

View 3: Hillingdon Road (eastbound)

Role of site in view / baseline description

Visibility of site

Limited glimpses of the car park below the tree canopy to the south of Hillingdon Road, with increased filtered views during winter.

Key elements in view

Hillingdon Road is framed on either side by tall, mature trees which screen much of the surrounding urban context in summer, with filtered visibility in winter (including glimpses of the Civic Centre).

Sensitivity

Receptors

Motorists/those in vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians travelling south on Hillingdon Road.

Value of view

Low – General townscape view along a major road; not protected. A relatively enclosed view with the bypass a prominent element; the layered tree coverage provides visual amenity/softens the scene.

Susceptibility

Motorists/those in vehicles and cyclists are focused on their journey; Low.

Pedestrians have some awareness of surrounding visual amenity; Medium.

Sensitivity

Motorists/those in vehicles and cyclists – Low.

Pedestrians – Low; limited by the road.

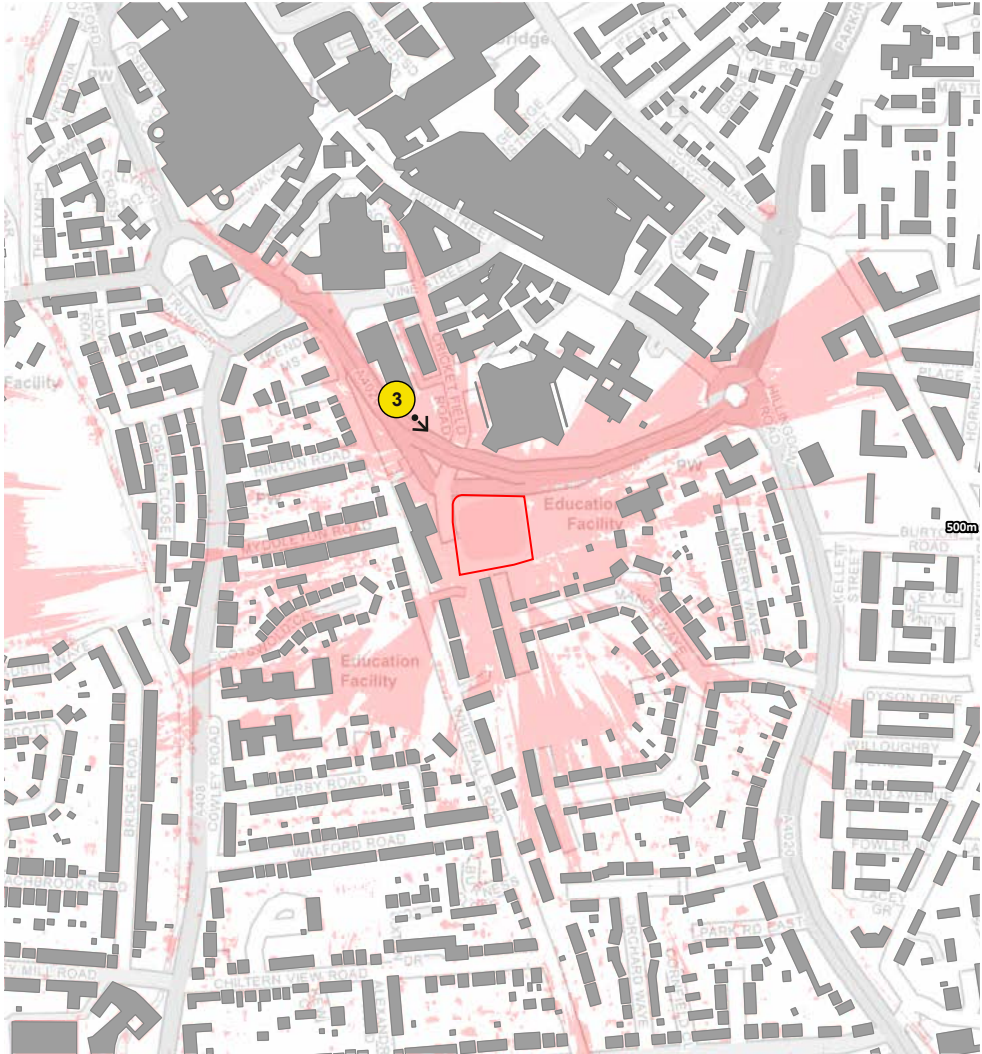
Nature of change

The proposed development would replace the existing car park with a taller built form, with the top of the new building partially visible above existing trees. There is potential for filtered glimpses of the lower sections in winter. There would be a Medium degree of change.

Visual effect

The increased height of the proposal would introduce a noticeable (though set back) and appropriately scaled urban element to the view which would enhance the definition of the junction with Cricket Field Road and legibility of the surrounding context. The pitched roof gables would result in a visually interesting profile which would articulate the massing and complement the Civic Centre. The brick tones would tie in with the existing townscape, particularly where glimpsed in winter. New trees, hedges and other planting along the northern/western edges of the Site would increase the layered coverage.

There would be a Minor Beneficial visual effect.



Extract from Viewpoint Location Plan



Image details	
Visualisation type	Type 2/AVR Level 3
Camera (existing photo) Lens	Canon EOS 5D 24mm
Date Time (photo capture)	19/06/2026 07:38
Grid Co-ordinates	505610E; 183811N
Direction of View	SE
Ground level	37.1m AOD
Virtual camera height	1.6m (above ground level)
Enlargement	96% @ A1





18381 | Bearing 143° Pitch 0° Focal Length 24mm 21/06/2026 16:00



183811 | Bearing 143° | Pitch 0° | Focal Length 24mm | 21/05/2026 16:00

View 4: Hillingdon Road (westbound)

Role of site in view / baseline description

Visibility of site

An external stairway on the northern frontage of the car park can be glimpsed in the distance along the road, with filtered visibility in winter months.

Key elements in view

Hillingdon Road is framed by trees/fencing on either side; there are glimpses of the tops of residential buildings to the west of the Site, as well as the listed Civic Centre at the view's right-hand extent – with visibility increasing during winter.

Sensitivity

Receptors

Motorists/those in vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians travelling west along Hillingdon Road.

Value of view

Low – General townscape view along a major road; not protected. The layered tree coverage provides amenity and enclosure; the busy bypass is a prominent detracting element. There is limited perceptibility of the surrounding urban context when trees are in leaf, with increased filtered views through trees in winter.

Susceptibility

Motorists/those in vehicles and cyclists are focused on their journey; Low.

Pedestrians have some awareness of surrounding visual amenity; Medium.

Sensitivity

Motorists/those in vehicles and cyclists – Low.

Pedestrians – Low; limited by the road.

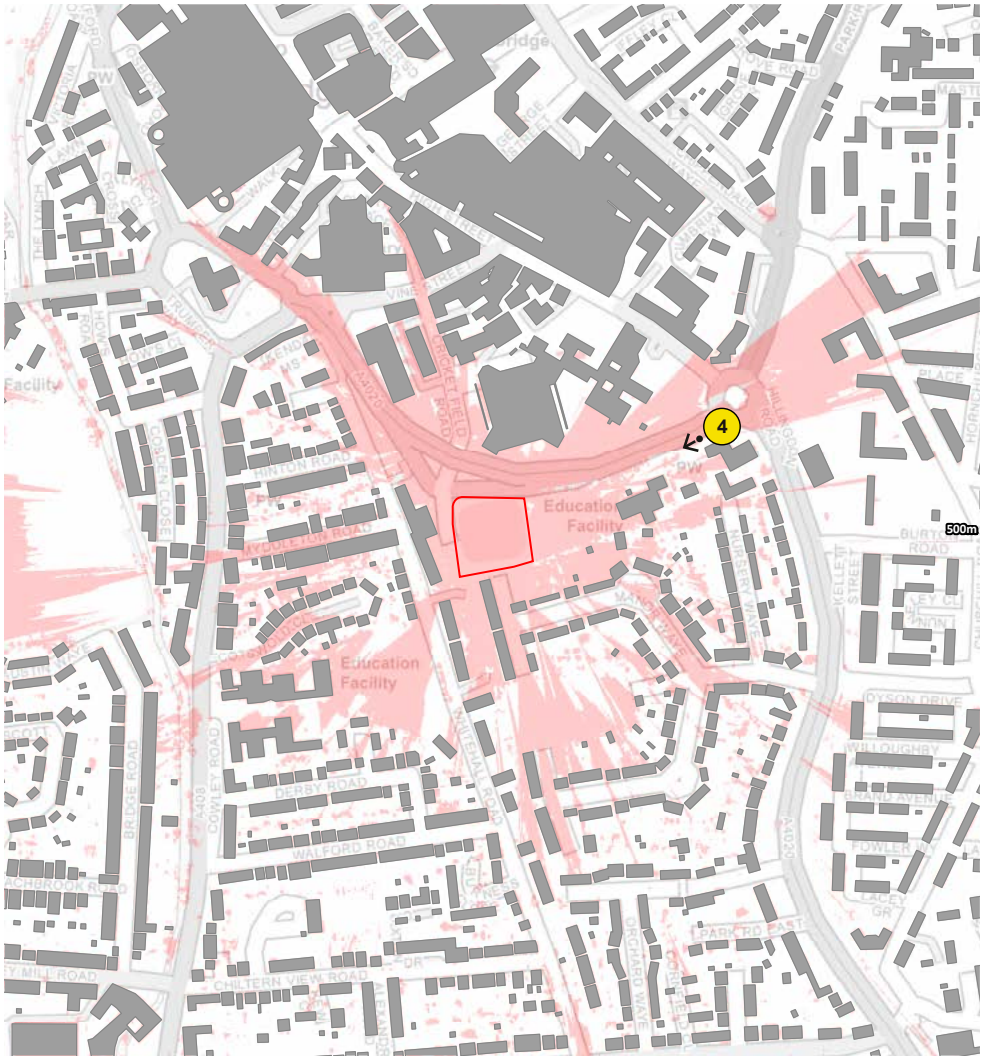
Nature of change

The taller northern frontage of the new building would be visible in place of the existing car park at an angle in the background of the view. A tree along the Site's northern boundary would be removed, with new trees and a hedge introduced along this edge. The degree of change would be Low to Medium.

