
7.0 Townscape Views & Visual Impact Assessment

This Section has been prepared by Peter Stewart Consultancy

7.1 Townscape Assessment

Proposed Development

DESCRIPTION

The new building is sited either side of the railway viaduct and incorporates enclosed spaces within the viaduct arches. The main entrance is from Spring Place, and there is also a new route into the Site from Grafton Road, via a new area of open space (only accessible during business hours).

The main part of the building, to the east of the railway viaduct, rises to six storeys high including the roof (the north-eastern part is two storeys high). It is mostly set back from the viaduct with an open area providing a route within the Site that connects the new building and the new accommodation within the arches. The exception is the event space to the north, which links through the northern arch to a double height volume on the west side of the viaduct (the only part of the building on the west side of the viaduct). To the south there is an open connection through an arch to the new Grafton Road Site entrance.

The building has a brick plinth along the street edge with textured brick banding and the southern bay comprises full height brickwork, with three large high level windows and a textured brick blind windows in the return flank elevation.

The upper floors of the remainder of the building are clad with a glass and metallic bronze coloured system. This cladding is expressed as an irregular grid with vertical elements which are sited progressively closer together as you rise through the elevations (apart from over the windows). Two types of recessed panels are used to infill this grid, solid and perforated, which together with the glazed areas, provide three different levels of transparency to the interior.

The roof is articulated with a saw tooth profile to the long elevations (3 gable ends to Spring Lane and 4 to the rear) with inset highly glazed infill elements beyond. The southernmost bay, which is brick clad, has a brick tiled roof pitch.

ASSESSMENT

The Proposed Development is of a high quality of design and has been well articulated through the careful handling of the massing and use of materials. It will sit as a positive addition and relate well to its varied context. The design responds positively to the railway viaduct and will signify the regeneration of the area to passing passengers.

The ground floor frontage will provide an enhanced active street edge, encouraging activity along this part of Spring Place. The new open space and entrance from Grafton Road will enhance this frontage of the Site, and introduce a new route through the Site and under the viaduct.

The building overall will have a robust commercial character clearly influenced by the industrial past of the area. The brick plinth provides a clear base, and the brick clad southern bay acts as a ‘book-end’ to the south, which will appear as a positive element in views from the south (including the conservation area).

The architectural design provides interesting elevations, with crisp detailing and a varied pattern providing a distinctive pattern across the elevations as a whole. This is complemented by the silhouette. The metal and glass clad element has a more lightweight character and together the brick, glass and metal cladding will provide a rich texture to the elevations.

7.2 View 01 Existing

Junction of Holmes Road and Willes Road

This viewpoint is on the south side of Holmes Road at the junction with Willes Road (which continues north to become Spring Place), looking north-west at the Site. The Site includes the white fronted building with the taller parapet, right of centre of the image (facing). Beyond, on the opposite side of the railway viaduct, is the seven storeys high apartment block no. 7 Spring Place.

The viewpoint and the end of the terrace in the immediate foreground to the far left are within the Inkerman Conservation Area. To the far right is the Council Depot. The George IV pub (directly behind the viewer and not visible in this view) was built between 1868-1875 and is a prominent corner building.



7.2 View 01 Proposed



The Proposed Development will define a new high quality built edge to Spring Place. The massing of the building has been carefully considered and the two distinct cladding treatments of different parts of the building will be apparent: the textured brick base and southern brick bay and flank (the latter articulated with three large glazed openings and a blind window), and the ribbed metal and glass cladding of the bays beyond. The saw tooth profile of the parapet evokes of the industrial heritage of the area.

The Proposed Development will enhance this view with a building of a high quality of design that is sympathetic to its context.

The black dashed outline illustrates how the view could appear in the likely event that the foreground site comes forward for redevelopment.

7.3 View 02 Existing

Grafton Road

This viewpoint is on the south-west side of Grafton Road looking north in the direction of the Site. The foreground, up to Holmes Road, lies within the Inkerman Conservation Area. The Site lies behind the brick railway viaduct (which crosses Grafton Road) and the single and two storeys high brick commercial building immediately to the right (facing).

There are mature street trees in the foreground. A number of the terraced properties in the conservation area have undergone piecemeal alterations and few retain their original commercial use at ground floor level today.



7.3 View 02 Proposed

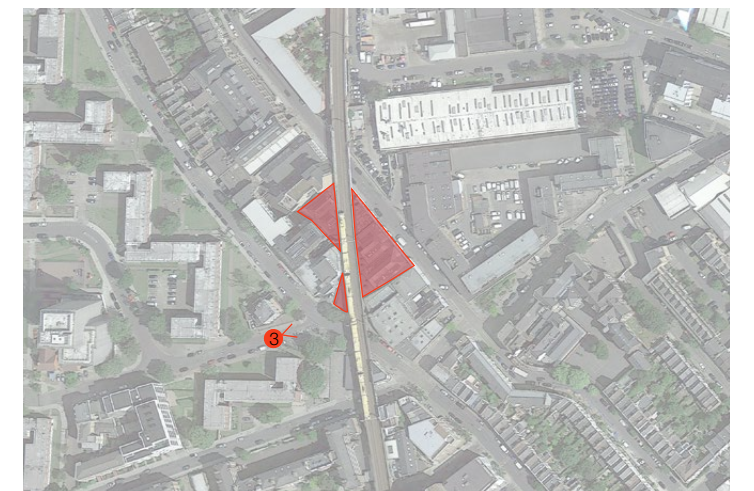


The metal clad upper floors of the Proposed Development will be visible (left of centre, facing, of the image) but not prominent. The elevation design, cladding materials and profile of the building will complement the commercial and industrial character of its immediate surroundings (and the wider area to the north-east).

