflect the Local Plan

(adopted in July 2018 and March 2020), it is likely that Policy LP 5 Views and Vistas will include the same already identified views and vistas. Therefore, the relevant designated views are described below.

- 5.62 A small part of the site, including the most southerly of the three existing buildings within the site, is bisected by the line which defines the northerly extent of one of the designated views from Richmond Hill. The designated view extends as far as Asgill House close to Twickenham Bridge. This designated view coincides with one of the AVR locations requested by LB Richmond and discussed in Pegasus' Landscape Technical Note (October 2018). The prepared AVR confirmed that, although Asgill House is evident in this view, the proposed development would not be visible from this section of Richmond Hill and Terrace Field. This viewpoint was subsequently omitted from further assessment work.
- 5.63 A further wide panoramic view is also designated across a slightly wider extent of Richmond Hill but does not include the site.
- 5.64 The designated view from the western bank of the River Thames, southwest of the proposed development, encompasses parts of Terrace Gardens but does not encompass the site.
- 5.65 There is a further designated view to the west of the River Thames, opposite the site, but it appears to fall within the built up area between Cambridge Road and Clevedon Road. Views from Clevedon Road and the western edge of the River, however, do include the elevated townscape of Richmond Hill. There are views across to Richmond Hill from the towpath and gardens along the River Thames which encompass the site, and this location is one of the AVR locations requested by the LB Richmond.
- 5.66 The site would also be included in sweep of the view available from the southeaster side of Richmond Bridge, albeit the line on the Proposals Map does not extend as far as the site. Again, the view from Richmond Bridge is one of the agreed AVR locations

Sequential Views

- 5.67 The site is located within the surroundings of the following townscape thoroughfares and / or areas of public realm, which are discussed as part of the townscape character assessment:

- B321 Richmond Hill.
- A307 Petersham Road.
- Robins Court.
- Richmond Bridge.
- Thames Path West/ Cambridge Gardens.
- Terrace and Buccleuch Gardens/Terrace Field.

5.68 The River Thames Path, a promoted long-distance route, follows both the east and west banks of the River in the vicinity of the site. The townscape analysis and visual assessment for the selected viewpoints provide evidence of the limited inter-visibility between these linear features and the proposals.

6. BASELINE CONDITION - TOWNSCAPE ELEMENTS

Author's Description of Townscape Elements

Topography

- 6.1 The prevailing topography of the surrounding area, which forms the site context, is shaped by Richmond Hill and the River Thames. Richmond Hill comprises a relatively gently sloping landform with a high point of just over 40m AOD to the east of Richmond Hill road and south of Friars Stile Road, sloping away to the north, east, south and west. The western portion of Richmond Hill has been eroded over time by the River to create a more steeply sloping terrace with a westerly to south-westerly aspect. Richmond Hill road broadly runs along the crest of the terrace with Petersham Road running along the foot of the terrace generally below 10m AOD parallel to the River (see Figure 5: Topography Plan).
- 6.2 The land occupied by the site and neighbouring developments (Bromwich House and Robins Court) has been subject to successive periods of disturbance through development and redevelopment, and in places includes retaining structures and benching to create stepped development platforms. This indicates that the value of topography is low, and landform within the site is of low susceptibility to the proposed development. Overall, the landform of the site is assessed as low sensitivity.

Enclosure

- 6.3 The sense of enclosure within the surrounding townscape, along Richmond Hill road and Petersham Road is variably influenced by neighbouring buildings (including the built form within the site), building heights, boundary treatments and building line in relation to the highway and pavements. It is also strongly influenced by mature trees along the route between Richmond Hill road and Petersham Road, and the eastern edge of Terrace Gardens, hence the overall enclosure along the route is consistent. The proposed development has the potential to influence the sense of enclosure along Richmond Hill road; enclosure along Petersham Road would not be affected due to the distance between the site and the road, and intervening buildings, such as Robins Court, that line the route and form enclosing elements.

- 6.4 The northern section of Richmond Hill road, between the site entrance and Hill Rise / Petersham Road junction, is characterised by a high sense of enclosure with shallow front gardens with low-level vegetation providing a buffer from the carriageway. The built form is generally 3 to 4 storeys in height. Occasional stepping-back of the building line occurs leading to a local small decreases in the sense of enclosure. South of Ellerker Gardens on approaching the site, enclosure along Richmond Hill road reduces to moderate with the stepping-back of the building line east of the highway associated with detached or semi-detached villas; a continuous terrace of houses lines the western side of the route. Prevailing built form remains at generally 3 – 4 storeys, with taller developments of Priors Lodge (8 storeys) and Richmond Hill Court (5 / 6 storeys) being balanced by tall mature trees within Terrace Gardens.
- 6.5 The continuous line of buildings along the western edge of Richmond Hill road and lack of side streets or gaps prevents from gaining views to the west from this elevated route. The building line steps back and is fragmented on arrival at the site access, with brief slot views permitted between Bromwich House and the Poppy Factory; nonetheless, mature trees fill the intervening spaces and so the sense of enclosure remains moderate.
- 6.6 With regard to the site, despite the relatively low height of the existing built form and sloping terrain, the overall sense of enclosure is strong. Vegetation along the northern and eastern boundary, that associated with Terrace Gardens, generally prevents from gaining any views out, and creates strong edge to the site. Built form associated with Robins Court, located to the south west and west, encloses the site with views terminating on building ridgelines. Bromwich House, due to its height and coupled with the surrounding mature tree vegetation, introduces strong sense of enclosure (refer to Figure 4: Site Context Views).

Massing and Scale

- 6.7 Building footprints within the study area are small to medium scale and are frequently linear in form reflecting the prevailing residential land use and relationship to roads and property boundaries; larger but still of medium scale building footprints do occur in places such as Bromwich House, the Poppy Factory, and Richmond Hill Court. In comparison, the development on the western side of the River Thames includes large volume Richmond Bridge Estate .

6.8 The medium footprint of low to medium height (3 – 4 storey) terraced town houses emphasise the linearity of Richmond Hill road. Small building footprints include detached or semi-detached properties, but these are less frequent along Richmond Hill road. The St. Matthias Conservation Area, located to the north and east of Richmond Hill road is characterised by strongly uniform scale and massing.

Movement and Grain

6.9 At a macro scale, urban grain and movement corridors are established by the linear, generally northwest-to-southeast corridor of the River Thames and underlying topography.

6.10 The historic River Thames crossing, A305 Bridge Street, establishes a southwest / northeast 'latitudinal' grid to the east of the River. The sloping topography of Richmond Hill river terrace has influenced the routeing of Richmond Hill road which establishes a 'longitudinal' northwest / southeast grid to the east of the road. This established rectilinear grid has a relatively high permeability (see Figure 9: Urban Grain).

6.11 Existing buildings to the east of Richmond Hill form perimeter development to the grid, directly addressing the roads / movement corridors. Occasional departures from this pattern occur, notably the 'U' shaped Richmond Hill Court immediately to the east of the site and the non-residential school and university buildings to the southeast (The Vineyard Primary School and Richmond University campus).

6.12 An established rectilinear grid pattern is not apparent to the west of Richmond Hill road due to steep landform and its relationship to the River. Whilst an incomplete linear grain is established along the Petersham Road movement corridor, this is fragmented and indistinct with a loosely radiating grain responding to the landform between Petersham Road and Richmond Hill road. Truncated and restricted access to the site / Bromwich House, the Poppy Factory and Robins Court (effectively a cul de sac) prevent permeability.

6.13 Medium to small scale residential developments create a corresponding fine grain to the east of Richmond Hill road, which contrasts with a loose medium grain created by larger building footprints to the west, within which the site lies.

6.14 The built form within the site is set-back from and below Richmond Hill road and is impermeable to east – west. The vehicular and public pedestrian movement responds to the fragmented and indistinct loosely radiating medium grain east of Petersham Road established by the Poppy Factory, Robins Court and Bromwich House.

Hard and Soft Landscape

6.15 Soft landscape planting within the boundary of the site is limited in quantity and scale to small areas of amenity grass with clumps of incidental ornamental shrub planting around the buildings, subdivided by tarmac paths with handrails. The soft landscape planting is well-maintained but unremarkable. External brick and concrete staircase provide access to the buildings.

6.16 Mature and semi-mature trees are located along the eastern and southern boundaries, but fall outside of the site, within Terrace Gardens. Mature trees also lie to the north of the site access.

6.17 Prevailing hard landscape (paving, signage and street furniture) within the vicinity of the site is variable reflecting its busy urban context, although granite kerbstones along Richmond Hill road are a constant feature. Boundary treatments display a variety of styles and detailing but generally display a limited palette of iron railings or brick walls of differing heights (in various brick colours and / or painted, with or without iron railings).

6.18 Hard and soft landscape within the site is of low susceptibility and low value.

6.19 The offsite trees are of high value with high susceptibility. This reflects the time needed for such a feature to become established and their contribution the Terrace Gardens RPAG.

7. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS ON TOWNSCAPE ELEMENTS

- 7.1 The effects on townscape elements include the direct physical change to the fabric of the land such as the addition, removal or modification of landform, enclosure, massing and scale or public realm within the site itself.

Topography

- 7.2 The proposed development would fall within the footprint of the existing built form.
- 7.3 The area is characterised by previously disturbed ground and is considered to be of low sensitivity. The proposed built form would require some ground clearance and levelling to create building platforms and access, but this would be a limited intervention. The existing levels across much of the site would be retained with the new building platforms largely utilising the already disturbed area.
- 7.4 Most importantly, the overall sloping profile of the site's topography would be retained. The magnitude of change upon the ground levels is assessed as negligible. With low sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change, the effect upon the site's topography would be negligible neutral.

Enclosure

- 7.5 The sense of enclosure as a perceptual quality is difficult to measure. Therefore, this assessment does not quantify the scale of effects but comments on the change brought about by the proposed development.
- 7.6 Although the proposed development would increase the sense of enclosure within the site, this would be largely limited to the site itself. The existing level of enclosure experienced within the site is a function of proximity to and height of the surrounding tree vegetation and existing built form, and sloping landform. The perception of open sky would be partially altered due to the height of the proposed built form, but the separation between the proposed development and neighbouring properties would be largely retained. Change in the topographical profile of the site and stepping down of the proposed roofline would assist in mitigating a comfortable sense of enclosure.

