



**West Hampstead Thameslink Replacement Station Building  
Iverson Road, West Hampstead, London**

**Design and Access Statement**



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## Introduction

1. It is Network Rail's intention to deliver a replacement station building at West Hampstead Thameslink Station to serve the increasing number of passengers using the station and improve the existing facilities.
- 1.2 This submission is being made in order to significantly enhance the capacity and infrastructure at West Hampstead Thameslink Station. The works proposed in this submission will upgrade station facilities and operations, to meet both current and future passenger needs. A new footbridge is already nearing the end of its construction, which will integrate into the new station.
- 1.3 It is proposed to locate the replacement station on the southern side of the rail tracks (the existing station is to the north), to improve interchange and to allow for an expanded concourse area which is not possible in the existing location.
- 1.4 The following report provides an outline of the existing site and the proposed station replacement. The information provided within this document provides additional details to the drawings and computer generated images submitted. This text provides a written description of the station design and the constraints and opportunities that have informed it. It also discusses the location of the replacement building and the access around the site.

## Existing site

2. West Hampstead is a suburb of Greater London, located in the north west of the city. The railways came to West Hampstead with the granting of the Hampstead Junction Railway Act 1853.
- 2.1 What is now known as West Hampstead Thameslink station was granted under the Midland Railway (Extension to London) Act 1863 and opened as West End Station in 1871 on the line to St. Pancras, with the original station building being to the south of the tracks on Iverson Road.
- 2.2 West Hampstead Thameslink Station is a National Rail station on the Midland Main Line and is served and managed by First Capital Connect trains (FCC) as part of the Thameslink Line service between Kentish Town and Cricklewood. The Thameslink station is a major interchange point providing access to the West Hampstead Underground Station for the Jubilee Lines and the West Hampstead over ground services.
- 2.3 West Hampstead Thameslink Station comprises of four platforms in a cutting with the ticket office at street level. The principal locations served are Luton to the north and Central London to the south.
- 2.4 The existing ticketing and customer information facilities are provided in a building located off a footway on the northern side of the Thameslink railway tracks, accessed via a narrow alley from West End Lane.



Existing station building

- 2.5 The building within which the ticketing and information facilities are currently located is leased by network rail and there is no opportunity to expand the existing facilities in this location due to space constraints and restrictions related to a public right of way which bisects the station and access bridge.

- 2.6 Passengers access the platforms via a narrow footbridge located opposite the ticket office, with currently no access to the platforms from the south side of the railway. The majority of passengers (approximately 60%) approach or leave the station to the south, primarily interchanging with the Jubilee Line, North London Line and bus services. For these passengers in particular, the station entrance is some distance from interconnecting transport modes and requires walking along the narrow pavements on the road bridge which crosses the railway.



## Proposal and development site

3. The proposal is to improve the facilities at West Hampstead Thameslink station, particularly the accessibility to and around the station. However due to the constraints associated with the existing station building and its immediate surroundings it is not viable to expand facilities on the north side of the railway.
- 3.1 It is therefore proposed to relocate the station building to the south of the tracks, off Iverson Road. The project will involve the construction of a new station building on the embankment land adjacent to Iverson Road, along with the expansion of the public realm to provide a clear view of the station from West End Lane.
- 3.2 At present the land on which the new station will sit is a steeply sloping, heavily planted embankment which is approximately 5m higher at street level than at track level. It contains a wide range of trees and shrubs and most significantly, a row of protected trees along the street edge (Iverson Road). There are a number of retaining structures at the foot of the embankment and remains of the former West End Station are also in existence, along with a disused, small out building close to the boundary with the Garden Centre.



View of West End Lane/Iverson Road junction from existing station

- 3.3 The site is noted as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance by the London Borough of Camden (LBC) and therefore the Network Rail team has carried out a full ecology survey of the site. Bat surveys (type 1 and 2) have been carried out in winter and during the roosting season. This indicates that there is no evidence of protected species on the site.
- 3.4 From Iverson Road (to the south) the building will be highly visible. This is intentional, as one of the key objectives of the project has been to improve

visual connectivity and way finding to and from the Jubilee Line and North London Line stations and bus stops which sit to the south of the Thameslink Station. As it has not been possible to locate the replacement station on the corner of West End Lane (the road that links these stations) due to the impact on major protected trees, the appearance of the new station and sight lines to it along Iverson Road will be important factors in creating an intuitive and pleasurable link between West End Lane and the replacement station.