Visual effect

The new building would be a set-back element mostly screened by retained and proposed trees. It would replace the poor-quality frontage of the car park and glimpses of existing dwellings behind, appearing larger (though not exceeding the prevailing treeline height). It would introduce a well-designed building with a residential character and appropriate sense of scale for its Town Centre location. The pitched roof forms, fenestration and elevational design – including the use of red/brown tones for the brickwork/cladding – would complement the existing townscape context including the Civic Centre.

There would be a Minor Beneficial visual effect.



Extract from Viewpoint Location Plan



Image details	
Visualisation type	Type 2/AVR Level 3
Camera (existing photo) Lens	Canon EOS 5D 24mm
Date Time (photo capture)	19/06/2026 07:58
Grid Co-ordinates	505901E; 183792N
Direction of View	WSW
Ground level	43.2m AOD
Virtual camera height	1.6m (above ground level)
Enlargement	96% @ A1





183794 Bearing 250° Pitch 0° Focal Length 24mm 21/06/2026 16:00



1837 [2] Bearing 250° Pitch 0° Focal Length 24mm 21/06/2026 16:00

View 5: Manor Way (north of Manor Way Recreation Ground)

Role of site in view / baseline description

Visibility of site

Trees along the southern edge of the Site are visible. There are filtered glimpses of the top of the car park structure in winter.

Key elements in view

View along a residential cul-de-sac with 2-3 storey mid-late 20th century/2010s brick and render-faced terraced housing. Parked vehicles occupy the streetscape; small front gardens are present along its left-hand side. The view is terminated by layered tree coverage at the northern end of the street.

Sensitivity

Receptors

People on Manor Way, mainly local residents (may be travelling in vehicles).

Value of view

Low – Typical view along a residential street; not designated or identified. Dwellings are of a typical form for their period, reflecting the residential context in the wider area. No particular architectural or urban features of note. Position/scale of buildings and trees gives the view an enclosed feel.

Susceptibility

People that are local residents have some awareness and expectation of visual amenity; Medium.

Sensitivity

Medium (assuming majority of visual receptors are residents).

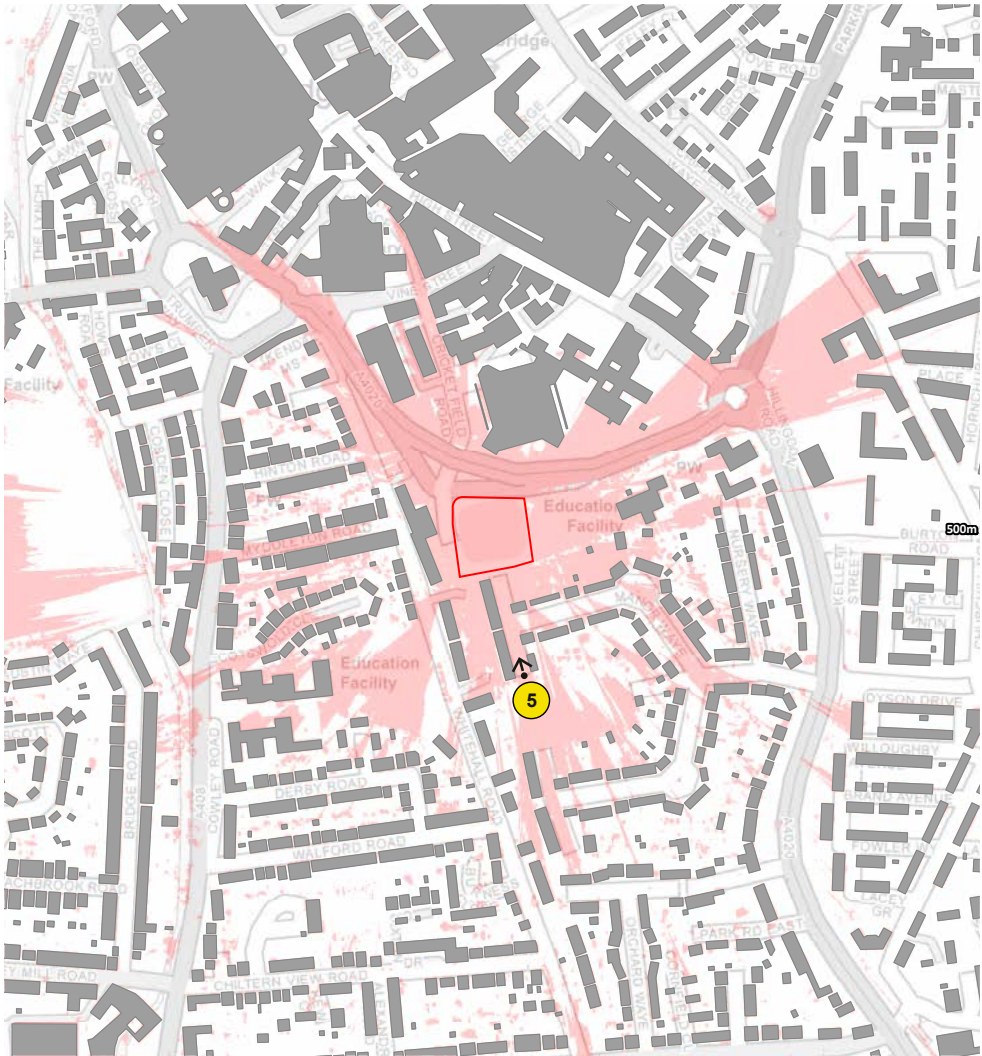
Nature of change

The top of the building would be partially glimpsed through gaps between trees at the end of the cul-de-sac. There would be some filtered glimpses of the lower levels in winter. Trees to be removed from this section of the Site are currently screened by the terraces. There would be a Low degree of change throughout the year.

Visual effect

The building would be a background element that would not appear to exceed the prevailing treeline from this location. Its massing would be broken down by the pitched roof gables. The visible elements would be from the tallest section of the building, which would be set further back within the northern section of the Site, stepping down towards the residential area – further reducing its presence within the view. When glimpsed through the trees, the care home would replace the existing blank facades of the car park, providing increased visual interest particularly during winter. The natural red/brown material tones would tie in well with those within the existing urban context.

There would be a Minor Neutral (summer) to Minor Beneficial (winter) visual effect.



Extract from Viewpoint Location Plan



Image details

Visualisation type	Type 2/AVR Level 1
Camera (existing photo) Lens	Canon EOS 5D 24mm
Date Time (photo capture)	19/06/2026 08:18
Grid Co-ordinates	505724E; 183546N
Direction of View	NNW
Ground level	37.6m AOD
Virtual camera height	1.6m (above ground level)
Enlargement	96% @ A1







View 6: Junction of Cowley Road/Myddleton Road

Role of site in view / baseline description

Visibility of site

Not visible.

Key elements in view

Myddleton Road is lined by early 20th century housing, with later 20th century development glimpsed at the opposite end of the street. The spire of St Andrew's Church is visible in the background.

Sensitivity

Receptors

Motorists/those in vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

Value of view

Medium – Not a designated or identified view. Incidental visibility of the church spire which aids with legibility of the wider area. Myddleton Street has a consistent residential scale and character, typical of its age.

Susceptibility

Motorists/those in vehicles and cyclists are focused on their journey, and if travelling along Cowley Road are oriented away from the view; Low.

Pedestrians have some awareness of surrounding visual amenity; Medium.

Sensitivity

Motorists/those in vehicles and cyclists – Low; due to focus on journey.

Pedestrians – Medium.