Massing and Scale

- 7.7 Similarly to the sense of enclosure, the perception of massing and scale is difficult to quantify. Therefore, the below assessment focuses on the description of the anticipated change and considers whether such change is in line with the prevailing character of the local townscape.
- 7.8 The proposed development would increase the perception of massing and scale with the new building taller than the existing built form within the site. In comparison with the adjacent Bromwich House the proposed built form would be comparable and not out of scale, whilst respecting the massing of the neighbouring residential properties associated with Robins Court. The Poppy Factory and the 5 - 4 storey Robins Court (No. 132-134 Petersham Road) are examples of larger mass and scale, given the context. It is considered that the proposed development would be reflective of the existing development in this area.

Movement and Grain

- 7.9 With the new building introduced there would be a physical change to the amount of built form in this area. In terms of the grain this would change to a degree with the building's footprint responding to the site's constraints whilst being comparable in footprint to the neighbouring developments: the Poppy Factory and Robins Court. The site's boundaries, adjacent internal street, and pedestrian footway, however, would remain unchanged. The existing pedestrian route between Richmond Hill road, the site, and Petersham Road, via Robins Court would not be physically affected. The magnitude of change is considered to equal to a 'no change' scenario with regards to movement; therefore there would be no effects upon this townscape element associated with the site. In terms of grain the introduced change is assessed as negligible, resulting in negligible neutral effects.

Hard and Soft Landscape

- 7.10 The proposed development has been redesigned to address comments received from LB Richmond during the pre-application stage, improving the relationship between the existing off site trees and proposed built form. The majority of the proposed building would be now located outside of the tree Root Protection Area (RPA) compared to the existing building footprints.

- 7.11 Soft landscape species would be selected to improve amenity and ecological quality of the site, responding to LB Richmond’s published Supplementary Planning Guidance ‘Nature Conservation and Development’ and ‘Trees: Landscape Design, Planting & Care’.
- 7.12 Considering the current low sensitivity vegetative cover within the site, the introduced planting would result in a considerable improvement and net gain. The magnitude of change is assessed as high in terms of structural vegetation and grassland cover on the basis of its amount, quality, and how it responds to the LB Richmond’s policies. Therefore the effects upon the site’s tree resource would be major beneficial and moderate beneficial upon the grassland cover.
- 7.13 The proposed hard landscaping and circulation area would be limited, due to the physical constraints of the site. Therefore the introduced change would be limited, nevertheless beneficial resulting in an improvement to the current hard landscaping. This is considered to be low beneficial on the basis that new area of hardstanding would be of high quality yet would occupy what was once a low amenity grassland. The scale of effects would therefore be minor beneficial.

Table 1 Summary of effects upon townscape elements

Townscape Element	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Scale of Effect
Topography	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Enclosure	Slight increase but not redefining the existing sense of enclosure / openness.		
Massing and Scale	Slight increase but reflecting the neighbouring built form at the Poppy Factory and Robins Court.		
Movement and Grain	No Change / Negligible Neutral		
Hard Landscape	Low	Low (positive)	Minor Beneficial
Soft Landscape	Low to High	High(positive)	Moderate to Major Beneficial

8. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS ON TOWNSCAPE CHARACTER

8.1 The effects of the proposed development upon the overall townscape character of the Conservation Area 12: Richmond Hill (Richmond side) is described below. As previously noted, the adopted SPD focuses on the heritage assets associated with the local landscape and does not analyse in detail the relationship or influence of other built form present in the area.

8.2 With regards to the adjacent Conservation Area 11: St Matthias, there is a strong physical and visual separation between its environs and the site. The site visit did not reveal any views that would suggest any potential townscape or visual effects. For that reason, the effects upon this particular townscape area are not considered further in this TVIA.

Conservation Area 12 Richmond Hill (Richmond side)

Refer to Viewpoint Location Plan (Figure 7), Context Baseline Views (Figure 8), and Single Frames and AVRs (Figure 10 and Figure 11).

8.3 The proposed development, by being physically located within the Conservation Area 12: Richmond Hill (Richmond side) has the ability to alter its grain, relationship between the existing buildings and appreciation of landmarks, overall streetscape and roofscape, skylines, views, or affect the dominance of the existing built form and relationship with the River Thames. These townscape character factors largely reflect the advice given in LB Richmond planning policies discussed in Section 3 of this TVIA.

8.4 In addition to the landmarks identified in the LB Richmond's SPD, the Thames Landscape Strategy (December 2012) identifies the following landmarks in Richmond: Asgill House, Odeon Cinema, Richmond Bridge, Richmond Lock, Richmond Railway Bridge, Richmond Riverside, Spire of St Matthias' Church, Richmond Hill, The White Cross Hotel, and Tower of Church of Elizabeth of Portugal.⁷ It is important to note that the majority of them are located away from the site and would not be seen in simultaneous views with the proposed development. Therefore, their contribution to the local townscape character would remain unchanged.

⁷ Thames Landscape Strategy (December 2012), p.309, <http://thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/9irichmond-2014.pdf> [accessed 30 September 2021].

8.5 The assessment of the visited routes and streetscenes (Context Baseline Views, Figure 8), presented below, helps identify which of the townscape features are most evident in the area and around the site, or may be affected by the proposed development. The following routes are assessed:

- B321 Richmond Hill.
- A307 Petersham Road.
- Robins Court.
- Richmond Bridge.
- Thames Path West/ Cambridge Gardens.
- Terrace and Buccleuch Gardens/Terrace Field.

8.6 In addition, the sequential views associated with these routes are considered in Section 9 of this TVIA as static viewpoints to aid the assessment.

B321 Richmond Hill (Viewpoints 5, A, B, C, D)

8.7 The perception of the townscape as one travels along Richmond Hill is strongly unified, despite localised changes and late 20th century developments. The Victorian and Edwardian houses form the dominant element along this road and control views in and out. They also define the predominant colour palette and use of brick, with elements of white render.

8.8 The proposed development would be largely screened in views from this road as illustrated by Viewpoints A, B, C, 5, and D. AVRs for Viewpoints A and B have not been completed due to insufficient alignment points, however, lack of inter-visibility with Bromwich House and presence of trees in the foreground suggest that the proposals would be inconsequential in terms of townscape character. This conclusion is supported by an earlier AVR prepared in October 2018 from around Terrace Field (refer to 1.10 of this TVIA).

8.9 The focus is on the Gardens and terrace houses, and these are the two dominant features of the townscape. The contribution of Terrace Gardens and strongly unified elevations along this section of Richmond Hill road to the townscape character would be preserved with the proposed development in place.

8.10 As one approaches Richmond Hill Court, gaps in tree vegetation allow for heavily restricted views; receptor overlook the site with Bromwich House identifiable

through the tree canopies. Given the existing ground levels along this section of the road, at approximately 32m AOD, the upper most part of the proposed development would appear in certain sequential views when looking southwest / south – Viewpoints C and 5. The building material would include yellow and blue engineering brick that would echo the predominant building material evident along the road, whilst introducing change in colour in order to provide subtle contrast. Although the sense of enclosure would increase locally, the overall streetscene would not be redefined with the existing trees in Terrace Gardens providing physical and visual separation, and retaining their dominance. The neighbouring Richmond Hill Court would continue to form the dominant feature along this section of the road.

- 8.11 Further northwest, as one approaches the vehicular access to the site, the existing tree vegetation and Bromwich House would considerably screen and enclose views of the proposed development. Views are likely to be limited to the northern part of the proposed building and its 2 upper floors only – refer to Viewpoint D. The gap between Terrace Gardens and Bromwich House would be partly enclosed, which would have some limited effect on the sense of enclosure. This would be very limited as the streetscene is already strongly enclosed with the focus on internal views. Views towards the site are incidental and lack any special relationship with the medium or long range landscape.
- 8.12 The grain associated with this section of the road is relatively consistent but includes slight departures such as the large scale and volume Richmond Hill Court and Priors Lodge, which locally dominate the streetscene and contrast with the fine grain townhouses along the western edge of Richmond Hill road. The visible Bromwich House is a slight departure from the grain and predominant Victorian and Edwardian architecture. The mass and scale of the proposed development would be diminished by the intervening trees, and its influence over the streetscene would be very limited. By being located at a lower elevation and largely behind the trees, it would not introduce any visual competition with the townhouses along Richmond Hill road.
- 8.13 The perception of roofline, nearby attractive Edwardian townhouses and views towards the Gothic Revival Old Vicarage School would not be redefined or affected to any evident degree. The overall character of the streetscene would be preserved with the above-mentioned buildings continuing to perform their function as local landmarks and attracting attention. The use of materials and

simple roofline would allow the proposed development to act as a subservient element, with its crescent shape limiting views to small parts of its northern and eastern elevations thus reducing the perceived mass and volume.

- 8.14 The magnitude of change upon the townscape character associated with this section of Richmond Hill is considered to be negligible. With high sensitivity of the townscape, the effects would also be negligible and neutral.

A307 / Petersham Road and Robins Court (Viewpoint 4)

- 8.15 With regard to views from the A307 / Petersham Road and Robins Court, these are controlled by a combination of built form and vegetation. There is a strong relationship between the road and River Thames in terms of topography and views, and the upper valley slope dominated by the terrace houses along Richmond Hill road. In contrast, the site is not visible from the majority of this road and does not exhibit any special, functional or visual relationship with this route. Views towards the proposed development are limited to one particular location at the entrance to Robins Court and are heavily framed by the existing built form in the foreground. In such views, the existing two storey pavilions within the site can be identified, seen against the backdrop of trees and 4.5 storey tall townhouse along Richmond Hill road. The neighbouring Glenmore House is screened by Robins Court.
- 8.16 This view is incidental, and the proposed development would be largely screened by the intervening buildings within Robins Court. Views would include small parts of the central and southern lower section of the proposed building, and the relationship between Robins Court and streetscape associated the A307 / Petersham Road would not be changed. The roofline and stepping down would respond to the local topography, incidental views would terminate, in parts, on the new built form, but the overall sense of enclosure experienced along this route would remain unchanged. The use of brick would be complementary to the existing architecture, whilst introducing an example of contemporary and respectful architecture.
- 8.17 The magnitude of change upon the townscape character associated with this route is considered to be negligible. With high sensitivity of the townscape, the effects would also be negligible and neutral.