## Site opportunities and constraints

4. There are a number of opportunities that can be unlocked if the replacement station is located on Iverson Road. These include:

- Providing a direct link between the recently constructed, fully accessible footbridge over the railway and a replacement concourse building. The bridge has no connection to the north.
- Reducing walk distances for the majority (c60%) of passenger movements to/from the south.
- Reducing the number of passengers crossing the narrow pavements alongside the existing road bridge.
- Potential to create a much more generous area of public realm and external accumulation space outside the station.

4.1. Whilst it is clear that a southern location for the new station has significant benefits, the proposed site also has a number of constraints, which have informed the siting and design of the replacement concourse and the area of public realm adjacent to it. These include:

- A row of substantial and protected mature trees running along the northern edge of the Iverson Road pavement, just within the Network Rail boundary fence.
- A steeply sloping gradient across the site in its north-south orientation, which drops approximately 5 metres between Iverson Road (at high level) and the railway itself (low level)
- Two existing retail units on the corner of West End Lane and Iverson Road that form a potential barrier to sight lines and movement routes between West End Lane and the proposed replacement station.



View of site from Iverson Road (top) and from existing station (bottom)



## Use and Amount

5. With these opportunities and constraints in mind, the proposal is to locate the replacement station approximately 80 metres west of the Iverson Road / West End Lane junction for which the rationale for this is two-fold.
  - 5.1. First, the impact on mature planting and in particular the protected avenue of trees is much less significant. This position will require the removal of two mature ash trees (a third has been consented for removal as part of the new bridge works), whereas location on the junction with West End Lane would require the removal of at least 6 and possibly more lime trees. Though both tree types are protected, Network Rail's arboricultural survey indicates that the lime trees have a more significant and beneficial impact in terms of landscape and amenity value.
  - 5.2 Secondly the replacement station can be located directly at the southern end of the recently constructed overbridge, providing an integrated concourse and platform access design solution.
  - 5.3 While this location for the replacement station has distinct advantages, issues of wayfinding and sight lines between West End Lane and the replacement station would be constrained by the narrow pavement, existing retail units and avenue of trees without further consideration of how the pedestrian route to the station could be enhanced.
  - 5.4 In detailed discussion with LB Camden's officers, Transport for London and the Train Operating Company, it has been agreed to widen the pavement on the northern side of Iverson Road substantially (onto Network Rail Land) and to remove the existing corner retail units to open up views to and from West End Lane. Tenants in the existing retail units have been served notice that leases are to be terminated.
  - 5.5 The proposal will retain the row of protected lime trees that run along the northern side of Iverson Road today, drawing these into a wide, generous public open space to form an attractive and safe movement route for pedestrians and opening up clear views of the station entrance from West End Lane.
  - 5.6 The width of this new space is primarily determined by the root protection zone of the retained lime trees; It is necessary to construct a new retaining wall to support the sloping embankment and this wall has to sit beyond the root protection zone to ensure that the trees are not adversely impacted during construction.
  - 5.7 The widened public realm area varies between 10.7m at its eastern end to 13.8m to the west. This dimension is taken from the south face of the new retaining wall to the existing curb edge – the southernmost strip of pavement

which varies from 1.5 to 2m in width is Camden footway, with the remainder lying on Network Rail land.

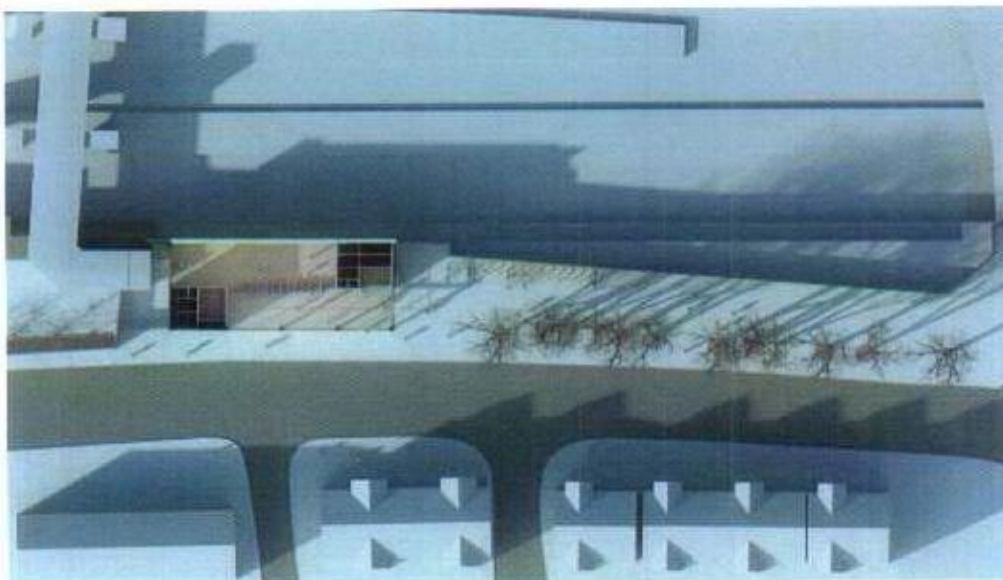
- 5.8** In order to provide a second means of access for those approaching and leaving the station to/from the north, Network Rail will retain the existing entrance route and footbridge. Ticket vending machines will be retained in this location but the staff ticket office north of the railway will be closed and replaced by a new facility in the replacement station on Iverson Road.