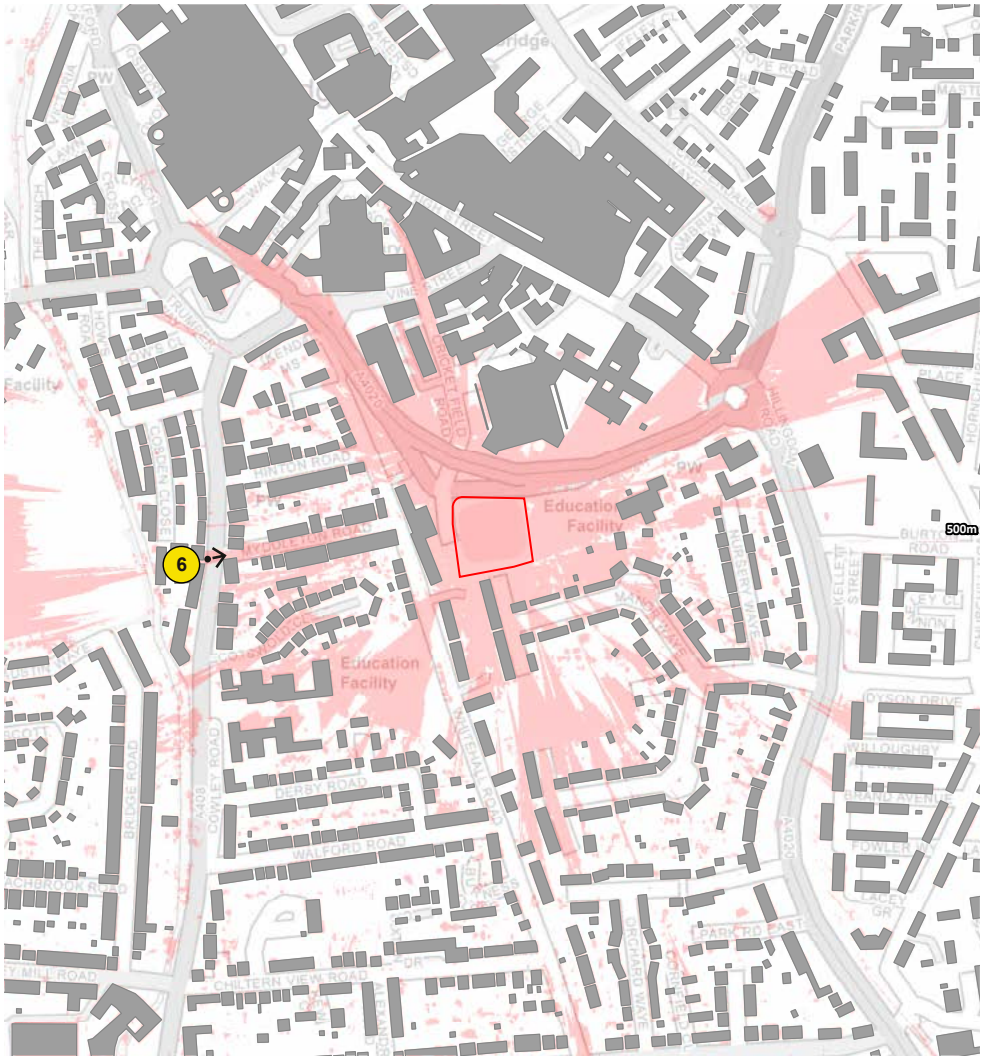
Nature of change

The roof of the new building would be partially visible above existing built form at the far end of the street, resulting in a reduction in the church spire's visible extent. There would be a Low degree of change.

Visual effect

The proposal would be a background element, contributing to a slight increase in the layering of built form within the view. The pitched roof gables would give the building a domestic scale in keeping with the terraces along Myddleton Road; the materials palette would also relate positively to the visual character of these buildings. Though reduced in its visible extent, the view of the church spire is incidental, and it would continue to be perceptible on the distant skyline.

On balance, there would be a Minor Neutral visual effect.



Extract from Viewpoint Location Plan



Image details

Visualisation type	Type 2/AVR Level 1
Camera (existing photo) Lens	Canon EOS 5D 50mm
Date Time (photo capture)	19/06/2026 11:17
Grid Co-ordinates	505386E; 183667N
Direction of View	E
Ground level	32.2m AOD
Virtual camera height	1.6m (above ground level)
Enlargement	100% @ A3







View 7: Junction of Cross Street/Windsor Street

Role of site in view / baseline description

Visibility of site

Not currently visible.

Key elements in view

Foreground building to the left (No. 23 Windsor Street) defines the edge of Old Uxbridge/Windsor Street Conservation Area; opposite is an area of green space with mature trees around Uxbridge Peace Memorial (not visible). A commercial building along Hillingdon Road is seen in the background.

Sensitivity

Receptors

Motorists/those in vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians at the junction/travelling due south-east.

Value of view

Medium – Not an identified view; located at the edge of a Conservation Area though oriented away from it. No. 23 Windsor Street is locally listed. The main outlook is largely focused on the busy road, with a four-storey office building visible in the distance; trees provide some visual amenity and softening along the route.

Susceptibility

Motorists/those in vehicles and cyclists are focused on their journey; Low. Pedestrians have some awareness of surrounding visual amenity; Medium.

Sensitivity

Motorists/those in vehicles and cyclists – Low; due to focus on journey.

Pedestrians – Medium.

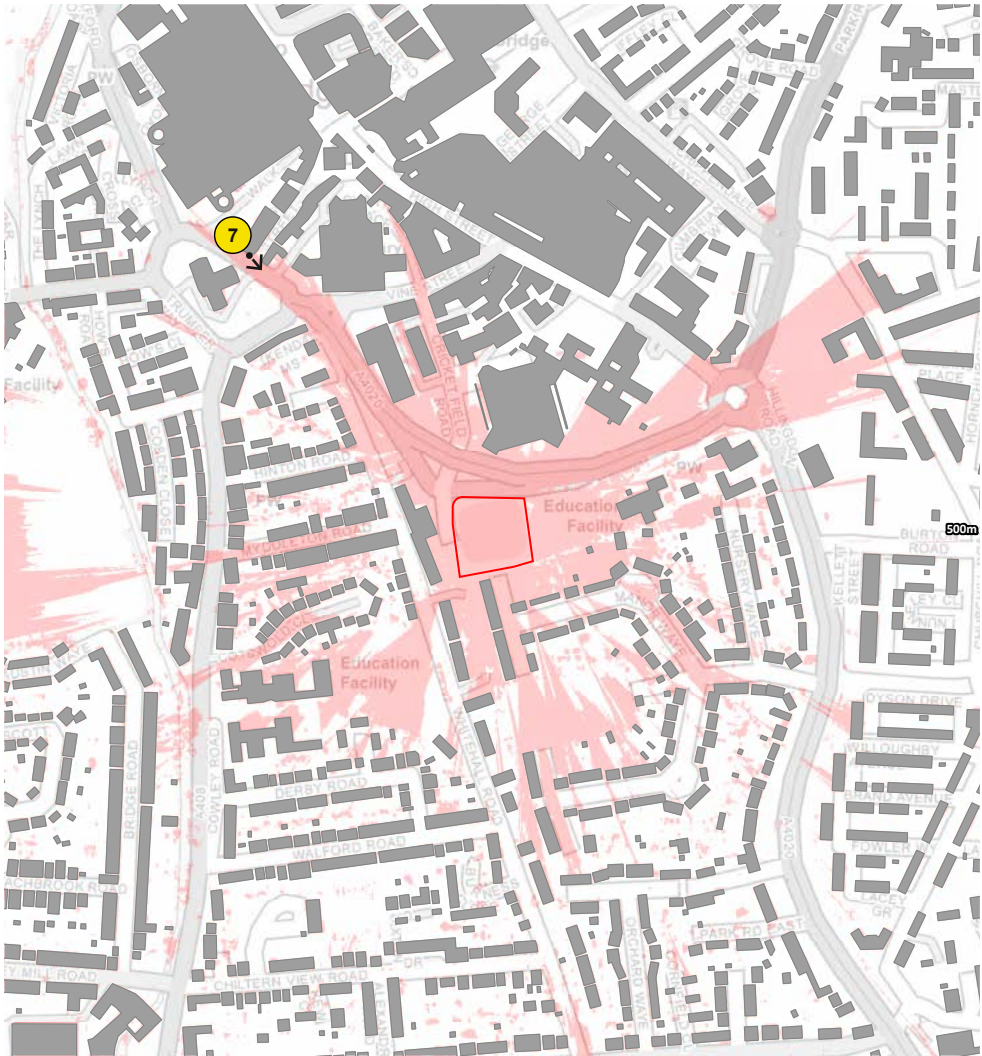
Nature of change

The top of the new building would be partially glimpsed at a distance above trees along Hillingdon Road. There would be a Very Low degree of change.

Visual effect

The proposal would be a small, set-back and low-level element on the background skyline, the pitched roof gables breaking down the massing. The scale of the new building and red/brown material tones would be compatible with/relate positively to the existing townscape character.

There would be a Negligible visual effect.