Richmond Bridge

- 8.18 Views from Richmond Bridge are controlled by the meandering River Thames, associated vegetation and built form on the valley slopes. The townscape and river setting are quite complex and include a variety of built form, Victorian, Edwardian, late 20th century and more recent early 21st century development. The Grade II listed Odeon Cinema and buildings at Heron Square, with their attractive lanterns, form a strong feature and act as local landmarks. Views along the River Thames include the Rotary Gardens, which add to the sense of openness and lose grain along the river, contrasting with the high density development along Richmond Hill road. Views north east, towards the site, are characterised by the layering of varied built form, which tends to create a strongly linear pattern, emphasised by relatively uniform and simple rooflines. Victorian terrace houses located between the Rotary Gardens and Petersham Road attract attention, but the nearby 3 – 3.5 storey development at Northumberland Place, and dark brick 4-storey office block behind, detract from the predominant architectural style. Bromwich House, the Poppy Factory, and the 5 storey apartment block at Robins Court are visible but do not detract from the overall composition, grain and quality of the townscape. Park House and adjacent terrace houses along the elevated Richmond Hill road, attract attention.
- 8.19 As evidenced by the AVRs, the proposed development would be either imperceptible due to vegetative screening – in ‘summer’ views, or its introduction would be inconsequential due to the distance and context – in ‘winter’ views. Therefore, the magnitude of change upon the townscape character associated with this route is considered to be negligible. With high sensitivity of the townscape, the effects would also be negligible and neutral.

Thames Path West/ Cambridge Gardens (Viewpoints 3, H, I, J, and K)

- 8.20 With regard to the townscape as experienced along the River Thames Path, it is relatively similar to that experienced from Richmond Bridge albeit with the increased influence of the late 20th century and early 21st century development at Petersham Road and Robins Court. The townscape includes examples of varied typology, grain and massing, with the unifying presence of the Rotary Gardens, Terrace Gardens and the River Thames.
- 8.21 As one travels south Terrace Gardens come in to the view with the terrace houses along the elevated Richmond Hill road increasingly influencing the views. Their mass, height, and unified design creates a strong feature and attracts attention.

The modern developments along Petersham Road add another layer in the evolution of the local townscape and due to their modest height, restricted colour palette and materials used, do not detract from the composite view. They do attract attention but not to the point where the legibility of the local townscape would become diluted.

- 8.22 The proposed development would be visible from this Path, and in certain views would be quite evident, seen as a new addition to the townscape. Despite the elevation the proposed built form would not introduce any visual competition or detract from any other positive features visible from the Path. The roofline would taper off away from Bromwich House reflecting the local topography and retaining the backdrop of Terrace Gardens and built form along the elevated Richmond Hill road. Its simple design, colour, and fenestration would help the proposed development to blend in, to form a subservient element that does not stand out but rather complements the existing townscape. It has to be recognised that in certain views the proposed development would be more apparent, and its positive influence would increase – where it screens and deflects attention from Bromwich House and the 1970s apartment block at Robins Court.
- 8.23 It is also important to note that the Proposals Map (2015) does not identify any protected views along this stretch of the River Thames therefore the proposals would not conflict with Policy LP 5 Views and Vistas. Where such views have been identified, further upstream, they do not include the site and are focused on Terrace Gardens.
- 8.24 Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would exert some limited beneficial change to the townscape character associated with this route. The magnitude of change is assessed as low beneficial with effects moderate beneficial.

Terrace and Buccleuch Gardens/Terrace Field (Viewpoints 1, A, E, F, G, and L)

- 8.25 The Pre-Application Response identifies that: "...the designation of the Historic Park and Garden was made after the current buildings were built. This is somewhat unusual and relevant as in some case similar designations deliberately skirt around built form to exclude it from the designation so there was good reason for its inclusion despite its limited architectural and historic merit. In this respect however there is a historic association and setting in the landscape, tucked in within the surrounding trees."

- 8.26 The site falls within the former grounds of Cardigan House, which were added to the Terrace Gardens public park in the 1920s. the Pre-application Advice given by Historic England (dated 14th August 2020) states: “Whilst none of the houses remain extant, the design and layout of the late 18th and early 19th century grounds remain very much in evidence, particularly with regards to the pathways, planting and borders which gives the park a secluded and enclosed character. This provides a unique and tranquil setting for appreciating not only the outward views to the river Thames, but also views within and across the gardens.”
- 8.27 Historic England acknowledges that the presence of the existing built form within the site: “...somewhat eroded the ability to appreciate its original open rural qualities when it formed part of the Cardigan Estate”. It does, however, omit the fact that apart from being physically located within the same area the site does not bear any resemblance to or contains any attributes that could be traced back to the previous layout.
- 8.28 It is also important to note that the Garden Trust in their response, dated 30th September 2020, acknowledged that the proposals: “...could make a positive contribution to the architectural mix on the hill, which is varied but generally of high quality. (...) the new curving block to be interesting in its form without being too assertive. And because of the topography, neighbouring buildings and surrounding trees, it should not be noticeable or very noticeable from most distant locations.”
- 8.29 With regard to Terrace Gardens and Terrace Field, its character is largely a function of its openness, designed landscapes, topography and elevated views over the meandering River Thames, and strongly uniform streetscene along the adjacent Richmond Hill road. Where the sense of enclosure is high, for example along the north western edge and northern part of the Gardens, views are inward looking and any views out to the west are incidental, and do not form part of designed views. The contribution of the surrounding landscape and townscape to the west is limited and incidental to the character of the Gardens. Within the elevated and more open eastern and southern parts the Gardens exhibit strong visual relationship with the River Thames and adjacent Richmond Hill road. The visual influence of the proposed development is discussed in Section 9 of this TVIA, but the inter-visibility with the proposed scheme is important in order to analyse the potential townscape character effects.

- 8.30 There would inevitably be a level of adverse change due to proximity, perceived height, lack of context, and change in the outlook, as gained from certain parts of the Gardens. Views from the western edge of the Gardens currently terminate on the boundary trees with glimpsed and very restricted views of the built form at Robins Court and Bromwich House. The built form is visible, but the boundary tree vegetation remains dominant in these views.
- 8.31 With the proposed development in place, the presence of built form in these views would increase and would include very close range views of the eastern elevation thus changing, to a degree, the outlook and altering the backdrop. Equally, there would be places from where the proposed development would be either not visible at all or its introduction would be inconsequential. As evidenced in the visual assessment there would be close range locations from where the proposal would be easily identifiable. Equally there would be locations from where the proposed development would not be visible or evident. The introduced built form would change, to a degree, the relationship with the townscape to the west, and change the backdrop in certain views, but the overall character of Terrace Gardens would remain largely unchanged. Most importantly the designated views from Richmond Hill / Terrace Fields and reciprocal views from Richmond Bridge would not be affected. The proposal would be seen amongst the tree canopies but due to its height and stepping down of the roofline the foreground would continue to be dominated by mature tree vegetation within the Gardens and the roofline would sit below the tree line.
- 8.32 On balance, the introduction of the proposed development would have some limited adverse character effects, judged to be low adverse with the effects moderate adverse.

Protected Views

- 8.33 It also has to be recognised that the adopted Policies Map (2015) does not include any views, vistas, or landmarks that would include the site, be focused on the site or suggest that the site forms part of a designed view, albeit the protected panoramic view from Richmond Bridge does (under Policy LP 5 Views and Vistas) include the southernmost edge of the site. The main part of the panorama, however, is concerned with the sloping Terrace Gardens and built form along Richmond Hill road. The Policies Map (2015) also includes views from the western bank of the River Thames, from around the Cambridge Park Footpath

further upstream, and the proposed development would fall out with this protected panorama, thus not conflicting with this Policy.

Summary

8.34 Table 2 below summarises the townscape character effects assessed above.

Table 2 Summary of effects upon SPD Character Areas

Townscape Character Area	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Effect
Conservation Area 12: Richmond Hill (Richmond side)	High	High	High	Negligible Low	Negligible Neutral with localised Moderate Adverse and Moderate Beneficial
Conservation Area 11: St Matthias	High	High	High	No Change	No Effects

9. ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

9.1 The LB Richmond Pre-Application Response (dated 2nd November 2017) (see Appendix 1) sets out a range of key views to be considered in relation to the proposed redevelopment and its relationship to existing townscape and views, namely:

- Protected view lines.
- Views from Terrace Gardens.
- Views from Petersham Road.
- Views from Richmond Bridge.
- Views from the western side of the River Thames.

9.2 An initial site visit was carried out in January 2018 to ascertain the extent of general views towards the site from the surrounding area and to specifically review the locations raised by LB Richmond in their Pre-Application Response.

9.3 Subsequently, communications with officers at LB Richmond resulted in agreement of six viewpoint locations from which Accurate Visual Representations (AVR) would be prepared to show the extent of the proposed development within the existing view (refer to paragraph 1.10 for details). Photography for the summer AVRs was carried out in August 2018 and photography for the 'winter' AVRs was carried in March 2021 as set out in the AVRs reports at Figure 10 and Figure 11. These AVRs have been used to inform the assessment on the effect of the proposed development on the specific views requested by LB Richmond.

9.4 Further two site visits were conducted in August 2021 to assess views towards the site that may be gained sequentially as one moves along Richmond Hill and around Terrace Gardens. The annotated photographs are set out at Figure 8: Context Baseline Views.

9.5 These locations are not necessarily representative of the general low visibility of the proposed development, but rather illustrate locations from where some level of inter-visibility is anticipated. The amount of built form and vegetative screening greatly limits the opportunities to gain views of the proposed development, including 'winter' views.

9.6 Where relevant viewpoint locations have been adjusted on site to gain less restricted view towards the site. Figure 7: Viewpoint Location Plan illustrates the spatial arrangement of the selected viewpoints and indicates those developed

as AVRs. The photographic evidence for each viewpoint is shown as panoramas (extent dependant on the context and available view) in Figure 8: Context Baseline Views.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 9.7 With regard to the value of views for the above listed viewpoints, their location with Richmond Hill Conservation Area and Terrace and Buccleuch Gardens RPAG suggests that such views would be of high value.
- 9.8 In terms of susceptibility to the proposed development, as a built form within large urban environment, pedestrians and recreational receptors (within public open spaces, etc.) are assessed as of medium susceptibility. With regard to receptors along Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) and other promoted routes, their susceptibility is taken as high. Road users are generally assessed as being of low susceptibility due to the variety of townscapes and their changing experience.
- 9.9 Overall, the sensitivity of visual receptors would vary from high - pedestrians and recreational receptors, including those along PRoWs; reducing to medium – road receptors.

Preliminary Viewpoint Assessment

- 9.10 The visual assessment is presented as a two-stage process. A preliminary assessment, carried out in a tabular form below and supported by the photographic evidence in Context Baseline Views and AVRs and single frame photos (Figure 8, Figure 10, and Figure 11), provides for a succinct yet robust assessment of the viewpoints identified in consultation with LB Richmond and additional sequential views.
- 9.11 The view from Terrace Field/Richmond Hill road looking north west towards Asgill House, initially considered during the iterative design process, is excluded from this TVIA due to lack of inter-visibility, as illustrated by AVRs presented to LB Richmond during the consultation stage (refer to paragraph 1.10 for details).