7.4 View 03 Existing

Warden Road

This viewpoint is on the south side of Warden Road, close to the junction with Grafton Road, looking towards the Site. The highway and associated markings and clutter are prominent in the foreground. To the left (facing) is a three / four storeys high commercial building dating from the 1960s. To the right is the railway viaduct and the electrification cables. The single storey white painted brick building in the foreground is on Site.



7.4 View 03 Proposed



The metal and glass clad upper floors of the southern end of the west elevation of the Proposed Development will be visible beyond the railway viaduct. The building will appear of a similar height to the foreground development to the left (facing) from this viewpoint. The elevation design, cladding materials and profile of the building will complement the commercial and industrial character of the immediate surroundings.

The new Site access and open space will be prominent on the street edge and will enhance the streetscene.

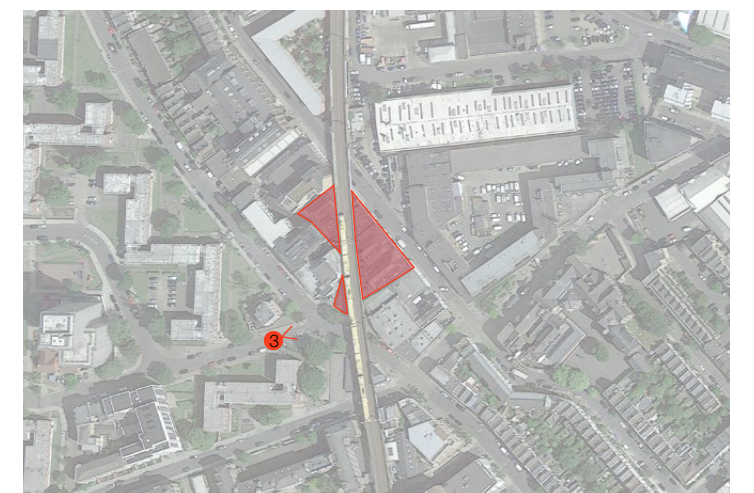
7.5 View 04 Existing

Spring Place

This viewpoint is on the north-east side of Spring Place, looking south in the direction of the Site. Spring Court is prominent to the right (facing), and to the left are nos. 13 to 19 Spring Place, a residential development.

The white street frontage of the Site can be seen through the railway bridge, towards the centre of the image. No. 7 Spring Place (a modern 7 storeys high apartment block) obscures views of the north- section of the Site (on the other side of the railway viaduct).

A modern infill apartment block can be seen terminating the view below the bridge, at the kink in Willes Road (in the Inkerman Conservation Area).



7.5 View 04 Proposed



The metal and glass clad upper floors of the northern element of the Proposed Development will be seen beyond the railway bridge, on the right hand side of the street. Its elevation design, cladding materials and profile will complement the commercial and industrial character of the area around the railway viaduct.

The new built edge to the south-west side of Spring Place will be visible below the bridge deck and the active ground frontage will significantly enhance the site's contribution to the local area.

7.6 Conclusions

Assessment of effect and conclusions

The Proposed Development would offer a number of urban design and townscape benefits, including the intensification of development on this underused Site and the provision of enhanced active frontages to Spring Place and Grafton Road. The building will contribute to a sense of place that is lacking on Site and the local area generally today. The well articulated massing and elevation designs will relate well to the varied character of the Site surroundings.

The architecture is of a high quality appropriate for the commercial use. The project will deliver a characterful building with a sculptural form and a distinctive silhouette.

The Proposed Development will have a limited effect in local views (as can be seen above). The scheme will be most visible in view 1 from the south, where the high quality design and well articulated brick elevations will be seen as a positive element and enhance the local townscape. The views from the west will be enhanced through the provision of a new open space and access into the Site. Elsewhere the metal and glass clad element of the building will be visible, to varying degrees, and will complement the industrial and commercial character of its immediate context.

There are no heritage assets on the Site or close to it. There are a number in the wider area and these have informed the design approach to the Site. The well considered high quality design will enhance views from the south and the wider setting of the Inkerman conservation area. The distance of the Site from the grade II listed College Francais Bilingue De Londres, and the nature of the intervening townscape, are such that the Proposed Development will not have any effect on any element of setting of this listed building that contributes to its significance. There will no be effect on any elements of setting that contribute to the significance of any other designated heritage asset.

In respect of the design considered in its own right, and the relationship between the new building and its surroundings, including the Inkerman Conservation Area, the effect of the new development will be entirely positive. The Proposed Development will enhance the quality of the townscape of the area. It is in line with the policies and guidance on design set out in the NPPF, the national PPG; London Plan policies; Core Strategy policy CS9; and DMDPD policies DM1, DM3 and DM4.