Extract from Viewpoint Location Plan



Image details

Visualisation type	Type 2/AVR Level 1
Camera (existing photo) Lens	Canon EOS 5D 24mm
Date Time (photo capture)	19/06/2026 07:12
Grid Co-ordinates	505434E; 183993N
Direction of View	SE
Ground level	35.8m AOD
Virtual camera height	1.6m (above ground level)
Enlargement	96% @ A1







4,37,183993] Bearing 140° Pitch 0° Focal Length 24mm 21/06/2026 14:57

View 8: Junction of Cricket Field Road/Vine Street

Role of site in view / baseline description

Visibility of site

Not visible in summer; some potential for limited filtered glimpses through tree coverage in winter.

Key elements in view

To the south of Vine Street are a series of mid-rise buildings along Cricket Field Road; those to the left are within Old Uxbridge/Windsor Street Conservation Area, including the two-storey Nos. 1-3 Old Brigade House. Beyond, the route is lined by mature trees.

Sensitivity

Receptors

Motorists/those in vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

Value of view

Medium – Not an identified view; oriented towards the edge of a Conservation Area, though few historic buildings are present. Contemporary built form is of mixed quality, their scale and form framing a linear view along Cricket Field Road towards the trees in the background, which provide some visual amenity within this urban context.

Susceptibility

Motorists/those in vehicles and cyclists are focused on their journey, and if travelling along Vine Street are oriented away from the view; Low.

Pedestrians have some awareness of surrounding visual amenity; Medium.

Sensitivity

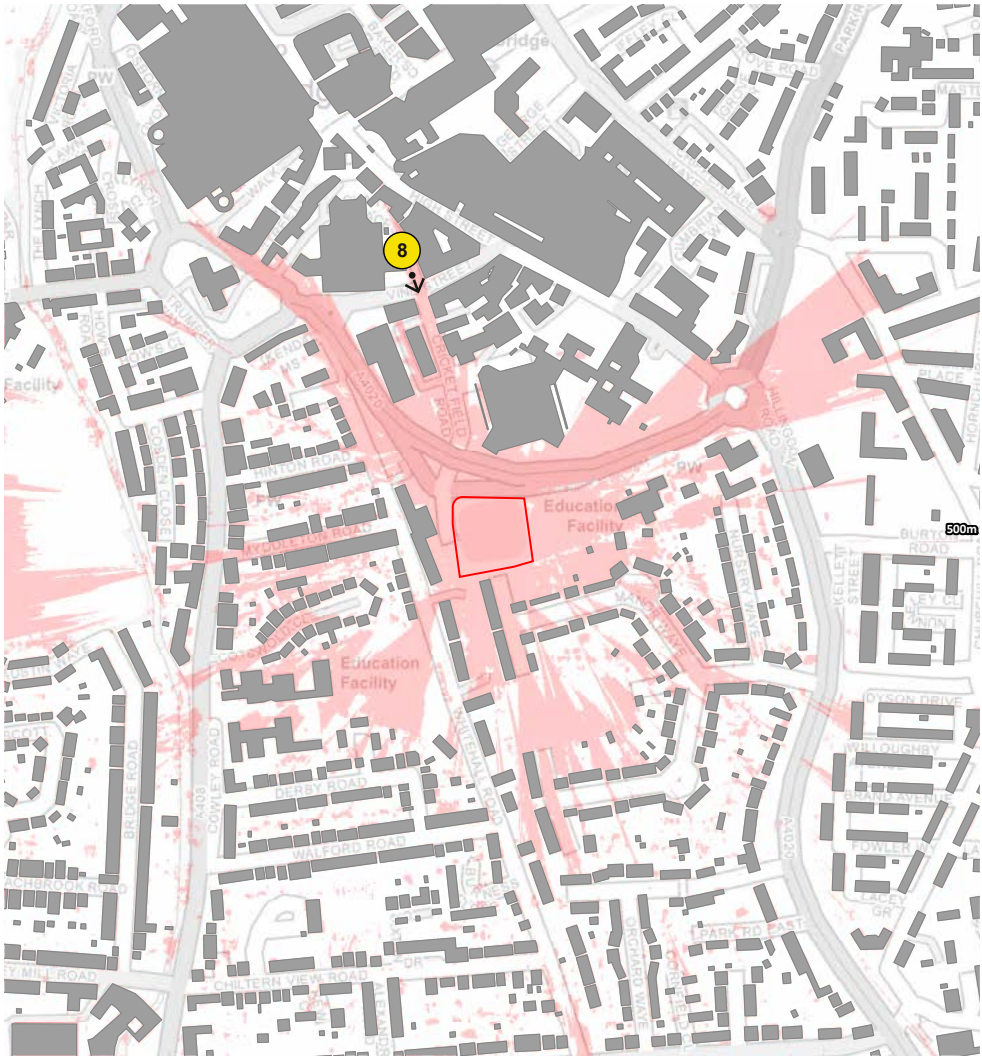
Motorists/those in vehicles and cyclists – Low; due to focus on journey.

Pedestrians – Medium.

Nature of change/Visual effect

The proposal would be screened by trees along Cricket Field Road in summer, with potential for some highly filtered visibility in winter. The extent and layered nature of the tree coverage would result in any visible elements being broadly imperceptible.

There would be a Very Low degree of change and a Negligible visual effect in winter only.



Extract from Viewpoint Location Plan



Image details	
Visualisation type	Type 2/AVR Level 1
Camera (existing photo) Lens	Canon EOS 5D 24mm
Date Time (photo capture)	19/06/2026 08:32
Grid Co-ordinates	505606E; 183971N
Direction of View	SSE
Ground level	38.1m AOD
Virtual camera height	1.6m (above ground level)
Enlargement	96% @ A1







[6, 40, 183971] Bearing 161° Pitch 0° Focal Length 24mm 21/06/2026 16:00

View 9: Rockingham Recreation Ground

Role of site in view / baseline description

Visibility of site

Not currently visible.

Key elements in view

Looks across sports pitches towards the edge of the Recreation Ground defined by tall, mature trees, with 2-storey houses and other taller buildings within the town centre seen beyond. In the background, the top of St. Andrew’s Church spire and the Civic Centre clock tower are visible through gaps between the trees.

Sensitivity

Receptors

Users of the Recreation Ground.

Value of view

Medium – Not an identified view. The open space and trees provide amenity value, whilst the church spire and clock tower – despite not being prominent on the skyline – serve as recognisable local landmarks providing legibility of the wider context including the Town Centre.

Susceptibility

Users of the Recreation Ground have some awareness of surrounding visual amenity though some may be focused on activity; Medium.

Sensitivity

Medium.

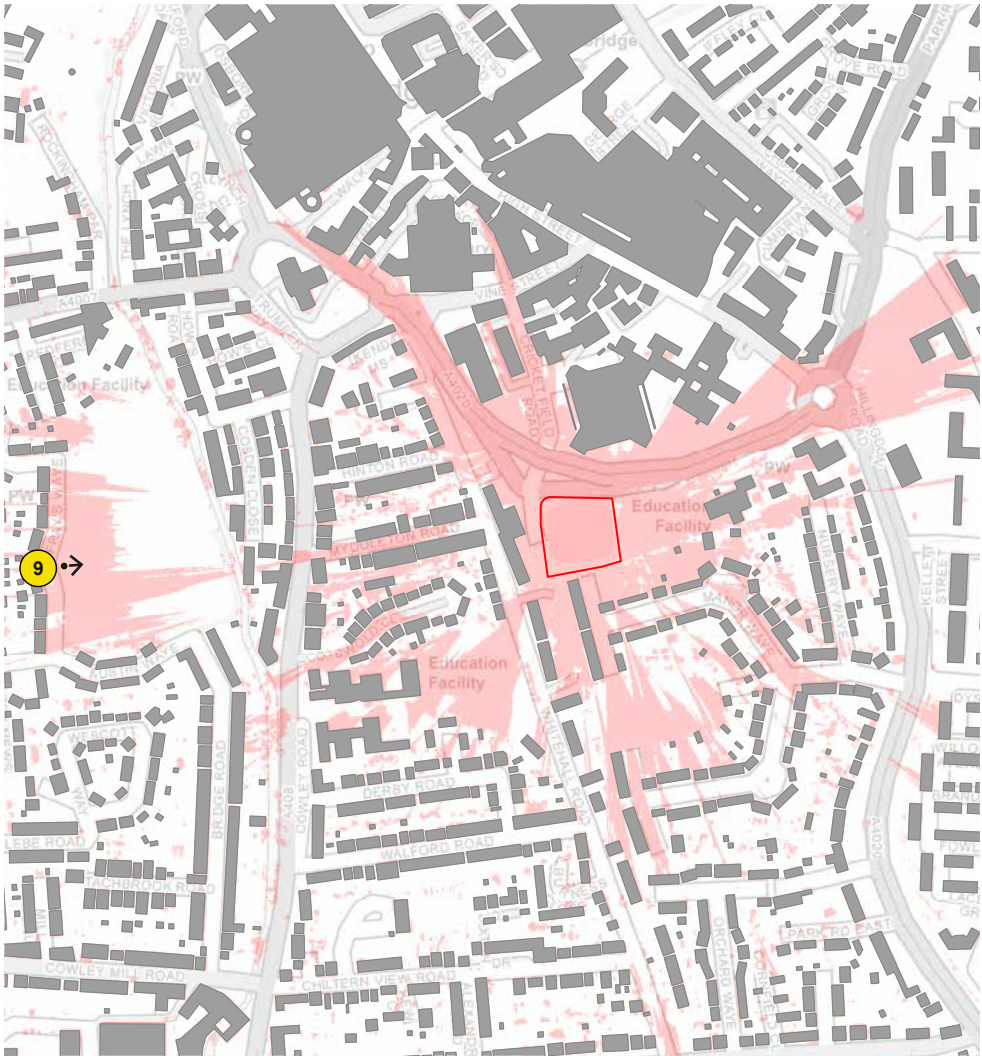
Nature of change

The very top of the roof of the new building would be partially visible between trees and above intervening buildings. There would be a Very Low degree of change.