Table 3 Preliminary Viewpoint Assessment

Viewpoint	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Taken for Further Assessment
Viewpoint 1 Terrace Gardens, elevated seat	High	Medium	High	Yes, close proximity view with undeveloped foreground to assess in

Viewpoint	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Taken for Further Assessment
area in the northern part, looking north west.				detail the change to views within the RPAG and confirm townscape assessment effects.
Viewpoint 2 Richmond Bridge, south western end, looking south east	High	Medium to Low	High to Medium	Yes, to assess in detail the change to the streetscene and confirm townscape assessment effects.
Viewpoint 3 River Thames Path, near Richmond Bridge Estate / Pelabon Gardens, looking east.	High	High	High	Yes, to assess in detail the change to the streetscene and confirm townscape assessment effects.
Viewpoint 4 Bucleuch Passage/ Petersham Road/Robins Court looking north east.	High	Medium to Low	High to Medium	Yes, to assess in detail the change to the streetscene and confirm townscape assessment effects
Viewpoint 5 Richmond Hill road, near Richmond Hill Court, looking south west.	High	Medium to Low	High	Yes, to assess in detail the change to the streetscene and confirm townscape assessment effects.
Sequential Views				
Viewpoint A Richmond Hill road, at south eastern corner of Terrace Gardens looking north west.	High	Medium to Low	High to Medium	No, the intervening vegetation, including evergreen species, would screen the proposed development or views would be inconsequential.
Viewpoint B Junction of Richmond Hill road and Friars Stile Road, looking north west.	High	Medium to Low	High to Medium	Yes, to assess in detail the change to the streetscene and confirm townscape assessment effects.
Viewpoint C Richmond Hill road, entrance to Richmond Hill	High	Medium to Low	High to Medium	Yes, view similar to Viewpoint 5. Both viewpoints are assessed

Viewpoint	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Taken for Further Assessment
Court, looking south west.				simultaneously.
Viewpoint D Richmond Hill road, near Priors Lodge opposite Site entrance, looking south.	High	Medium to Low	High to Medium	Yes, to assess in detail the change to the streetscene and confirm townscape assessment effects.
Viewpoint E Terrace Gardens, northern edge, elevated path leading to Richmond Hill road, looking south west.	High	Medium	High	Yes, close proximity view with undeveloped foreground to assess in detail the change to views within the RPAG and confirm townscape assessment effects.
Viewpoint F Terrace Gardens, western circular path, looking north.	High	Medium	High	Yes, close proximity view with undeveloped foreground to assess in detail the change to views within the RPAG and confirm townscape assessment effects.
Viewpoint G Terrace Gardens, central area near Hollyhock Café, looking north.	High	Medium	High	Yes, close proximity view with undeveloped foreground to assess in detail the change to views within the RPAG and confirm townscape assessment effects.
Viewpoint H River Thames Path, near Cambridge Park Footpath, looking north east.	High	High	High	Yes, to assess in detail the change to the river setting and confirm townscape assessment effects.
Viewpoint I River Thames Path, near Richmond Bridge Estate / Pelabon Gardens, looking east.	High	High	High	Yes, to assess in detail the change to the streetscene and confirm townscape assessment effects.
Viewpoint J River Thames Path, near tennis courts, looking east.	High	High	High	No, the intervening built form would screen the proposed development or views would be inconsequential.
Viewpoint K River Thames	High	High	High	No, the intervening built form would

Viewpoint	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Taken for Further Assessment
Path, southern edge of Cambridge Gardens, looking south east.				screen the proposed development or views would be inconsequential.
Viewpoint L Terrace Gardens, eastern edge overlooking Bulbous Betty sculpture, looking north west.	High	Medium	High	Yes, to assess in detail the change to the streetscene and confirm townscape assessment effects.

Detailed Viewpoint Assessment

9.12 Following the Preliminary Viewpoint Assessment, three viewpoints were scoped out (A, J, and K) based on the predicted lack of inter-visibility, as supported by onsite assessment and AVRs (Figure 11).

9.13 The following paragraphs consider the shortlisted viewpoints in detail with the assessment supported by panoramas – Context Baseline Views (Figure 8) and AVRs (Figure 10 and Figure 11). The AVRs are prepared to Level 4 of the adopted guidelines published by the Landscape Institute (depending on the available reference points). Certain AVRs are being shown as detailed wiremodels, with fenestration and balconies accentuated, whilst others are shown as an outline; this depends on the proximity and limitation of the software.

9.14 Some of the above shortlisted viewpoints are located in close proximity to each other and / or share similar context, and have been purposely selected to illustrate sequential experience as one travels along Richmond Hill road, the River Thames Path, or through Terrace Gardens. For that reason, the below assessment considers those viewpoints together, where appropriate.

Viewpoint 1 Terrace Gardens, elevated seat area in the northern part, looking north west.

Viewpoint F Terrace Gardens, western circular path, looking north.

Viewpoint G Terrace Gardens, central area near Hollyhock Café, looking north.

9.15 These three viewpoints are considered simultaneously, being located within the north western part of Terrace Gardens, and sharing similar context / character and nature of the view. The Gardens provide a sense of openness where the

foreground is defined by ornamental planting including mature trees, and views of the built form are generally screened or restricted, particularly in summer months.

- 9.16 Viewpoint 1 offers more elevated and less restricted views towards the site with Bromwich House easily recognisable behind the tree canopies. The existing two storey built form within the site is also evident, although due to its low height and colour it exerts limited influence. Views from Viewpoints F and G are located on the lower slopes and views are increasingly restricted and screened by tree vegetation within the Gardens.
- 9.17 The proposed development would form a new element in winter views, seen behind the wooden shelter at Viewpoint 1 due to gap in tree cover. It would replace the existing built form within the site and Bromwich House, increasing the sense of enclosure and influence of built form in this particular in this view. It is important to note, however, that views of the neighbouring built form along Richmond Hill road, Petersham Road, and along the valley floor are one of the modern characteristic of the Gardens, although historically the views were more open. Built form encloses the Gardens to the east, north, and north west with the development on the western side of the River Thames clearly visible - Richmond Bridge Estate. The built form would appear close to the receptor with roofscape tapering off towards the Gardens, helping to reduce the perceived mass and scale of the proposed development. Although the scheme would be respectful in terms of its design language and complimentary use of materials and colours, due to proximity, increased sense of enclosure, and limited influence of unattractive architecture within and around the site, the introduced change is considered to be adverse.
- 9.18 It is considered that in winter views the magnitude of change would be medium, reducing to negligible in summer months. On that basis the scale of effects would vary from major adverse to negligible neutral depending on seasonal changes.
- 9.19 With regard to Viewpoints F and G, the intervening vegetation has the ability to almost completely screen the proposed development, with heavily filtered views gained through the tree canopies. It is likely that the eastern elevation and upper parts of the scheme would appear amongst the tree vegetation. Bromwich House is partially visible at Viewpoint G with the streetscape of Richmond Hill road exerting strong influence over the Gardens. Receptors within this urban

environment would be familiar with the form of development proposed, although it is recognised that architecturally they would be different. The simple outline and materials used would help create a subservient element in the view, with the foreground and boundary vegetation associated with the Gardens continuing to form the main element in this view.

- 9.20 It is considered that in winter views the magnitude of change would be low, reducing to negligible in summer months. On that basis the scale of effects would vary from moderate adverse to negligible neutral depending on seasonal changes.

Viewpoint 2 Richmond Bridge, south western end, looking south east.

- 9.21 This viewpoint is located approximately 450m away from the site and is heavily influenced by the River Thames corridor, its valley landscape and urban environment of Richmond that covers the valley slopes. It aims to represent the protected views from Richmond Bridge, as identified in the adopted Policies Map (2015) and current Policy LP 5 Views and Vistas.
- 9.22 Summer views are characterised by strong vegetative cover which cloaks the slopes and built form in mid distance. Winter views are open, and the river setting is largely defined by dense built form with pockets of open space. Architecturally, the built form varies to a considerable degree, but the combination of roofscape, fenestration, scale and mass coupled with the consistent use of brindle brick helps unify the townscape. Built form on the mid and lower slopes includes late 20th and early 21st century developments, which partially screen the townscape further up the slope and along Richmond Hill road. They deflect attention, to a degree, but do not prevent the elevated townscape from performing its function as a dominant townscape feature.
- 9.23 With regard to the site, the Poppy Factory and Bromwich House help establish its location, but the existing built form is not visible, being completely screened by the intervening developments.
- 9.24 Given the existing screening and height of the Poppy Factory and Bromwich House the majority of the proposed development would be considerably screened even in winter views. The taller northern part of the scheme would be screened by Bromwich House with its central part heavily filtered by the intervening tree canopies located immediately to the southwest of the site. It is possible that one of the corners of the central volume would appear above the tree canopies and

would be seen against Park House, the 5.5 storey high terrace, located at the junction of Richmond Hill road and Friars Stile Road. Considering the dark and recessive colour of the proposed materials and simple building outline, the proposed development would exert very limited influence. Dark colours would help the development to blend in and the amount of reflected light is likely to be very limited, particularly as it would be seen through the intervening tree canopies in winter. Its modest scale and simple roof line would render the scheme subservient with the roofline stepping down away from Bromwich House reflecting the sloping topography and respecting the river setting. The reduction in height, when compared to the initially proposed scheme, allows a greater degree of visual separation from the backcloth of attractive terrace houses along Richmond Hill road. When the vegetation is in leaf the proposed development is likely to be completely screened by the intervening tree canopies and built form.

- 9.25 It is considered that in winter views the magnitude of change would be negligible reducing to a 'no change' scenario in summer months. On that basis the scale of effects would vary from negligible neutral to no effects, depending on seasonal changes.

Viewpoint 3 River Thames Path, near Richmond Bridge Estate / Pelabon Gardens, looking east.

Viewpoint I River Thames Path, near Richmond Bridge Estate / Pelabon Gardens, looking east.

- 9.26 Views from this section of the River Thames Path are strongly influenced by the built form along Petersham Road, which defines the middle ground and partially screens the elevated terrace houses associated with Richmond Hill road. The Poppy Factory is almost completely screened in this particular view with Grade II listed The Paragon and Bingham House Hotel forming a feature in this view. Bromwich House and Robins Court, particularly its 5 storey apartment block, detract from the overall quality of the view and townscape, although in 'summer' views the inter-visibility is considerably lower. Blade House with its vaulted roof is a modern intervention contrasting with other properties along Petersham Road.
- 9.27 The elevated townscape of Richmond Hill road forms an attractive backdrop, particularly the terrace houses near Terrace Gardens, but its influence is somewhat reduced by the aforementioned Robins Court. The intervening built form on the lower and mid slope restrict views up the slope and the eye travels

along the river corridor rather than up the slope; receptors are likely to be focused on the immediate environs.