## Layout and Scale

6. The layout of the station is based on Network Rail's modular station planning grid. This logical arrangement organises the building in bays of 6m x 6m and allows for gating, passenger support and ticketing/staff facilities to be located within each bay. Due to the narrowness of the site and implications of building alongside the railway to the north and public footway to the south, this structural grid has been adjusted to 6m in its east-west direction and 5.5m north-south.
- 6.1. The building comprises 8 bays in total; two deep (north-south) and four long (east-west). This provides an overall enclosed building footprint of 11.5 m x 24 m. Canopies extend beyond the enclosed perimeter by 3m on the east and west frontages and 1.5m along the southern frontage. The gross building footprint, including overhang zones for the canopy, sits entirely on Network Rail land.
- 6.2 Two entrance doors are provided on the south east corner of the building, one facing West End Lane to the east, and the other onto Iverson Road, facing south. There is a third 'out of hours' entrance door located in the linking section between the concourse and the existing bridge.
- 6.3 The gateline is capable of accommodating 7 regular ticket gates and 2 wide aisle gates (based on demand forecasting to 2026). It occupies the two central bays of the station, providing an overall gateline zone of 12m in width. The areas immediately north and south of the gateline are free of other accommodation to allow passengers to move freely between the gates, the entrance and the new footbridge.
- 6.4 To the east of the gateline, a block of cellular accommodation provides two DDA compliant WC's, a small retail unit, a cash machine and provision for 3 ticket vending machines on the outside (eastern) facade of the building, along with a small store and access routes to the plant zone located at mezzanine level above the cellular accommodation. The Train Operating Company (FCC) anticipate installing 2 ticket machines in the short term but have capacity to introduce a third if required.
- 6.5 To the west of the gateline a second block of cellular spaces provides a two window ticket office facing the entrance doors, along with mess, wc and locker facilities for staff and plant access and riser accommodation. The area above these rooms at first floor will be used to house primary electrical and communications equipment.
- 6.6 A link section in the north west corner of the building provides the connection to the recently constructed footbridge and also provides a location for the additional 'out of hours' entrance to the station which also provides additional fire escape capacity as an exit route from the new bridge.



- 6.7 A screened, external plant area located to the west of the station building, alongside the garden centre boundary fence, will provide the future location for a Vodafone mast which currently sits in the same location as the proposed entrance doors to the new station. Retention of the mast in its current location is not therefore possible. Vodafone will be liaising directly with LBC in regard to its relocation and Network Rail has served notice for its relocation.



Overview of the station building and public realm

- 6.8 There is a partial basement, occupying the northern side of the building, taking advantage of the sloping site profile to provide space for rainwater harvesting and retention tanks and primary sewerage and water services. This is accessed from the railway side of the building.

## Landscaping

7. The new, widened pavement along the northern side of Iverson Road will form an important new public space for West Hampstead. The strongest visual component will be the long retaining wall forming the space's northern edge and extending from West End Lane to the replacement station building.
- 7.1. The wall, which measures 2.6m high from ground level, is to be faced in 'sawtooth' engineering bricks with off-set coursing. This provides a textured surface which is 'woven' in appearance, adding to its visual interest, but equally importantly, discouraging graffiti and fly posting. The finish of the brickwork is to be glazed.



Proposed street scene view facing Iverson Road

- 7.2. Glazed brick is a traditional material with a distinctive rail-related history. It was used widely on both overground and underground railways from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century until the late 1930's and forms the public face of several of London's finest historic stations. In many instances it still remains in place and has stood the test of time for more than a century. The intention at West Hampstead is to utilise this traditional material in a contemporary way by utilising an unconventional brick profile to create a textured and sensitively coloured surface.
- 7.3. The colours for the glaze will be based on the foliage of the lime trees that sit above it, shifting from a very dark (almost black) green, to the palest of lime greens. The colours will be graduated along the length of the wall with the darker tones located at the eastern end and the lighter greens to the west. As well as providing visual interest and a shifting colour palette, this will create a natural wayfinding device between West End Lane and the station, drawing the pedestrian's eye westwards as the colours lighten towards the station entrance.
- 7.4. The ground plane of the new area of public realm will be surfaced in York stone to be consistent with LB Camden's own street design manual. Circular tree pits measuring 2.5m in diameter will be located around the trunk of each



retained tree to allow for root growth and movement and incorporating bound gravel at the base of each trunk.