Visual effect

The proposal’s visible elements would be broadly imperceptible and form part of the layered townscape seen beyond the Recreation Ground, with a similar material/visual character to existing residential buildings. It would be visually separated from the Church spire and clock tower.

There would be a Negligible visual effect.



Extract from Viewpoint Location Plan

Image details	
Visualisation type	Type 2/AVR Level 1
Camera (existing photo) Lens	Canon EOS 5D 50mm
Date Time (photo capture)	19/06/2026 11:11
Grid Co-ordinates	505154E; 183666N
Direction of View	E
Ground level	30.8m AOD
Virtual camera height	1.6m (above ground level)
Enlargement	100% @ A3





666] Bearing 84° Pitch 0° Focal Length 50mm 21/06/2026 16:00



Summary of visual appraisal

5.9 A summary of the visual appraisal is provided in Table 5.2. There would be a range of Negligible to Major Beneficial visual effects.

Table 5.2: Summary of visual appraisal

Ref	Location	Sensitivity	Degree of Change	Visual Effect
1	Junction of Cricket Field Road/Hillingdon Road	Low	High	Moderate Beneficial
2	Footpath/cycleway south of Cricket Field Road	Medium	Medium (summer); High (winter)	Moderate Beneficial (summer); Major Beneficial (winter)
3	Hillingdon Road (eastbound)	Low	Medium	Minor Beneficial
4	Hillingdon Road (westbound)	Low	Low to Medium	Minor Beneficial
5	Manor Waye (north of Manor Waye Recreation Ground)	Medium	Low	Minor Neutral (summer); Minor Beneficial (winter)
6	Junction of Cowley Road/Myddleton Road	Low (motorists/cyclists); Medium (pedestrians)	Low	Minor Neutral
7	Junction of Cross Street/Windsor Street	Low (motorists/cyclists); Medium (pedestrians)	Very Low	Negligible
8	Junction of Cricket Field Road/Vine Street	Low (motorists/cyclists); Medium (pedestrians)	Nil (summer); Very Low (winter)	Nil (summer); Negligible (winter)
9	Rockingham Recreation Ground	Medium	Very Low	Negligible

6.0 Summary and conclusions

- 6.1 This TVA has been prepared to consider the townscape and visual effects arising from the proposed development. The appraisal has been informed by current townscape character assessments and heritage designations relevant to the consideration of townscape and visual matters. It has been prepared in accordance with current best practice guidance and has assessed the townscape and visual effects of the proposal.
- 6.2 The scheme has also been considered in terms of its compliance with relevant aspects of planning policy and guidance on townscape and visual matters.

Townscape effects

- 6.3 The existing Site has a Low value associated with the functional nature of the car park, its linear footprint and inactive frontages limiting permeability, legibility and sense of place – though existing trees provide enclosure and soften the boundary condition. The proposal would provide the Site with an increased sense of place and identity through the introduction of a residential typology, drawing on positive aspects from the immediate townscape context. The new care home would introduce active frontages, providing natural surveillance and overlooking of adjacent streets. The building would have a visually interesting form with stepping, setbacks and pitched roof gables articulating the massing. The façade treatment and materials palette would be of high quality with clearly articulated fenestration and elevational hierarchy and an appropriate range of materials in natural red/brown tones and detailing which would give texture to the facades. The proposed layout would retain the majority of existing trees and soft planted edges of the Site, with new landscape elements including replacement/additional trees and other planting contributing to visual amenity along existing frontages. Private external space for residents would be located away from the busy Hillingdon Road, utilising existing boundary trees to provide enclosure. There would be a High degree of change and a Moderate Beneficial effect on the townscape character of the Site.
- 6.4 There would be a Minor Beneficial effect on the townscape character of TCA1: Uxbridge Town Centre. The proposal would be in keeping with

the varied scale and height of buildings within this area, taking architectural cues from the listed Civic Centre to the north through the building's stepped north-west corner, pitched roofscape and use of red/brown brick. The northern elevation would present a more visually interesting and active frontage towards the wider TCA, providing overlooking along the adjacent section of Hillingdon Road as well as the footpath/cycle link to the town centre adjacent to Cricket Field Road.

- 6.5 There would be Minor Beneficial effects on the townscape character of TCA2: Manor Waye (to the south) and Minor Neutral effects on TCA3: Between Whitehall Road and Cowley Road (to the west). The proposed care home use would relate well to the broadly residential character of both areas; stepping along the building's elevations and pitched roof gables would break down the frontages, creating a more domestic sense of scale which would relate positively to that of the terraced housing found in both areas. The reduction in height across the building would create a gentle transition to lower-scale built form within TCA2, with new landscape elements enhancing a footpath connection to this area. The top of the proposal would be glimpsed incidentally from TCA3, occluding part of the St. Andrew's Church spire to the east – though the latter would continue to be discernible as a local landmark.

Visual effects

- 6.6 The visual appraisal has been undertaken with reference to 9 views that are representative of different receptors in key public realm locations within the surrounding area.
- 6.7 In views immediately adjacent to the Site (1-2, along Cricket Field Road and a footpath/cycleway to its west/south-west respectively) there would be Moderate to Major Beneficial visual effects. The new building would replace the existing car park with a taller built form, set back further into the site along its western frontage. It would appear prominent when moving along the majority of this edge of the Site, though existing and new trees would provide partial screening in places. The residential use would introduce a well-designed, more visually interesting and active frontage to both views. Setbacks, stepping and pitched roof gables would create a sense of rhythm and depth

along the elevation and articulate the massing. The distribution of materials would define a clear base, middle and top, providing clarity of the main entrance along the western façade. New low-level planting would partially screen a new external parking area to the west of the building.

- 6.8 Receptors travelling along Hillingdon Road (views 3, 4) would experience Minor Beneficial visual effects. When travelling on/adjacent to the eastbound carriageway, the visible top of the building – seen above existing trees lining the route – would increase legibility of the surrounding context, with the roof pitches creating a visually interesting profile. In views travelling westbound, the proposal would replace glimpses of existing built form further west.
- 6.9 In views from the south along Manor Waye (5), the top of the building would be glimpsed through gaps between retained trees along the southern edge of the Site, replacing the blank facades of the existing car park with more active frontages. The building would appear to step down towards the foreground residential street, and would have a compatible material character for the urban context.
- 6.10 The top of the proposal would be visible in views from the west (6, 9, along Myddleton Road and within Rockingham Recreation Ground respectively), resulting in Minor Neutral and Negligible visual effect. From Myddleton Road, the building would slightly reduce the visible extent of the St. Andrew's Church spire, which is glimpsed incidentally along this route; where seen from the Recreation Ground, it would be well separated from this landmark. From both locations, the building would blend in with the surrounding townscape context, with a similar material/visual character.
- 6.11 Views from the edge of Old Uxbridge/Windsor Street Conservation Area have also been considered. From the junction of Cross Street/Windsor Street (7), the top of the proposal would be glimpsed as a small, set-back and low-level element in the background, with limited perceptibility and Negligible visual effects in winter. Similarly, from the junction of Cricket Field Road and Vine Street (8), the building would be well-screened by layered tree coverage with potential for Negligible winter effects only.

Compliance with policy

- 6.12 The proposal complies with local and national planning policy in respect of townscape and views as follows:

1. Does the proposal make efficient use of land and contribute to an increase in the density of the area in which it is located, taking into account existing character? Is the proposal a 'high building' and, if so, is the Site an appropriate location for a 'high building' in principle?
- 6.13 The new building would be located on previously developed land within central Uxbridge and replace an existing car park with a taller building form, making more effective use of the Site. The siting of the new building would allow existing positive aspects of the Site (i.e. landscape features) to be largely retained, optimising the use of land in a contextually appropriate way. The proposed care home use over 3-5 storeys would be an increase in density terms compared to the surrounding residential context, which broadly consists of 2 storey terraced/semi-detached dwellings.
- 6.14 The proposal is not considered to be a 'high building' as it is not substantially taller than its surroundings, which consists of the mixed urban context (of varied heights/scales) within the Town Centre to the north and low-rise residential buildings to the west and south - the proposal stepping down to 3 storeys in response to the latter.