9.28 In 'summer' views, the proposed development would be almost completely screened, and receptors would be unaware of its presence or would easily miss the introduced built form. When the vegetation is denuded of its foliage, views are likely to include the two upper most floors of the northern volume, the glazed link, and top floor of the central volume, with Robins Court and intervening trees screening the majority of the proposed development. The upper floors of the northern volume would be seen against, and partially screen Glenmore House visible on the higher ground. The neighbouring 4.5 storey light coloured rendered town house (at Cardigan Road) would be also partially screened. Their roofline and parts of the front south facing elevations, however, would continue to be visible, helping to retain their positive influence over this view. The proposed development would be visible in this 'winter' view and would add a new contemporary yet modest element into this view. Due to its style, simple outline and dark colours the proposed development would not detract from the overall view and would not create any undue contrast with other built form, particularly that along the elevated Richmond Hill road. The stepping down of the roofline, glazed link, and gently curved footprint would considerably help reduce its perceived mass and height, whilst visually balancing the mass of the apartment block at Robins Court. Due to the direction of view and curved footprint, the side elevations and associated green walls would be visible, further disintegrating the massing and scale of the scheme. In terms of nature of change, it is considered to be beneficial due to the proposal including green walls, introducing a modest and subservient, yet architecturally attractive feature into the townscape and deflecting attention from other less attractive buildings visible in this view. This acts to offset the increased sense of enclosure and reduced inter-visibility of Glenmore House and the adjacent town house at Cardigan Road.

9.29 Based on the above assessment the magnitude of change in winter views would be low beneficial reducing to negligible in summer months. On that basis the scale of effects would vary from moderate beneficial to negligible neutral.

Viewpoint 4 Buccleuch Passage/ Petersham Road/Robins Court looking north east.

9.30 Viewpoint 4 is the only location along Petersham Road where views into the site can be gained. Views are strongly enclosed and dominated by 5 to 3-storey

development at Robins Court, which forms the foreground. Views are strongly channelled by the buildings either side of this view, with one of the two storey pavilions within the site visible in the background. The townscape associated with the elevated Richmond Hill road comes in and out of this narrow angle view, becoming incidental and exerting very limited influence.

- 9.31 The proposed development would be almost completely screened by Robins Court with only small parts of its central (4-storey) and southern (3 to 2-storey) lower volumes appearing behind the built form. Due to its curved footprint views would terminate on the west facing elevation and green walls. In certain views the proposed development would screen the white rendered town house at Cardigan Road, but the view is strongly focused on the immediate environs and the wider context is of little contribution to this particular view. The introduced modern architecture would respond well to the surrounding townscape environment with brick and colours creating a subservient element in the background. Despite the change in levels the massing and scale of the proposed scheme would not be evident.
- 9.32 Similarly to Viewpoints 3 and 1, the nature of change is considered to be beneficial due to the proposal including green walls, introducing a modest and subservient, yet architecturally attractive incidental feature into this view.
- 9.33 Based on the above assessment the magnitude of change would be low beneficial regardless of seasonal changes. On that basis the scale of effects would be moderate beneficial to minor beneficial – depending on the sensitivity of receptors.

Viewpoint 5 Richmond Hill road, near Richmond Hill Court, looking south west

Viewpoint C Richmond Hill road, entrance to Richmond Hill Court, looking south west.

- 9.34 This is one of the closest viewpoints selected for this TVIA. Receptors at both Viewpoints 5 and C are influenced by the townscape along Richmond Hill road, with Richmond Hill Court representing a slight departure from the prevailing grain and character, due to its large scale and mass. Views south are open and overlook Terrace Gardens.
- 9.35 Due to the very close proximity the proposed development would be recognised as being a new element in the view and streetscene. The change in levels and

vegetative cover helps reduce its visibility with only the top level of the 5-storey northern volume visible in this view. Views are likely to include elements of fenestration and glazed link staircase, but the walkway itself is likely to be screened by the balustrade associated with Terrace Gardens. The proposed materials would be complimentary to and reflective of the building material prevalent along Richmond Hill road. The simple roofline would not introduce any verticality or visual competition although the currently open and distant views south would be screened. It is recognised that to some receptors the proposed contemporary architecture may represent an attractive addition. In order to provide a worst case scenario, however, the introduced change is taken to be adverse due to difference in architectural styles. It has to be recognised that movement and presence of Richmond Hill Court acts to diminish the adverse effects. Notwithstanding the visibility of the proposed development, the dominance of tree vegetation withing Terrace Gardens and their contribution to this composite view would be retained. It is also important to note that this is an incidental view, does not form part of a wide panorama such as that gained along Terrace Fields, and is gained through a break in tree vegetation.

- 9.36 Therefore, the magnitude of change would be low adverse regardless of seasonal changes. On that basis the scale of effects would be moderate to minor adverse – depending on the sensitivity of receptors.

Viewpoint B Junction of Richmond Hill road and Friars Stile Road, looking north west.

Viewpoint L Terrace Gardens, eastern edge overlooking Bulbous Betty sculpture, looking north west.

- 9.37 Viewpoints B and L are both strongly influenced by the presence of Terrace Gardens, valley landscape and topography, elevated views across the River Thames and its developed setting. Views are also influenced by the proximity to Richmond Hill road and its townscape with movement frequent and evident. The streetscene includes the strongly unified terrace houses, such as Park House and those adjacent to the south, with the nearby Hillbrow apartment block somewhat detracting from the overall quality. Views southwest and west are relatively open, elevated and distant. Looking northwest towards the site, however, views terminate on the tree vegetation that forms part of the foreword. Evergreen species interrupt the horizon. Bromwich House, although identifiable in ‘winter’

views at Viewpoint B is almost imperceptible and exerts very limited influence over this view.

- 9.38 It is predicted that the same would be true for the proposed development, and its introduction would be inconsequential in visual terms. Given that its maximum height is lower than that of Bromwich House, receptors may potentially gain views of the upper most part of the proposed development. Such views would be heavily filtered by the intervening vegetation and the introduced built form would not exert any evident or perceptible change to this view.
- 9.39 It is considered that the magnitude of change would be negligible regardless of seasonal changes. On that basis the scale of effects would be also negligible neutral.

Viewpoint D Richmond Hill road, near Priors Lodge opposite site entrance, looking south.

- 9.40 Viewpoint D is located in a relatively close proximity to Viewpoints 5 and C, and illustrates the sequential experience as one travels along this road. Views from this viewpoint are largely influenced by the strongly coherent townscape along the lower western end of Richmond Hill road, but Priors Lodge and Richmond Hill Court do interrupt the grain and overall character of the streetscene. Views towards the site are interrupted by tree cover; Bromwich House is easily identifiable framing the gap to the right.
- 9.41 The proposed development would be largely screened in this view, due to changes in topography, presence of intervening trees, and alignment of the proposed building. In 'winter' views the tree cover would heavily filter views of the top two storeys of the eastern and northern elevations with the lower part of the built form not visible at all. Although the proposal would introduce a new element of built form the overall composition of the view and streetscene would change to a very limited degree only. The simple outline and choice of materials would allow the proposed development to be absorbed into the view, particularly given the vegetative screening, without any negative change. The new built form would be recessive in colours and subservient in terms of its mass and scale, being located on the sloping ground and away from the carriageway. This would allow the new roofline to sit much lower than the existing roofscape associated with Richmond Hill road, thus preserving its contribution to the townscape of the Richmond Hill conservation area. The modern and simple architecture of the

proposal would help deflect the attention from the nearby Bromwich House and 'book end' development of No. 45 – 67. The scheme would be recognised as being a modest and subservient addition to the townscape and this streetscene, not detracting from its overall character but rather contributing to its layered development.

- 9.42 The magnitude of change is considered to be low beneficial with effects moderate beneficial in 'winter' views. When vegetation is in leaf the magnitude of change is assessed as negligible with effects negligible neutral, given the context and amount of built form in this view, anticipated vegetative screening, and transitional nature of this view.

Viewpoint E Terrace Gardens, northern edge, elevated path leading to Richmond Hill road, looking south west.

- 9.43 This viewpoint illustrates one of the closest and least restricted views of the site gained from the northern elevated part of Terrace Gardens. The sense of enclosure in this area is considerable due to the vegetative cover within the Gardens. The accidental gap in the boundary vegetation, however, allows for elevated and distant, albeit restricted views looking southwest and into the site. The existing 2-storey pavilions form part of the very close range middle ground with the Poppy Factory visible behind. The backdrop is formed by tree canopies and elements of built form with eye travelling towards the distant horizon. Bromwich House is almost completely screened in this particular angle of view.
- 9.44 The introduction of the proposed development would foreshorten and change the character and composition of this views to a considerable degree. The sense of enclosure would increase with receptors focused on the new attractive architecture, but losing the long range views. The stepping down of the roofline would help reduce the perceived mass and height of the scheme, and allow it to respond to the underlying topography of the townscape, nevertheless due to proximity the change would be adverse. On that basis, and similarly to Viewpoints 1, F, and G, the nature of change is considered to be adverse.
- 9.45 It is considered that in winter views the magnitude of change would be medium, given the context, reducing to low in summer months. On that basis the scale of effects would be major adverse reducing to moderate adverse, depending on the vegetative screening.

Viewpoint H River Thames Path, near Cambridge Park Footpath, looking north east.

- 9.46 This is one of the first locations along the River Thames Path, as one travels northbound, where views towards the site can be gained. The meandering river corridor screens views towards the site from further south along the Path. Views are restricted by the vegetation that lines the river corridor with the middle ground defined by the built form along Petersham Road. The modern Blade House with its vaulted roof and early 21st century 3.5 storey residential apartments (142A to 142D Petersham Road) on the edge of Terrace Gardens, create a relatively strong feature and attract attention. Bromwich House can be seen mid slope with the built form along Richmond Hill road visible, adding to the complexity of the view.
- 9.47 The majority of the proposed built form would be completely screened in this view, regardless of the seasonal changes. 'Winter' views would include the upper most 2 storeys of the northern volume, which would partially screen and replace Bromwich House in this view. The elevation gently curves and roofline steps down, following the local topography, and the central and southern lower volume would be almost completely screened. Views would include the very upper edge of the top storey identifiable above the roofscape associated with Petersham Road. The contemporary style, use of brick and restrained detailing would create a simple, modest yet attractive element in this composite view. The proposals would respond positively to the presence of other modern features in this part of the townscape and reinforce this positive change, yet without creating any visual competition or undue contrast. By partially screening Bromwich House the proposals would also help diminish its negative influent and deflect attention.
- 9.48 Based on the above assessment the magnitude of change would be low beneficial in 'winter' views diminishing to negligible when trees are in leaf. On that basis the scale of effects would be moderate beneficial to negligible neutral – depending on seasonal changes and inter-visibility.