- 7.5. For the built-up area of public realm on the northern side of the retained trees, a lightweight construction is proposed to minimise compaction of the soil around existing tree roots. This will comprise a bottom distribution layer of a reinforced and soil filled 'honeycomb' membrane to distribute loads evenly across the root zone and avoid excessive point loads being applied to the upper root zone. Above this a 'Silva Cell' or similar soil containment system will be installed, then in-filled with topsoil.
- 7.6. This system will prevent excessive compaction when the uppermost layer of backfill, comprising lightweight aggregate, is laid to provide the bedding course for the York stone paving material. Paving slabs will be sand bedded to allow for water penetration and air permeability. Weep holes are to be constructed on the railway side of the retaining wall at low level to avoid potential water logging of the built up area in times of heavy rainfall.
- 7.7. During excavation and construction phases, Network Rail has committed to providing regular inspection from a specialist arboriculturalist consultant to ensure roots are protected throughout construction and that the back fill zone is installed to minimise impact on the retained trees. A 'non-dig' construction method is to be adopted in the root protection area.
- 7.8. 16 Sheffield cycle stands are to be located alongside the wall to the north of the public space, in close proximity to the station. Full 24-hour manned CCTV surveillance will be installed to cover all areas of public realm and the area around the station itself.
- 7.9. Lighting of the public realm will comprise two key components. For the long wall, a row of close-centred LED light fittings will be installed within the wall parapet, providing an even, downward wash on the wall surface and illuminating the ground plane alongside it. Within the tree pits, recessed uplighters will illuminate the trees at low level. Up and down lighters are provided on the station facade to illuminate the ground plane and the canopy around the building's perimeter. The intention of this lighting strategy is to provide a safe and even level of illumination of the ground plane without excessive light 'spill' at high level.



## Appearance

8. The building is approximately 6m high. This relates to Network Rail's modular station planning grid and allows areas above the cellular blocks to accommodate plant, as well as providing a lofty, day lit space for the concourse and primary circulation areas.
- 8.1. The eastern and southern faces of the building are fully glazed. For concourse and circulation areas this glazing will be clear, security glass to the full height of the building. Where cellular accommodation and plant space sits behind the facade (on its south west and north east corners) the glazing will be obscured using a coloured frit applied to the back of the glass to allow a common cladding system to be used for the full extent of these primary elevations.



- 8.2. A band of horizontal louvers occupies the very top section of the elevations to aid natural ventilation, thereby avoiding the need for mechanical air handling and cooling in the concourse and circulation areas.
- 8.3. The western facade will be predominantly faced in powder coated aluminium louvers to accommodate air intake and extract equipment and heat rejection from the ticket office and computer racks, without the need for roof-mounted plant.
- 8.4. The northern facade of the building, facing directly onto the railway, will be finished in oxidized zinc cladding with one horizontal window illuminating the main passenger circulation area adjacent to the gateline. The zinc material has been specifically selected as it requires little maintenance, which is a key consideration bearing in mind its proximity to the operation railway and its dark

grey colour will avoid visible staining from break dust emanating from the railway. The lowest section of this wall, where it sits below concourse level, will be faced in saw-tooth textured black engineering brick.

- 8.5. The central section of the roof will include sedum planting, selected for its ecological and carbon reduction qualities and its low maintenance / irrigation characteristics. The outer section of the roof will be clad in oxidised zinc, to link with the northern elevation and to form the visible leading edge of the canopy which extends beyond the glazed elevations of the new building. This canopy provides weather protection and solar shading above the main entrance, ticket machines and out of hours gate. The profile of this canopy edge adopts a chamfered section to reduce the visual weight of this important architectural feature, giving the building an elegant and defined outer profile. The underside of this canopy will be clad in smooth ceramic panels.
- 8.6. The colour selection for the obscured parts of the building has been chosen to match the foliage of the lime trees to the east of the station and as discussed above this colour theme extends along the main retaining wall of the new public space.

## Summary

10. The above information sets out the design principles and details of the submitted scheme. It has outlined the rationale behind the location of the building and widening of the existing public footpath.
- 10.1. The proposal has been developed through a series of meetings with relevant stakeholders and LBC to ensure that the scheme is acceptable and understandable in terms of its siting and design.
- 10.2. The new station building will be part of the operational railway, providing much needed infrastructure improvements at West Hampstead Thameslink station and also improving the public realm along Iverson Road.