2. Has the proposal responded to its context, including its history, character, site features and setting? Would the development integrate with and enhance its surroundings including through the arrangement of plots and buildings, mass/scale, architectural character and materials/detailing? Would it contribute to local distinctiveness or create a positive new identity?
- 6.15 The proposal would relate positively to the broader residential character of the adjoining areas south of the Town Centre whilst enhancing the legibility and sense of place within the Site itself. Its form would provide an appropriate transition from the Town Centre to the broader residential context, with stepping, setbacks and pitched roof gables

- breaking down the massing and elevations – giving the building a domestic sense of scale whilst relating to the architectural and material character of the Civic Centre.

3. Would the proposal create a well-designed, high-quality place that is liveable and functions well? Will it provide good connections to the wider area? Will it include appropriate built form that defines streets and spaces, promotes compact forms of development, creates focal points and enhances views? Will public spaces be safe, inclusive and accessible, with legible routes integrating natural surveillance and places to meet? Would the proposal be visually attractive, distinctive and characterful? Would it incorporate and connect to green space and enhance tree coverage? Have existing trees and natural features been retained and street trees introduced where possible?
- 6.16 The proposal would be of high quality with an appropriate and attractive architectural character that would relate positively to the surrounding urban context. The blank facades of the car park would be replaced by the active frontages of the care home, increasing natural surveillance and overlooking. This would improve views of the Site as well as the condition of the surrounding public realm, including the adjacent footpath/ cycleway to its west. The building’s footprint would allow the grassed/planted areas at the edges to be retained, integrating directly with new private courtyards/gardens for residents. The latter would be sensitively located at the centre of the Site, enclosed by both the building and retained boundary trees. Replacement and additional trees and low-level planting would result in a further increase to the visual amenity already provided by existing vegetation, softening the boundaries and providing some screening of a new external parking area.

4. Is the proposal of the highest architectural and urban design quality? Has consideration been given to the relevant requirements of local and/ or national design guidance? Has the design evolved as a result of effective engagement?
- 6.17 The proposal has evolved through a design-led approach that responds appropriately to both design guidance and its context – taking cues from existing notable buildings in the area (e.g. the Civic Centre) whilst responding to the surrounding variation in the townscape context through its stepped massing. The varied materials palette and use of natural colour tones would clearly articulate the base, middle and top, with brick detailing and green-toned accent colours for balconies and window frames adding texture and giving the proposal a high-quality appearance. The new landscaping would improve the quality of the surrounding public realm.

6.18 Overall, it is considered that the proposal is well designed and appropriate for its context. It would be a characteristic addition to the local townscape and would result in a range of neutral and beneficial effects on townscape and visual receptors.

References

1. Hillingdon Townscape Character Study, page 122; Urban Initiatives Studio/Hillingdon Council, 2023
2. Hillingdon Townscape Character Study, page 18; Urban Initiatives Studio/Hillingdon Council, 2023

Appendix 1

Methodology statement

Townscape and Visual Appraisal

The methodology is in conformity with the approach set out in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment prepared by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013 (GLVIA3) and clarifications published in 2024. The guidance in the Landscape Institute’s updated Technical Guidance Note (06/19) Visual Representation of Development Proposals and Townscape Character Assessment Technical Information Note 05/2017 Revised April 2018 has also been reviewed.

This study comprises separate but interrelated assessments: an assessment of the likely significant effects on the character and quality of the townscape and an assessment of the effect of development on views, viewers and their visual amenity.

Visualisations prepared by Lichfields using VU.CITY and drawings/CGIs prepared by Hunters have been used to assess the change to the townscape character and identified views as a result of the Proposed Development.

Approach to Townscape Appraisal

Townscape is a product of the interaction between a range of physical characteristics (e.g. topography buildings and landscaping) and human activity (e.g. land use, human culture and history). The assessment of townscape effects requires the existing characteristics, quality and sensitivity of the application site and the surrounding area to be defined to enable an evaluation of the effects of the Proposed Development on the townscape to be made.

For each character area identified, the key characteristics which give the area its distinct sense of place are set out. These are usually positive features but can also be negative in a degraded environment. Key positive characteristics are sensitive receptors that could be directly or indirectly affected by the development.

For townscape character areas, compatible with the National Design Guide/PPG and GLVIA3 para 5.5 the following aspects of townscape character have been reviewed where relevant:

- The context and setting,
- Topography and relationship to built form,
- Historic evolution of the area,
- The urban grain – pattern and scale of streets, blocks, development plots and buildings,
- Land use and activity,
- Movement patterns,

- The scale, mass and form of buildings,
- Building style, details and use of materials including vernacular traditions; and
- The public realm including the role of open spaces, vegetation and water features.

The value of the townscape is established, having regard to any designations and the value of its component parts. It is noted that undesignated townscapes may also have value in their constituent elements and overall character. The existing townscape quality and value is categorised as high, medium, low or negligible/zero, based on the criteria in Table 1.

The susceptibility of the townscape receptors to accommodate change arising from the Proposed Development is based on factors such as rarity, robustness and consistency based on the criteria at Table 2.

The sensitivity of the townscape to accommodate change is categorised as being high, medium, low or negligible/nil by experienced assessors having regard to both to its “value” (Table 1) and the susceptibility of the receptors to change (Table 2).

The nature (or degree) of change to the townscape receptors (including heritage assets) that arises from the introduction of the development is then predicted, and is defined with reference to the criteria in Table 3.

The assessment considers, at a site-wide and character area level the effects of proposals on elements of the townscape that contribute to its character and on the character areas as a whole.

The townscape effects are judged based on a combination of both the sensitivity of the townscape to change and the degree to which the Proposed Development will effect the townscape. Consideration is then given as to whether effects on receptors are adverse, neutral or beneficial in light of local/other relevant policy objectives. A balanced view is taken in cases where there are both positive and negative changes.

Visual Appraisal Methodology

The assessment of a development’s visual effects relates to the changes that will occur in views as a result of the development, viewers’ responses to those changes and the effect the changes have on visual amenity.

The existing baseline situation has been recorded, establishing the components, character and amenity of the existing scene within each view. The value of views is determined having regard to Table 4.

Analysis of the effects of the amended development on those views has then been undertaken with reference to the application drawings, photographs of the existing situation and visualisations/CGIs.

Visual effects relate to changes in available views of the townscape and the effects of those changes on people. It considers:

- The effects (adverse, neutral or beneficial) due to amended development upon representative views through intrusion or obstruction,
- The reactions and numbers of viewers who may be affected; and,
- The overall effects on visual amenity.

The sensitivity of visual receptors (i.e. people at specific locations) to amended change has been determined having regard to:

- The activity and expectations of the receptors – their susceptibility to change; and
- The importance or amenity value of the view.

The criteria applied in assessing the susceptibility of visual receptors is set out in Table 5. It is noted that views across third party land are not protected by the planning system although consideration can be given to changes in residential visual amenity.

The sensitivity of receptors to change has been assessed as being high, medium or low. This is based on the judgement of experienced assessors combining the susceptibility of the receptor to change and the value of the view/visual amenity. The rationale for the judgements made is set out particularly where the value and the susceptibility differ. Consideration has been given to factors including whether the quality of the view diminishes or increases the expectation of the receptors in a particular location.

The nature (or degree) of the change arising as a result of the development has been predicted using the visualisations together with the application plans. The change is categorised as nil, very low, low, medium or high and are set out in Table 6, having regard to the scale of change to the views, their composition, the contrast/ integration of features with the prevailing townscape, screening of elements of value/ interest and whether the view of development is clear, partial/filtered or glimpsed. The effect on views and visual amenity is assessed on the basis of a series of representative views. This enables an assessment of the effects on a range of typical receptors in the surrounding area.

A judgement is made by experienced assessors about the visual effect at each of the representative view positions having regard to the sensitivity of the receptor (a product of their susceptibility to change and value of the view), the nature (or degree) of change that will be experienced (its scale, extent, permanence) and the qualitative aspects of the change (i.e. whether overall it will have a beneficial, neutral or adverse effect). In some cases, whilst there may be changes to a view, where these are compatible with the context and will neither harm nor benefit the outlook, they are assessed as being neutral. In some cases, there may be a combination of positive and negative changes that need to be weighed against each other. In making these judgements consideration is given to the general definitions in Table 7 to give an overall consistency in approach. It is recognised that while the description of the baseline, the identification of sensitive receptors and the prediction of the nature (or degree) of the effects can be objectively established, the sensitivity of receptors and the judgement about the overall effect and whether that effect will be positive, neutral or negative involve a qualitative judgement.

Table 1: Classification of Townscape Value

Classification	Townscape Character
High	Visually coherent groups of well-designed/well-proportioned buildings, well related to streets, spaces and townscape elements, highly distinctive sense of place established over time, may be protected by heritage designation (e.g. conservation area or listing). Few detracting elements.
Medium	Relatively coherent grouping of buildings reasonably well-related to the public realm to create a good although not exceptional sense of place (may include locally listed buildings) - occasional buildings and spaces may lack quality and cohesion.
Low	Largely undistinguished area lacking sense of place and identity, poor spatial definition and generally limited visual interest. Area of emerging character as a result of large scale new development.
Very Low	Poor quality environment lacks cohesive form and structure significant potential for enhancement and very little or no visual interest. Area in a state of development or change in character.