Summary of Visual Effects

- 9.49 Table 4 below summarises the visual effects assessed above.

Table 4 Summary of visual effects upon viewpoints

Viewpoint	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change (Year 1 winter / summer)	Scale of visual effects (Year 1 winter / summer)
Viewpoint 1 Terrace Gardens, elevated seat area in the northern part, looking north west.	High	Medium	High	Medium / Negligible	Major Adverse / Negligible Neutral
Viewpoint 2 Richmond Bridge, south western end, looking south east	High	Medium to Low	High	Negligible / 'No change'	Negligible Neutral / No Effects
			Medium		
Viewpoint 3 River Thames Path, near Richmond Bridge Estate / Pelabon Gardens, looking east.	High	High	High	Low / Negligible	Moderate Beneficial / Negligible Neutral
Viewpoint 4 Buccleuch Passage/ Petersham Road/Robins Court looking north east.	High	Medium to Low	High	Low	Moderate Beneficial
			Medium		Minor Beneficial
Viewpoint 5 Richmond Hill road, near Richmond Hill Court, looking south west.	High	Medium to Low	High	Low	Moderate Adverse
			Medium		Minor Adverse
Viewpoint A Richmond Hill road, at south eastern corner of Terrace Gardens looking north west.	High	Medium to Low	High	Scoped out – anticipated to be negligible.	Scoped out – anticipated to be negligible neutral.
			Medium		
Viewpoint B Junction of Richmond Hill road and Friars Stile Road, looking north west.	High	Medium to Low	High	Negligible	Negligible Neutral
			Medium		
Viewpoint C Richmond Hill road, entrance to Richmond Hill Court, looking south west.	High	Medium to Low	High	Low	Moderate Adverse
			Medium		Minor Adverse

Viewpoint D Richmond Hill road, near Priors Lodge opposite Site entrance, looking south.	High	Medium to Low	High	Low / Negligible	Moderate Beneficial / Negligible Neutral
			Medium		Minor Beneficial / Negligible Neutral
Viewpoint E Terrace Gardens, northern edge, elevated path leading to Richmond Hill road, looking south west.	High	Medium	High	Medium / Low	Major Adverse / Moderate Adverse
Viewpoint F Terrace Gardens, western circular path, looking north.	High	Medium	High	Low / Negligible	Moderate Adverse / Negligible Neutral
Viewpoint G Terrace Gardens, central area near Hollyhock Café, looking north.	High	Medium	High	Low / Negligible	Moderate Adverse / Negligible Neutral
Viewpoint H River Thames Path, near Cambridge Park Footpath, looking north east.	High	High	High	Low / Negligible	Moderate Beneficial / Negligible Neutral
Viewpoint I River Thames Path, near Richmond Bridge Estate / Pelabon Gardens, looking east.	High	High	High	Low / Negligible	Moderate Beneficial / Negligible Neutral
Viewpoint J River Thames Path, near tennis courts, looking east.	High	High	High	Scoped out – anticipated to be negligible.	Scoped out – anticipated to be negligible neutral.
Viewpoint K River Thames Path, southern edge of Cambridge Gardens, looking south east.	High	High	High	Scoped out – anticipated to be negligible.	Scoped out – anticipated to be negligible neutral.
Viewpoint L Terrace Gardens, eastern edge overlooking Bulbous Betty sculpture, looking north west.	High	Medium	High	Negligible	Negligible Neutral

10. CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 This TVIA has been prepared on behalf of Housing 21 in support of a planning application for the redevelopment of land at Howson Terrace, Richmond Hill, Richmond upon Thames. The site is located on an irregular, crescent-shaped parcel of sloping land that is separated from Richmond Hill to the east / northeast by Terrace Gardens, which wrap around its eastern and southern boundary. The western boundary is formed by Robins Court estate which separates the site from Petersham Road, and in turn the River Thames at the toe of the hillside. The site is currently occupied by three freestanding 2-storey residential buildings / pavilions dating from 1971. To the north of the site is the five-storey Bromwich House.
- 10.2 The site lies within Richmond Hill Conservation Area, which encompasses properties lining the eastern edge of Richmond Hill, Terrace and Buccleuch Gardens to the south of the site, the River Thames to the west and properties along its western bank, and Richmond Bridge to the northwest of the site. According to LB Richmond's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Richmond and Richmond Hill Village Planning Guidance, the site falls within the Conservation Area 12: Richmond Hill (Richmond side).
- 10.3 The site also falls within the Terrace and Buccleuch Gardens, Grade II* Registered Park and Garden (RPAG), included on the Historic England 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England'. The designation encompasses the site's two storey buildings, but not the access road or car park.
- 10.4 Consultation with LB Richmond started in 2017 with initial landscape works carried out in 2018 supported by a number of Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs). This work aimed to respond and address LB Richmond's comments raised in their Pre-application Response. Subsequent communications with LB Richmond in 2020 and site surveys in March and August 2021 were carried out to include 'winter' views and sequential assessment.
- 10.5 The published SPD and conservation area appraisal have been reviewed to inform the assessment work, and to identify those features that are of particular relevance to the local townscape.
- 10.6 It has been identified that there are no buildings of Townscape Merit or listed buildings immediately adjacent to the site. Although the Local Plan identifies a

number of protected views, under Policy LP 5 Views and Vistas, the majority of them do not include the site. Only one of them, looking north west from Richmond Hill across Terrace Field towards Asgill House, cuts through the site. The visual assessment and AVR prepared in 2018, however, confirmed that the proposed development would not be visible in this particular view. With regard to the Pre-Application Response from LB Richmond received in 2017 it advised that: “Any interruption in the skyline, above tree line and obtrusiveness within the protected views will be resisted...” In order to address these comments, the proposed development has been redesigned with its footprint changed and height reduced to protect these views.

- 10.7 With regard townscape character, built form within the Richmond Hill Conservation Area is varied in terms of its height, mass and grain. It includes for example the single storey Rosemont School, approximately 20m high 5 storey Bromwich House, 6 storey Richmond Hill Court in the immediate vicinity of the site, and the 5 storey Richmond Bridge Estate on the opposite bank of the River. One taller structure, Priors Lodge at 8 storeys and approximately 25m tall, lies opposite the site access on Richmond Hill. The 5 storey The Royal Star and Garter Home marks the transition between Richmond Park and townscape of Richmond Hill. Overall, with regard to the streetscene along Richmond Hill road there is a clear tendency for the building heights to reduce from south east to north west, as one follows the sloping landform.
- 10.8 The assessment has concluded that the effects of the proposed development upon the topography of the site, as a townscape element, would be negligible neutral. With regard to soft and hard landscape this has been assessed as subject to beneficial effects with the increase in tree cover, change to diverse wildflower grassland, with the addition of ornamental planting and native boundary hedge, and high quality hard landscaping. Plant species would be selected to improve amenity and ecological quality of the site, responding to LB Richmond’s published Supplementary Planning Guidance ‘Nature Conservation and Development’ and ‘Trees: Landscape Design, Planting & Care’.
- 10.9 With regards the sense of enclosure, massing and scale, and grain, the assessment of these townscape factors has not been quantified but rather a narrative description provided to present the anticipated change. The assessment has concluded that there would be localised increased in the sense of enclosure,

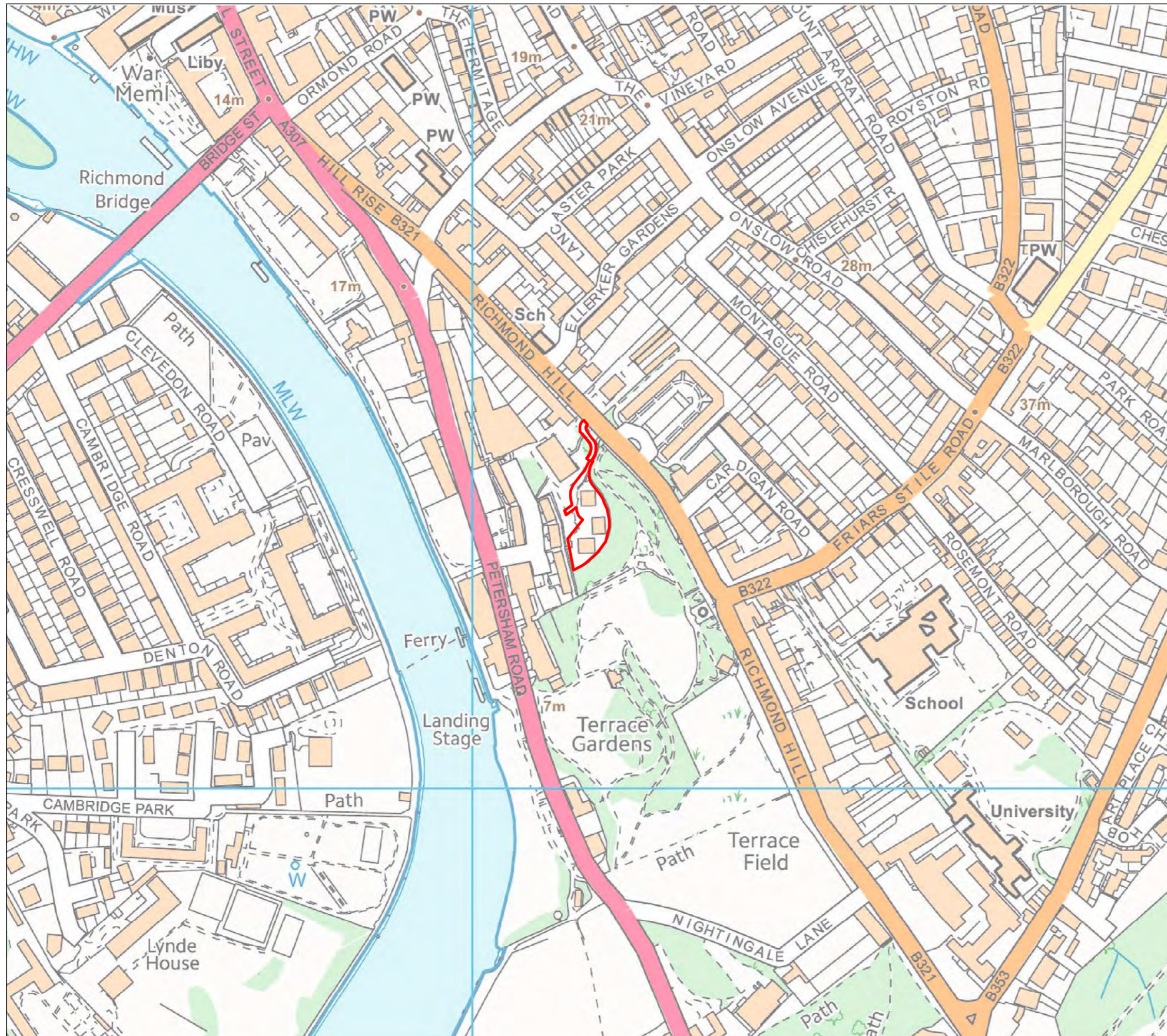
massing and scale, but this would be reflective and in keeping with the neighbouring properties.