Table 2: Classification of Townscape Receptors to Change

Classification	Susceptibility of Townscape Receptors to Change
High	Rare/ intact area or component of townscape (may be designated)
	Vulnerable to change - limited potential for change without effect on integrity of feature or area
	Notable aesthetic/ perceptual qualities or cultural associations that could be adversely affected
Medium	Townscape component or area may be sufficiently robust or frequent to accommodate some changes without affecting integrity
Low	Aesthetic/ perceptual qualities may be affected by detracting elements
	Robust or frequent component or robust area of townscape
	Integrity of townscape receptor would be maintained
Very Low	Not vulnerable to change
	No component within townscape that has any special quality/ interest

Table 3: Classification of Nature of Change to Townscape

Classification	Nature of Change to Townscape
High	Large change/addition to townscape over a wide area or loss/major alteration of key characteristic feature(s).
Medium	Moderate permanent changes in localised area, or partial loss/alterations of characteristic feature(s). Change may include the introduction of prominent new elements which are characteristic/appropriate to the existing townscape.
Low	Change to minor component, feature that is characteristic of the townscape. Introduction of elements which are in character with the existing townscape.
Very Low	Very minor loss or alteration to minor feature / characteristic or virtually imperceptible change in any components / No noticeable change. Maybe very short term or reversible.

Table 4: Classification of Value of View

Classification	Value of View
High	Protected view, viewpoint or panorama, designated vista, scene with considerable scenic or amenity value (may be protected by designations).
Medium	View/outlook with local scenic or amenity value.
Low	View/outlook with limited scenic/amenity value.
Very Low	View dominated by significant detracting elements. No residual scenic or aesthetic values.

Table 5: Susceptibility of Visual Receptors to Change

Classification	Susceptibility of Visual Receptors to Change
High	People within/using public open spaces whose focus is on amenity value
	People using public rights of way through highly valued townscape or using national/ regional/tourist routes
	People within the immediate setting of elements of national cultural heritage value who may be focused on visual amenity
	Residents with outlook from main aspect of residential property
Medium	People using open spaces whose appreciation of amenity is secondary to their activity
	People using public rights of way through townscape of moderate/low value whose main focus is on the journey/commute than its amenity
	Residents with compromised visual amenity/ limited outlook.
Low	People at work who are not focused on visual amenity
	Transient receptors such as motorists whose focus is on travelling

Table 6: Nature of Change to Visual Receptors

Classification	Nature of Change to Visual Receptors
High	Large change to the view. Development becomes the prominent feature in the scene introducing a major new component. Limited screening effects. Alternatively, existing development may be replaced by notably larger (more prominent) or notably smaller (less prominent) development.
Medium	The proposals are a visible and recognisable new element, moderately prominent within the scene. Possible screening of some, but not all elements. Alternatively, new development may replace existing buildings with larger (more prominent) or notably smaller (less prominent) development.
Low	The proposals would be a new, relatively small component in the overall view. Development may be seen at a distance in context of existing development and/or screening effects limit amount of new development in the view.
Very Low	May be substantive screening. Views over such a distance that barely distinguished from the general scene. Alternatively, development may replace existing development with buildings of the same or a similar scale. Overall, change to view imperceptible.

Table 7: Criteria applied to judgment of effect

Classification	Susceptibility of Visual Receptors to Change
Major Adverse	Loss/ alteration of valued/characteristic townscape feature(s) such that the integrity of a townscape is undermined.
	Introduction of discordant/prominent element within an important or protected view that obscures/ distracts from a key feature.
	Extensive, incongruous change to view.
Moderate Adverse	Marked uncharacteristic alteration to/partial loss of sensitive townscape character/ features that gives rise to some loss of integrity of feature/ townscape character.
Minor Adverse	Introduction of an element within that may be noticeable and detrimental due to its scale, incompatibility with the existing scene and/or relationship to important elements.
	Limited or localised alteration to valued townscape component or characteristic.
	Slight reduction in the integrity of positive townscape character/ features overall.
Negligible	Limited harmful overall change to / minor incongruous element in protected/ important view.
	Change to townscape character or view would be almost imperceptible.
	Neutral
Minor Beneficial	Change would be evident but entirely consistent with the townscape character or view or could comprise positive and negative change that overall would not be harmful to townscape character or the view. Can be major, moderate, minor or negligible.
	Limited change to the view or townscape character that is positive/ reinforces existing positive characteristics/ introduces a positive and compatible new feature.
	Small overall improvement to existing view.
Moderate Beneficial	Marked change to the view or townscape character that is positive/ reinforces existing positive characteristics/ introduces new elements that are compatible with policy objectives.
	Distinct improvement to existing view.
	Major Beneficial
Major Beneficial	Extensive change to townscape character or view that is positive/ reinforces existing positive townscape characteristics or introduces new elements that are compatible with policy objectives.
	Considerable improvement to existing view.

Appendix 2

Relevant policy context

Statutory Development Plans

The London Plan (March 2021)

Policy GG1 on inclusive growth requires that changes to the physical environment are positive to London (B), streets and public spaces are comfortable and safe, creating places that foster a sense of belonging (E) and:

“ensure that new buildings and the spaces they create are designed to reinforce or enhance the identity, legibility, permeability, and inclusivity of neighbourhoods, and are resilient and adaptable ...” (G)

Policy GG2 (Making the best use of land) promotes successful, sustainable mixed-use places that make best use of land including previously developed land, in Opportunity Areas and on public sector land, and using small sites (A). This includes to:

“proactively explore the potential to intensify the use of land to support additional homes and workspaces, promoting higher density development, particularly in locations that are well-connected to jobs, services, infrastructure and amenities by public transport, walking and cycling “(C)

“applying a design-led approach to determine the optimum development capacity of sites” (D) [and]

“understand what is valued about existing places and use this as a catalyst for growth, renewal, and place-making, strengthening London’s distinct and varied character. (E)”

Policy D3 seeks to optimise the capacity of sites through a design led approach (A).

Part D confirms that development proposals should:

“1) enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to existing and emerging street hierarchy, building types, forms and proportions,

2) encourage and facilitate active travel with convenient and inclusive pedestrian and cycling routes, crossing points, cycle parking, and legible entrances to buildings, that are aligned with peoples’ movement patterns and desire lines in the area,

- 3) be street-based with clearly defined public and private environments...
- 5) achieve safe, secure and inclusive environments,
- 6) provide active frontages ... to generate liveliness and interest,
- 7) deliver appropriate outlook, privacy and amenity,
- 8) provide conveniently located green and open spaces for social interaction, play, relaxation and physical activity...
- ...11) respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character; [and]
- 12) be of high quality, with architecture that pays attention to detail, and gives thorough consideration to the practicality of use, flexibility, safety and building lifespan ...”

Policy D4 deals with delivering good design. It suggests that visual modelling and assessments of design options should be undertaken where appropriate.

D8 states that proposals should explore opportunities for new public realm where appropriate (A), ensure that it is well designed, safe, accessible inclusion, attractive related to the local and historic context, easy to understand and maintain (B). It should be based on an understanding of how the area functions at different time of day and through the year (D), accommodate movement functions (E) and have a mutually supportive relationship with surrounding uses to create a vibrant public realm (F) including natural surveillance (G). Green infrastructure and sustainable approaches to dealing with rainwater should be included (I) and shade, sunlight and seating should be considered to encourage people to spend time in a place (J).

The proposal does not fall within the height threshold for Policy D9 (Tall buildings) to be applicable.

Hillingdon Local Plan

Part 1: Strategic Policies (November 2012)

Policy BE1 on the built Environment states that:

“The Council will require all new development to improve and maintain the quality of the built environment in order to create successful and sustainable neighbourhoods... All new developments should:

(1) Achieve a high quality of design in all new buildings... which enhances the local distinctiveness of the area, contributes to community cohesion and a sense of place,

(2) Be designed to be appropriate to the identity and context of Hillingdon’s buildings, townscapes, landscapes and views, and make a positive contribution to the local area in terms of layout, form, scale and materials and seek to protect the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential properties...

(3) Improve the quality of the public realm and provide for public and private spaces that are attractive... respect the local character and landscape, integrate with the development [and] enhance and protect biodiversity... [and]

(11) In the case of tall buildings, not adversely affect their surroundings including the local character... cause harm to the significance of heritage assets or impact on important views... The height of all buildings should be based upon an understanding of the local character and be appropriate to the positive qualities of the surrounding townscape...”

Policy EM4 on open Space and informal recreation states that:

“...Major developments will be expected to make appropriate contributions to the delivery of new [open space] opportunities...

The Council will seek to protect existing tree and landscape features and enhance open spaces with new areas of vegetation cover...”

Part 2: Development Management Policies and Site Allocations and Designations (January 2020)

Policy DMHB 10 on high buildings and structures – noted as being “substantially taller than their surroundings, causing a significant change to the skyline” – states that:

“Any proposal for a high building or structure will be required to respond to the local context and satisfy the criteria listed below.

It should:

i) be located in Uxbridge or Hayes town centres or an area identified by the Borough as appropriate for such buildings;...”

“...(iii) be of a height, form, massing and footprint proportionate to its location and sensitive to adjacent buildings and the wider townscape context. Consideration should be given to its integration with the local street network, its relationship with public and private open spaces and its impact on local views,

(iv) achieve high architectural quality and include design innovation. Consideration should be given to its silhouette, so that it provides a positive contribution to the skyline, its design at street level [and] facing materials and finishes... [and]

(v) where residential uses are proposed, include high quality and usable private and communal amenity space and ensure an innovative approach to the provision of open space...”

Policy DMHB 11 on the design of new development states that:

“(A) All development... will be required to be designed to the highest standards and incorporate principles of good design including:

(i) harmonising with the local context by taking into account the surrounding: scale of development, considering the height, mass and bulk of adjacent structures; building plot sizes and widths, plot coverage and established street patterns; building lines and setbacks, rooflines, streetscape rhythm, for example, gaps between structures and other streetscape elements, such as degree of enclosure; architectural composition and quality of detailing; local topography, views both from and to the site; and impact on neighbouring open spaces and their environment; [and]

(ii) ensuring the use of high-quality building materials and finishes...”

Policy DMHB 12 on streets and public realm states that:

“(A) Development should be well integrated with the surrounding area and accessible. It should:

(i) improve legibility and promote routes and wayfinding between the development and local amenities,

(ii) ensure public realm design takes account of the established townscape character and quality of the surrounding area,

(iii) include landscaping treatment that is suitable for the location, serves a purpose, contributes to local green infrastructure, the appearance of the area and ease of movement through the space... [and]

(v) incorporate appropriate and robust hard landscaping, using good quality materials...”

Policy DMHB 14 on trees and landscaping states that:

“(A) All developments will be expected to retain or enhance existing landscaping, trees, biodiversity or other natural features of merit, [and]

(B) Development proposals will be required to provide a landscape scheme that includes hard and soft landscaping appropriate to the character of the area, which supports and enhances biodiversity and amenity particularly in areas deficient in green infrastructure...”

Material Considerations
National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026)

To achieve sustainable development, through the planning system Paragraph 17 identifies a social objective of

“fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places” and an environmental objective to “protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land... [and] using natural resources prudently...”

Policy L2 confirms that substantial weight should be given to the benefits of proposals that, amongst other things:

“[Make] better use of vacant and underutilised land and buildings (such as... building on... car parks... which are no longer required)”

Policy L3 states that development proposals should make efficient use of land including “...its scope for improvement, a site’s connectivity and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.” (part 1)

Part 2a confirms that:

“Within settlements, development proposals for residential and mixed-use development within settlements should contribute to an increase in the density of the area in which they are situated. The only exception is where there is a clear justification that this is either inappropriate or not possible (for example, where the prevailing density is already very high, the nature of the accommodation required precludes higher densities, or where it would conflict with other policies in this Framework). In considering the potential to increase densities, the existing character of an area should be taken into account, in accordance with policy DP3, but should not preclude development which makes the most of an area’s potential.”

Part 2c goes on to reinforce the need for densities to be met in well-connected locations stating that:

“...for residential or mixed-use schemes ... within reasonable walking distance of a well-connected station, a density of at least 35 dwellings per hectare should be achieved within the net developable area of the site. High densities – of at least 45 dwellings per hectare – should be achieved where the service frequency is at least twice that of the minimum required for a well-connected station.”

Well-connected stations are defined in the Glossary as:

“Railway stations and underground, tram and light rail stops located within a top 80 Travel to Work Area located partially or fully within England by Gross Value Added (GVA)⁷² and which, in the normal weekday timetable, are served (or have a reasonable prospect of being served due to planned upgrades or through agreement with the rail operator) throughout the daytime by at least four trains or trams per hour overall, or at least two trains or trams per hour in any one direction.”

Part 4 reinforces this, stating:

“Developments that do not make efficient use of land in accordance with paragraph 2 should be refused.”

The objective of the policies in the ‘Achieving Well Designed Places’ are to: “...promote high quality, healthy, inclusive and sustainable places, through setting clear expectations about design outcomes and the use of relevant tools and processes.”

Policy DP3 Part 1 states that

“Development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of the site and its setting) so they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets. This should not preclude innovation and change where appropriate, especially where an increased scale or density of development is justified in accordance with policies L2 and L3.”

DP3 Part 2 states that

“To create well-designed places, development proposals should also reflect relevant aspects of the following principles, as appropriate to the nature of the development and its location:

a. Liveability: support healthy, mixed, vibrant and integrated communities, which will function well over the lifetime of the development, by incorporating a range of uses and tenures, employing features which promote social interaction, and which are robust, durable and easy to look after;

b. Climate: contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation ... by using building layouts, building orientation, massing, landscaping and materials which conserve energy and other resources...;

c. Nature: incorporate and/or connect to a network of high quality, accessible, multifunctional green infrastructure to provide opportunities for recreation and healthy living, strengthen habitats, improve climate change resilience and improve air and water quality. This should include maintaining and enhancing tree cover and incorporating sustainable drainage systems;

d. Movement: ... provide good connections to the wider settlement (or those nearby), and prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport;

e. Built Form: use the pattern of buildings to define the arrangement of streets, squares and other spaces, promote compact forms of development to optimise the site’s potential, distinguish between public and private areas, create focal points and, where appropriate, enhance views into and out of the scheme;

f. Public Space: include spaces that are safe, secure, inclusive, and accessible for all ages and abilities, including for groups such as women and girls; and which facilitate and encourage social interaction, play and healthy lifestyles (for example by providing high quality, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, a variety of recreational spaces and places to meet, integrating lighting and making building entrances and windows face onto streets and other public spaces to provide natural surveillance); and

g. Identity: create visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development to establish or maintain a strong sense of place and pride, including through the use of a coherent palette of materials, design features and planting.”

DP3 Part 3 states that when assessed against DP3 and local policies, guides, codes and masterplans in the development plan: “...proposals should be refused if, without clear justification, they conflict with paragraph 1 or this policy or relevant aspects of the principles in paragraph 2, or with any explicit design standards (including those in locally-specific policies, guides, codes or masterplans Substantial weight should be given to compliance with these policies when assessing the design quality of proposals.” Whereas Part 3 confirms that reference should be made to the Design and Placemaking PPG in the absence of local policies and guidance.

Substantial weight should be given to: “...outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they are consistent with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.” (DP3, Part 4)

Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution of the scheme (DP4).

National Design Guide (January 2021)

This guidance seeks to ensure well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful are achieved. It notes that “*the long-standing, fundamental principles for good design are that it is: fit for purpose; durable; and brings delight.*”

The guidance comments on the complexity of places, noting that they are:

“...a setting for a diverse range of uses and activities, and is experienced by many people in many different ways; it is made up of buildings, and also landscape and infrastructure, which are likely to endure longer than the buildings themselves; most places evolve over a long period of time once they have been established, with many incremental changes that can affect their quality; the quality of ‘delight’ includes a richness of experience gained from all of our senses, not only the visual; and beauty in a place may range from a long view down to the detail of a building or landscape.”

The ten characteristics of well-designed places are defined, as set out within the PPG on Design.

In relation to context, it explains that:

“well-designed places are: based on a sound understanding of the features of the site and the surrounding context, using baseline studies as a starting point for design; integrated into their surroundings so they relate well to them; influenced by and influence their context positively; and responsive to local history, culture and heritage.”

In relation to identity or character of a place it notes that this derives from:

“...the way that buildings, streets and spaces, landscape and infrastructure combine together and how people experience them. It is not just about the buildings or how a place looks, but how it engages with all of the senses. Local character makes places distinctive. Well-designed, sustainable places with a strong identity give their users, occupiers and owners a sense of pride, helping to create and sustain communities and neighbourhoods. Well-designed places, buildings and spaces: have a positive and coherent identity that everyone can identify with, including residents and local communities, so contributing towards health and well-being, inclusion and

cohesion; have a character that suits the context, its history, how we live today and how we are likely to live in the future; and are visually attractive...”

The guide notes that:

“Well-designed new development is influenced by: an appreciation and understanding of vernacular, local or regional character, including existing built form, landscape and local architectural precedents; the characteristics of the existing built form ...; the elements of a place or local places that make it distinctive; and other features of the context that are particular to the area ... This includes considering: the composition of street scenes, individual buildings and their elements; the height, scale, massing and relationships between buildings; views, vistas and landmarks; roofscapes; the scale and proportions of buildings; façade design, such as the degree of symmetry, variety, the pattern and proportions of windows and doors, and their details; the scale and proportions of streets and spaces; hard landscape and street furniture; soft landscape, landscape setting and backdrop; nature and wildlife, including water; light, shade, sunshine and shadows; and colours, textures, shapes and patterns.”