- 10.10 In addition to the review of the Council's published documents, the author has conducted their own analysis, looking specifically at areas in the immediate locality of the site, particularly the streetscene associated with Richmond Hill road, Richmond Bridge, Petersham Road, the River Thames Path, and Terrace Gardens. As part of this analysis, the TVIA has aimed to identify those features and elements in the streetscene that are most evident and may be altered by the proposed development.
- 10.11 The townscape assessment has considered the effect of the proposed development on the Conservation Area 12 Richmond Hill (Richmond side). Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would largely retain the existing townscape character and would be inconsequential with localised moderate adverse and moderate beneficial change upon certain parts of the local townscape.
- 10.12 With regard to neighbouring Conservation Areas, the indirect effects would be negligible neutral.
- 10.13 A total of 12 viewpoints have been selected, through preliminary visual studies carried out in 2018 and as part of the sequential visual assessment in 2021. In order to aid the assessment and provide evidence to LB Richmond the majority of them have been developed as AVRs. Consequently, three viewpoints have been omitted from detailed assessment due to lack of inter-visibility. These coincide with the elevated Richmond Hill road overlooking Terrace Gardens and the River Thames Path that follows the western edge of the River. This proves that the proposed development has been redesigned to respect the local townscape character, that into account the issues of skyline and dominance of the existing features as advised in the Pre-Application Response from LB Richmond: "Any interruption in the skyline, above tree line and obtrusiveness within the protected views will be resisted...".
- 10.14 The amount of vegetative screening, intervening built form, and relatively modest height of the proposed buildings, results in views either not being gained or considerably restricted. The assessment has found that a number of viewpoints would be subject to negligible visual effects when trees are in leaf. This would

change in places to beneficial or adverse, reflecting the context, change in scale and massing, change to the nature or character of the view, and allowing for a higher inter-visibility in winter months.

- 10.15 Receptors at five viewpoints have been assessed as subject to moderate beneficial effects, on the basis of positive visual influence of the proposed modern yet restrained architecture. These viewpoints coincide with the Richmond Hill road near site access, views from Petersham Road through Robins Court, and views from the opposite side of the River Thames, along the River Thames Path. Receptors at six viewpoints have been assessed as experiencing major to moderate and minor adverse effects depending on the sensitivity of receptor. It has to be acknowledged that this represents a precautionary approach whereby the introduced contemporary architecture is considered to exert some limited negative influence on the nature of view and due to proximity. Such locations, however, are very limited.
- 10.16 Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would respect the grain, scale and mass of the existing built form within the Richmond Hill area, thus not altering its overall townscape character. Some very localised adverse effects may occur within Terrace Gardens, but the proposed development would not redefine the overall character of this designated asset or appreciation of its designed landscapes and views out.

FIGURE 1
SITE LOCATION PLAN



KEY

 Site Boundary

Revisions:
First Issue- 08/09/2021 AD

Site Location Plan

**Howson Terrace, Richmond,
London**

Client: Housing and Care 21
 DRWG No: **P17-2640_10** Sheet No: - REV: -
 Drawn by: AD Approved by: AS
 Date: 08/09/2021
 Scale: 1:3,500 @ A3



FIGURE 2
LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN



- Site Boundary
- Existing vegetation to be retained to BS5837:2012 with Root Protection Areas
- Existing trees to be removed
- Proposed specimen shrubs and small multi-stem trees
- Proposed native hedgerow planting
- Proposed ornamental shrub / grass / herbaceous planting
- Proposed bulb planting
- Proposed amenity grass area - Emorsgate Seeds (or similar), EG22: for use in amenity green space and verges
- Proposed shady locations woodland wildflowers meadow grass - Emorsgate Seeds (or similar), EW1: for use in shady locations such as alongside hedgerows / woodland
- BH Proposed ecological enhancement - suggested location for bug / insect hotel
- HB Proposed ecological enhancement - suggested location for hedgehog box
- LP Proposed ecological enhancement - suggested location for log piles/stag beetle loggery
- Existing and proposed road/car park - tarmac
- Existing and proposed tarmac footpath
- Proposed feature paving area
- Proposed feature paving to indicate pedestrian crossing
- Proposed retaining wall - to be specified by engineers

NOTE: Levels to be confirmed by engineer. Levels within Root Protection Areas must not undermine trees future ability to thrive or disturb the trees structural integrity. Any soft works carried out within the root protection area must be carried out with hand tools.

To minimise the risk to those using or maintaining the space there must be a maximum gradient of 1:3 for any area of soft landscaping.

The proposed plant species will respond to the Council's published Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Nature Conservation and Development' and 'Trees: Landscape Design, Planting & Care'.

Revisions:
 First Issue- 10/09/2021 ASK
 A- (21/09/2021 ASK) - note amended to include planting guidance

Landscape Masterplan

Howson Terrace, Richmond, London

Client: Housing and Care 21

DRWG No: **P17-2640_05** Sheet No: REV: A

Drawn by: JN/ASK Approved by: TH

Date: 21/09/2021
 Scale: 1:150 @A1

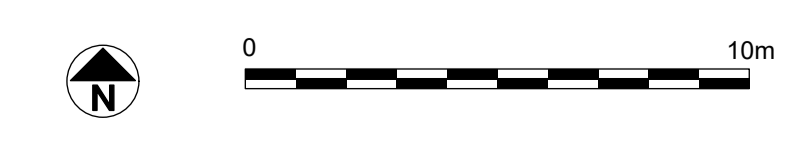


FIGURE 3
TOWNSCAPE CONTEXT PLAN



KEY

- Site Boundary
- Grade I Listed Building
- Grade II* Listed Building
- Grade II Listed Building
- National Trail
- Registered Park / Garden
- Conservation Area

Revisions:
First Issue- 01/04/2021 AD

Townscape Context Plan
Howson Terrace, Richmond,
London

Client: Housing and Care 21
 DRWG No: **P17-2640_12** Sheet No: - REV: -
 Drawn by: AD Approved by: DRAFT
 Date: 01/04/2021
 Scale: 1:2,500 @ A3



FIGURE 4
SITE CONTEXT VIEWS

5 storey Bromwich House on Howson Terrace

Existing buildings on Site



CONTEXT VIEW 1 - View from walkway within Site looking north

Existing buildings on Site

5 storey buildings at Robins Court



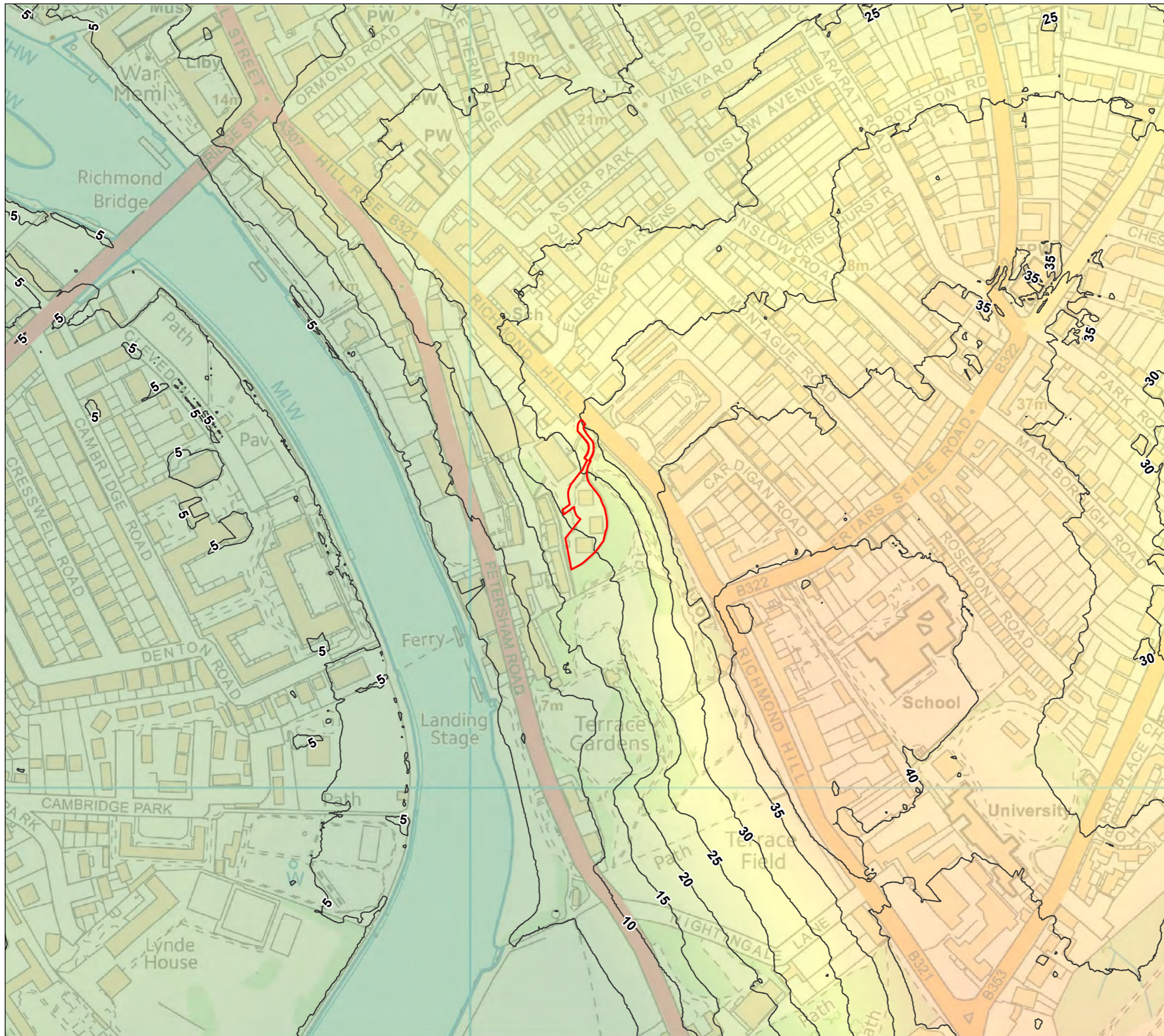
CONTEXT VIEW 2 - View from main drive looking south west

Existing buildings on Site




CONTEXT VIEW 3 - View from walkway within Site looking south

FIGURE 5
TOPOGRAPHY PLAN




KEY

 Site Boundary

 5m Contours

Topography

 High : 57.83

Low : 1.25

Revisions:
First Issue- 01/04/2021 AD

Topography

**Howson Terrace, Richmond,
London**

Client: Housing and Care 21
 DRWG No: **P17-2640_15** Sheet No: - REV: -
 Drawn by: AD Approved by: DRAFT
 Date: 01/04/2021
 Scale: 1:3,500 @ A3



FIGURE 6
BUILDING HEIGHTS PLAN



KEY

- Site Boundary
- BUILDING HEIGHTS (AGL)**
- 0 - 5m
- 5.1 - 10m
- 10.1 - 15m
- 15.1 - 20m
- 20.1 - 25m
- 25.1 - 30m
- 35m +

Heights for proposed buildings taken from drawings-
 APL 010 West elevation
 APL 011 East elevation
 APL 012 South elevation
 APL 013 North elevation

Revisions:
 First Issue- 29/09/2021 AD

Building Heights

Howson Terrace, Richmond, London

Client: Housing and Care 21
 DRWG No: **P17-2640_14** Sheet No: - REV: -
 Drawn by: AD Approved by: DRAFT
 Date: 29/09/2021
 Scale: 1:3,500 @ A3



FIGURE 7
VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN



KEY

- Site Boundary
- AVR Viewpoint
- Single Frame Viewpoint (Non AVR)
- 1-5** Viewpoint Location
- A-L** Sequential Viewpoint Location

Revisions:
First Issue- 08/09/2021 AD

Viewpoint Location Plan
Howson Terrace, Richmond, London

Client: Housing and Care 21
 DRWG No: **P17-2640_11** Sheet No: - REV: -
 Drawn by: AD Approved by: AS
 Date: 08/09/2021
 Scale: 1:3,000 @ A3



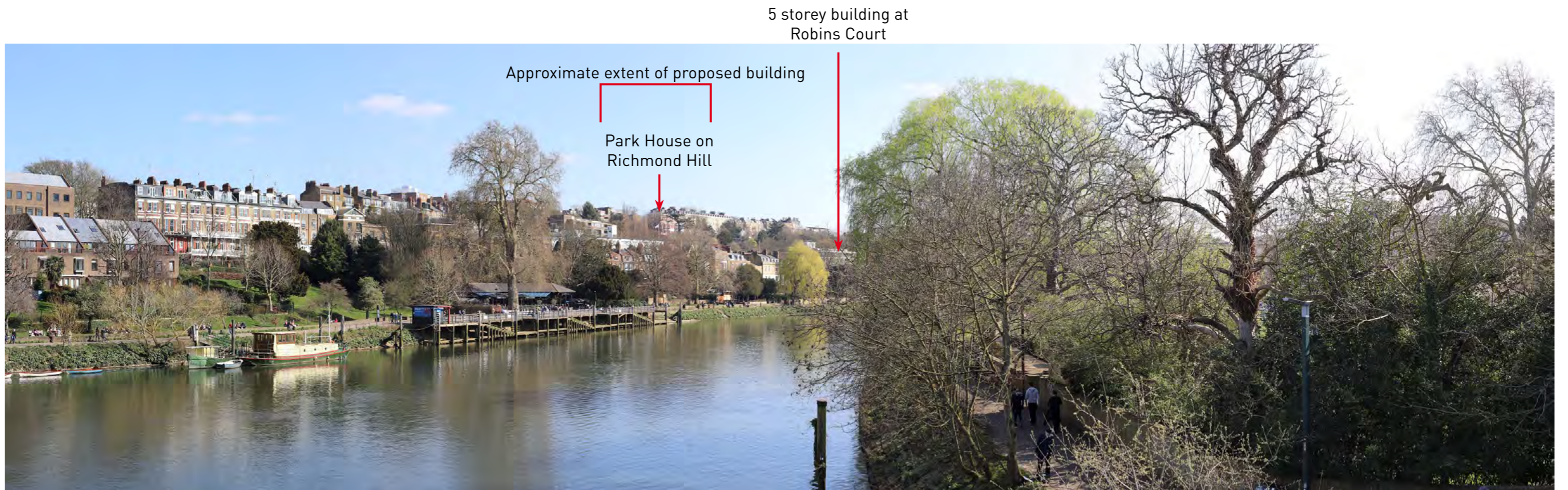
FIGURE 8
CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWS



VIEWPOINT 1 - Terrace Gardens, elevated seat area in the northern part, looking north west.



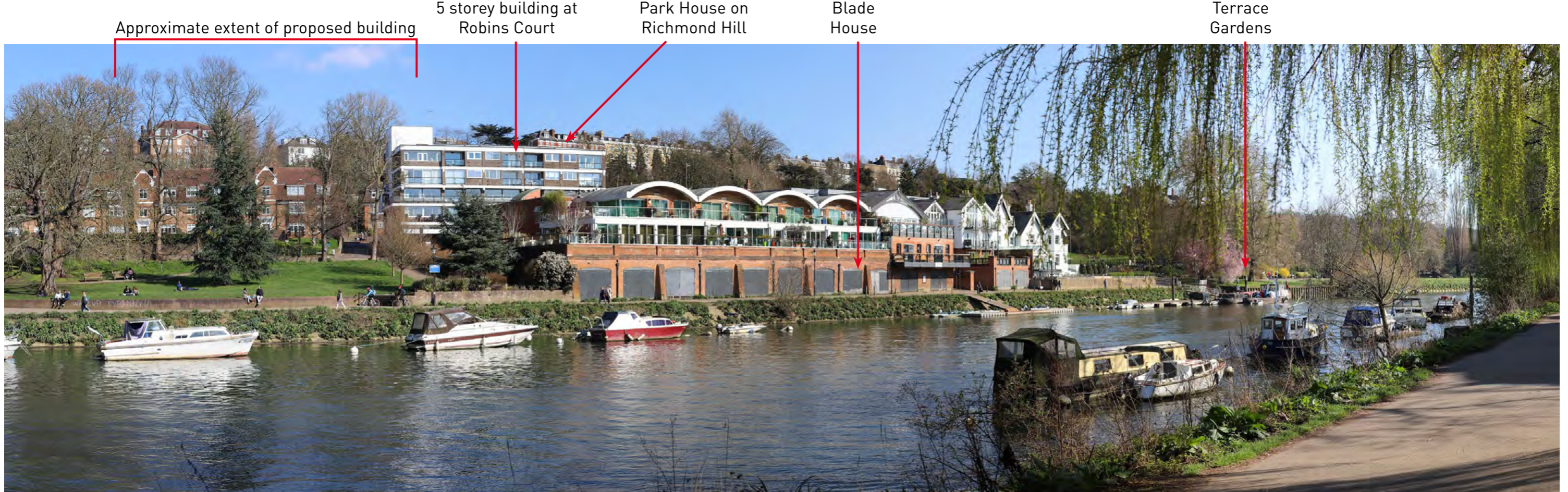
VIEWPOINT 2A - Richmond Bridge, south western end, looking south east



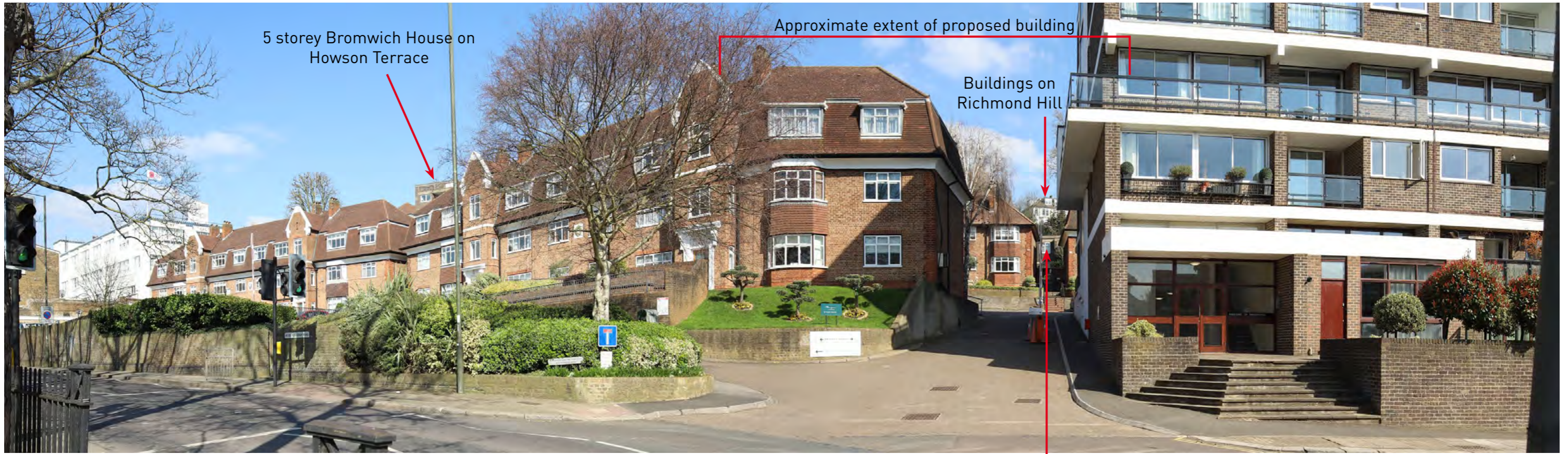
VIEWPOINT 2B - Richmond Bridge, south western end, looking south east



VIEWPOINT 3A - River Thames Path, near Richmond Bridge Estate / Pelabon Gardens , looking east.



VIEWPOINT 3B - River Thames Path, near Richmond Bridge Estate / Pelabon Gardens , looking east.



VIEWPOINT 4 - Buccleuch Passage/ Petersham Road/Robins Court looking north east.

Existing Housing and Care 21
two storey buildings

5 storey Bromwich House on Howson
Terrace (behind vegetation)



VIEWPOINT 5 - Richmond Hill road, near Richmond Hill Court, looking south west.

5 storey building at Robins Court

Approximate extent of proposed building



VIEWPOINT A1 - Richmond Hill road, at south eastern corner of Terrace Gardens looking north west.

Glenmore House on Richmond Hill

Park House on Richmond Hill



VIEWPOINT A2 - Richmond Hill road, at south eastern corner of Terrace Gardens looking north west.